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PARISH MAGAZINE

July 2026

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The Revd Tim Clifford Hill
Rector



Georgie Gregson
Youth & Families
Minister

A Caring Christian Community, here for everyone

St John's is open every day from 9.30am to 4pm. Please feel welcome to visit us.

Sunday services are listed on Page 2.

Services during the week:

Morning Prayer Monday to Thursday at 9am in Church.

Holy Communion on Wednesdays at 10.30am in the Merrow Hall, St John's Centre.

Evening Prayer on Fridays at 5pm in Church.

Wednesday Holy Communion will be weekly at 10.30am in the Merrow Hall.

All are welcome.

July 2026 Services (Year A)

Sunday 5th July 5th Sunday after Trinity, Green

Romans 7.15-25a, Matthew 11.16-19, 25-end

8am BCP Holy Communion

10am All Age Worship

Sunday 12th July 6th Sunday after Trinity, Green

Romans 8.1-11, Matthew 13.1-9, 18-23

8am BCP Holy Communion

10am CW Holy Communion

6pm Songs of Praise

Sunday 19th July 7th Sunday after Trinity, Green

Romans 8.12-25, Matthew 13.24-30, 36-43

8am BCP Holy Communion

10am CW Holy Communion

Sunday 26th July 8th Sunday after Trinity 9, Green

Romans 8.26-end, Matthew 13.31-33, 44-52

8am BCP Holy Communion

10am CW Holy Communion

Sunday 2nd August 9th Sunday after Trinity, Green

Romans 9.1-5, Matthew 14.13-21

8am BCP Holy Communion

10am All Age Worship

Wednesday Holy Communion will be weekly at 10.30am in the Merrow Hall

Discover the Hidden History of St John's Church, Merrow

The most imposing feature of Merrow's skyline is the cedar shingle-clad steeple of St John's, rising some 12 metres above the bell tower at the west end of the building. Many local residents will be familiar with the sound of its bells, ringing for Sunday morning services and Tuesday evening practices, or will have glanced up at the clock while waiting in slow-moving traffic on Epsom Road. What you may not know is that the tower houses a remarkable collection of Victorian machinery, still in excellent working order and very much part of daily Merrow life.

This includes the original 1843 turret clock which requires weekly manual winding of the pendulum and the hourly chime weight mechanisms. The tower is also home to the present peal of six bells, commissioned in 1897 to mark Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.

Funded by parishioners' subscriptions, these bells replaced an earlier ring of three 16th and 17th century bells which had fallen into disrepair. The heaviest tenor bell weighs in at 684 kg and the lightest treble bell at 292 kg. A fragment of the oldest original bell, bearing the founder's mark from 1616, can still be seen preserved in the tower.

Heritage Open Days: Take a tour to find out more

On 19th and 20th September, the Friends of St John's (FoStJ) will be hosting an open weekend as part of this year's 'National Heritage Open Days Festival'. FoStJ is a local charity that raises funds for special projects connected with the upkeep of this historic Grade II listed church, its churchyard and the War Memorial. This will be a rare opportunity to explore parts of the church not usually open to the public, including the bell tower, and to learn more about the Friends' previously completed and current heritage projects.

Visitors will be able to climb the spiral staircase up to the ringing room for a behind-the-scenes view of the clock, to see how the bells are rung, and to examine a collection of historical items related to bell ringing dating from the late 1890s to the present day. Past ringers at St John's have included rectors, churchwardens - even a bishop – and generations of local villagers. You may even discover that your own Merrow forebears were among them!

Whether your interest is in history, community, or learning the unique traditional art of bell change-ringing, come along to the Heritage Open Days and experience the hidden history of St John's Church. All are welcome.

FROM THE RECTORY

From the Youth Worker's Office – July

July is here, and summer has finally arrived! Well, as much as it ever does in England. Whether we're enjoying sunshine, dodging showers, or doing both in the same afternoon, there's plenty to look forward to in church life this month.

First up is our **Church Fête on Saturday 4th July, from 12:30pm–3:00pm**. This is always one of the highlights of the year and we'd love to see as many people there as possible! Our team of amazing volunteers have been working hard to get everything ready. There will be stalls, games, animals, music, refreshments, and more along with performances from the children of Merrow Infants and Juniors! So, invite your friends, family, and neighbours, and come along for what promises to be a fantastic afternoon!

5th July - 10am All Age Worship in the Rectory Garden (weather permitting). Followed by coffee and biscuits in the garden. Please do bring a blanket and any other refreshments if you wish. There is no need to rush off at the end and we welcome people hanging around, talking and relaxing in the garden after the service.

We're also starting to get excited about our August Holiday Club, **Mission Rescue**, which is taking place in August, where we'll be exploring the story of Moses and his incredible journey with God. Before then, we'll be holding a couple of crafting and preparation days, and we'd love any willing helpers to come along:

- **Thursday 23rd July, 9:30am–1:00pm**
- **Wednesday 29th July, 12:30pm–4:00pm**

No special skills are required—just a willingness to help prepare decorations, activities, and resources as we get ready to welcome lots of children in August.... Oh, and tea, coffee and biscuits provided of course!

Thank you for all the different ways people from our community show support for the life of our church- you are all greatly appreciated! I hope you have a wonderful summer, and I look forward to seeing many of you at the fête, the outdoor service, and our Mission Rescue prep days.

See you soon!

Georgie xx

ST JOHN'S, MERROW PRESENTS



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THE FRIENDS OF ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST (FOSTJ)



The Friends of St John the Evangelist is a registered charity formed by members of the community of Merrow to assist in maintaining and preserving the buildings and grounds of the magnificent Grade II listed Church.

If you would like to help in our endeavours in any way and keep up with our news, please visit www.fostj.org. We would love you to become a member.

Our Parish Magazine front page this month reminds everyone about our **St John's Church Fete, taking place on Saturday 4th July from 12.30pm to 3pm at The Rectory** (just along the road towards the tennis courts from the church centre). This year's fete will be opened by The Very Rev'd Bob Cooper, Dean of Guildford Cathedral. Please do join us for a lovely afternoon out, including BBQ, children's activities, music & dance from Merrow schools, cake stall, book and jigsaw stall, tombola and lots more!!

Thank you very much to Chantries & Pewleys for sponsoring our colour magazine cover again this year, and for sponsoring our Fete.

FORTHCOMING MAGAZINE INFORMATION

Issue	Copy date	Editor	Editor's email address
August	12 th July	Susan Harrington	suzh90@outlook.com
September	16 th August	Cathy Thompson	cathy.thompson@saintjohns.org.uk
October	13 th Sept	Chris Starr	chrisstarr10@btinternet.com

(If you draft your copy in Tahoma, 16 point, on an A4 page, you'll get a good idea of how much space it will take up.)



VIEW FROM THE PEWS

I thought our Gift Sunday service the other day was glorious. What a celebration of time and talents that members of St. John's give to our church. And those brave people who stood up to speak on Gift Sunday just represented everyone who've volunteered a slice of their lives to the cause.

As I listened, my mind started playing a game of hopscotch.

First, a Hop; they all did it (whatever it was) in thanks for the welcome they'd had into the family of God at St. John's. They all said they wanted to give thanks for that welcome and to give something back.

Then a Skip; when Tim described this as "expressing the joy of being given" the talents by God, I thought I heard God saying "Don't waste what I've given you. Use them".

Then a Jump; not many of us can stand on a soap box at the street corner and proclaim God. But our volunteers "doing things" in church are spreading the news of Jesus around the Merrow community just by using the talents God has given them.

My mind continued the game; more Hops, Skips and Jumps.

The Gift Sunday Service can't be the end of it, surely?

Hop; God doesn't issue prizes on Prize Day. Laurels not to be rested on.

Skip; the future beckons and there are talents to be put to use. So what talents have I got which are going rusty?

Jump; the Rector carefully avoided a direct appeal for money. But all our efforts will dry up unless we have the funding. I heard two numbers to react to- a £12,000 operating deficit to cover this year - and £39,000 needed to hit our £150,000 Young People's Ministry Fund target of £150,000.

Hmmm; better see what is in my wallet. I need a coffee after all that mental exercise.



WEDNESDAY COFFEE CLUB

Coffee club is open for business 10.15 every Wednesday as usual till the school holiday when we will close on the 22nd July. To give all the hard working helpers and drivers a rest.

Following the success of our trip to Paddington we thought we would try a couple of informal get togethers over the summer, so we are holding two events:

The Horse & Groom Merrow on the 5th August at 11.30

Edwins the garden centre at Clandon Park on the 26th August, again at 11.30

These are drop ins and anyone is welcome to join me, members and non members there is no need to book just turn up!

Hope to see you there and either way enjoy the Summer,

Gerald Hunt

Should you have any queries, please contact me on my e-mail merrowcoffeemorning@hotmail.com or ring me on 07545256114

FROM THE REGISTERS

Funerals

18th June Margaret Hicks

24th June Joan Westlake

Wedding

6th June Helen Chambers and Michael Eagle

FROM MERROW C OF E INFANT SCHOOL



Dear Friends,

This is probably the busiest time of year in schools – although we may say that every half term. It certainly seems very busy with staff organising lots of exciting activities for the children. In the next few weeks the KS1 children will be going to Milestones Museum in Basingstoke as part of their history studies, the YR children have their final visit this year to Forest School as well as pizza making, Sports Day and the very popular return of Andy Hiccup's magic show to celebrate the end of year.

We are making final preparations for the Summer Fair. We are always so very grateful to the wonderful PTA for all that they do to make the school fairs so much fun as well as profitable. The money they raise each year goes to providing some of those extras that make coming to Merrow special for the children. They support our funding of ICT equipment, outdoor equipment, books for the library as well as paying for events such as Pied Piper theatre company and Andy Hiccup. A highlight of the Fair is watching the Maypole Dancing; our Y2 children have been practising hard with Mrs Baxter and Mrs Newth; we are very grateful for Mrs Newth returning to Merrow each week to continue coaching our troupe of dancers.

Over the next few weeks we welcome the children and families that will be joining us in September in Reception. We have a Teddy Bears Picnic, two stay and play sessions as well as a parent's information evening. We devise the sessions to help the children become familiar with the classroom and staff as well as provide information about expectations and routines for parents. We recognise it is a big step for many families as it is their child's first experience of 'big school' and we like to ensure that we work together to make sure the transition goes smoothly. We are looking forward to seeing many of you at the Parish Fair in July where the Maypole dancers will once again be performing. Many thanks for your continued prayers, particularly as we navigate this Consultation over our future; as you can perhaps appreciate it is a very difficult time for the whole school community and we appreciate your support.

Warm regards, *Emma Hooper*



ST JOHN'S MEN-IN-FELLOWSHIP

Men-in-Fellowship upcoming Events

Your Men-in-Fellowship team has been busy planning events for Summer 2026 and here's a summary of what's coming soon...

- Saturday 18th July - Watercress Line "Real Ale Train" – evening departure from Alton Station – always a popular event / more details to follow.
- Saturday 25th July (8.30am) - Breakfast Meeting with Philip Pratley on a talk entitled "Reflecting Ethics in leadership; inverted or subverted"

Please save the dates and we hope you can join us.

More details will follow, meanwhile contact Robert robertavis@raavis.plus.com or Richard Richard.burtonwood@saintjohns.org.uk if you need more information.



ST JOHN'S WOMEN-IN-FELLOWSHIP

Women in Fellowship upcoming Events

Your Women-in-Fellowship team are busy planning events for 2026 and here is a summary of what you can look forward to...

- Saturday 11th July - 8.30am - Breakfast with talk by Rev'd Margaret Dean – 'Life in a rural parish'
- Saturday 10th October - 8.30am - Breakfast and talk – TBA

If you wish to know more about the Women-In-Fellowship or the events, please contact Carole Burtonwood carole.burtonwood@saintjohns.org.uk or Lindsay Dobson treasurer@saintjohns.org.uk

St John's Men and Women in Fellowship

Tour of Guildford Cathedral

On a gloriously sunny Saturday 30th May, thirteen Men-in-Fellowship and no fewer than twenty-one Women-in-Fellowship assembled for their first officially shared event in the form of a comprehensive tour of Guildford Cathedral. We were split into three groups, led by knowledgeable and interesting guides Liz, Martin and Marion.

Most of us had visited the cathedral many times before but we soon realised that our knowledge of the history of the design and fabric of the building was rather sketchy. We were particularly interested to learn about 'Guildford Blue', a recurring decorative theme throughout the building, with its origins in Guildford's medieval trade in wool and woad. We also learned about the origins of the unique bricks of which the building is constructed.

The Men-in Fellowship group has previously visited cathedrals built in the 11th, 12th and 13th centuries, so this visit to one of just three twentieth century cathedrals (the others being in Coventry and Liverpool) caused us to reflect of the strength of our Christian roots.

Following the tour, the three groups reconvened for a Pilgrim Mass in the Lady Chapel conducted by Rev. Patrick Colem and the morning was rounded off with a convivial buffet lunch in the Seasons Café.

A joint donation from the two groups has been sent to the Cathedral in appreciation of their welcome, personal service and provision of our guides. Thanks are also due to David Mulvey for organising a most interesting and enjoyable trip.

Sally Lingard

A colorful poster for a church fete. The background is light blue with stylized green hills at the bottom. There are several white and orange flowers scattered throughout. A central illustration shows a bonfire with a black pole and colorful streamers (yellow, pink, green) hanging from a green circular top. In the top left, there is a logo for St. John the Evangelist Merrow featuring a cross and a dove. The text is arranged in various fonts and colors, with some elements inside orange cloud-like shapes. At the bottom, there are logos for sponsors: CAP, foodwise, Compassion, and Chanceries & Pewleys.

St. John the Evangelist Merrow

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ST JOHN'S, MERROW

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GARDENING HINTS for JULY

Well we have been lucky enough to recently have had a lot of sunshine to warm the ground up but now we await the rain, gardeners like farmers are never happy.

If you have still not finished planting out your Bedding plants do not worry, they will soon catch up once they are in the soil.

Things to do in the garden in July.

Remove the main stem of Cordon Tomatoes just above the fourth truss, any fruit that forms above this truss is unlikely to ripen before winter sets in.

Spray Potatoes and Tomatoes when it is wet and muggy to reduce the risk of blight damage.

A regular feed of Tomorite will help Tomatoes and Dahlias to produce good fruit and flowers, start feeding Tomatoes as soon as the first fruit starts to form, irregular watering will encourage blossom end rot in Tomatoes.

Continue to make successional sowings of Salad Crops

Regularly pick Courgettes unless you wish the fruit to become Marrows.

French and Runner Beans will become tough and stringy unless they are picked frequently.

Spring Cabbage, Turnip and a final batch of French and Runner Beans should now be sown. Leeks and Winter Brassicas should be planted out this month.

Give Summer Bedding Plants and containerised plants a regular Liquid feed.

Clumps of Bearded Iris should be divided after flowering.

Dead head Bedding Plants to maintain a colourful display and Perennials to obtain a second flush of bloom.

Water containerised Camellias and Rhododendrons well to enable good flowering next year.

Roses should be dead headed after which a feed of rose fertiliser should be applied to help to produce a second flush of bloom, make sure that in hot dry weather Roses and Honeysuckle are kept well watered to reduce the risk of mildew.

Cuttings can now be taken of non flowering shoots of Penstemon, remove lower leaves and insert the cuttings around the edge of a 9cm pot and firm the soil down around each cutting.

Now that the June drop has finished thin out Dessert Apples leaving only one or two fruits every 4-6", Cooking Apples should also be thinned out leaving 1 or 2 fruits every 6-9"

Water Houseplants when the pots feel light and feed once a fortnight.

Control fast growing weeds with a hoe and Slugs and Snails with your own preferred method.

During long dry spells the mower blades should be set at a higher cut, feed the Lawn with a Summer Dressing when rain is forecast.

John Boon

ABOUT OUR CATHEDRAL



As mentioned in my article last month, we will be following the appointment of a new Bishop of Guildford. However, having checked the Diocese website today I advise that, at the moment, all I can report is that the process of choosing a new Bishop is not likely to be completed until the end of Summer 2027.

In the meantime, I would like to write about the organs of Guildford Cathedral.

There are two organs in the Cathedral, the main instrument which occupies two positions on the north side of the building with its console above the south choir stalls, and the instrument in the Musicians' Gallery of the Lady Chapel. Both instruments were installed by the Liverpool firm of Rushworth & Dreaper, the smaller organ originally being intended as a temporary instrument while the main organ was being constructed. Almost fifty years on both instruments continue to do sterling service, the main organ the gift of the Coulthurst Trust and the small organ the gift of a private donor. The greater part of the main organ started its life in Shipley, Yorkshire and was built in approximately 1866 by Nicholson of Bradford. Following some significant upgrades the organ was destined for Guildford in 1960. As May 1961 approached, and with it the proposed consecration of the Cathedral, Rushworth & Dreaper constructed a remarkably complete installation with further improvements a year later. The organ was overhauled and enhanced with significant technical improvements in 1983, 1993 and 1999. From 2015 to 2018 the organ fell silent as the fabric of the Cathedral underwent extensive refurbishment. During this time organ builders worked on restoration cleaning and making good flue and reed pipes.

The Way Through the Woods.

by [Rudyard Kipling](#)

They shut the road through the woods
 Seventy years ago.
Weather and rain have undone it again,
 And now you would never know
There was once a road through the woods
 Before they planted the trees.
It is underneath the coppice and heath,
 And the thin anemones.
 Only the keeper sees
That, where the ring-dove broods,
 And the badgers roll at ease,
There was once a road through the woods.

Yet, if you enter the woods
 Of a summer evening late,
When the night-air cools on the trout-ringed pools
 Where the otter whistles his mate,
(They fear not men in the woods,
 Because they see so few.)
You will hear the beat of a horse's feet,
 And the swish of a skirt in the dew,
 Steadily cantering through
The misty solitudes,
 As though they perfectly knew
 The old lost road through the woods.
But there is no road through the woods.

PARISH MAGAZINE – URGENT REQUEST PLEASE

Could you consider being a 'guest editor' for one magazine per year – any month of your choosing?

We are urgently looking for more people to get involved with producing the Parish Magazine.

The magazine is a focal point for information about St John's activities and makes a healthy profit for church funds. We currently need two additional guest editors.

Guest editors receive a document template with the magazine cover, adverts and regular pages already inserted. They then insert articles from both regular and occasional contributors and are free to add anything of particular interest to them. After proof-reading they send the completed copy to the printers.

Please contact Cathy Thompson (cathy.thompson@saintjohns.org.uk or ring 07518 202920) if you would like more information.

Thank you for considering this.

Answers to the June Quiz: Mad Dogs and Englishmen

1. Mediterranean
2. Australia, Africa
3. Dime
4. Dutch
5. Orange
6. Graffiti
7. South Pacific
8. Apollo XI
9. Nigel Benn
10. Donna
11. Epidural
12. Nicotine
13. Glen Cambell
14. Libra
15. India
16. Sapphire
17. Harmonica
18. Magnum
19. Electron, Neutron, Proton
20. Northern Lights

BONUS ANSWER - MAD DOGS AND ENGLISHMEN

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES!

(in the Centre unless mentioned otherwise)

JULY

Sat 4th July	Church Fete – Rectory Garden 12.30-3pm
Sun 5th July	Parish Picnic – Rectory Garden
Tues 7th July	Green Team 4pm
Sat 11th July	Women-in-Fellowship – Breakfast
Sun 12th July	Baptism Tea Party
Sun 12th July	Sparks 5-11s group – during 10am service in church
Sat 18th July	Men-in-Fellowship – Watercress Line 'Real Ale Train'
Sun 19th July	Inter-Church 4pm in Church
Tues 21st July	Green Team 4pm
Thurs 23rd July	Mission Rescue Holiday Club Prep Session 9.30am – 1pm
Sat 25th July	Men-in-Fellowship – Breakfast
Sun 26th July	Sparks 5-11s group – during 10am service in church
Wed 29th July	Mission Rescue Holiday Club Prep Session 12.30pm – 4pm

WHO'S WHO

Rector	The Revd Tim Clifford Hill (Day off: Friday and Sat am)	951649
Youth & Families Minister	Georgie Gregson (Days off: Friday & Saturday)	07974 494504
Churchwardens	Cathy Thompson	07518 202920
	Michael Eagle	07850 000224
Deputy Churchwarden	Rosemary Stoughton	rosemary.stoughton@saintjohns.org.uk
Verger	Helen Chambers	01483 846574
St Johns Centre Office	9am – 2pm, Mon, Wed and Fri 9.30am – 1pm, Tues and Thurs	01483 454621
- Parish Administrator	Sandra Rayner	office@saintjohns.org.uk
- Centre Manager	Barry Dickinson	centremanager@saintjohns.org.uk

Web site: www.saintjohns.org.uk

Email: office@saintjohns.org.uk

(Acting) PCC Secretary	Tricia Tappin	01483 579193
PCC Treasurer	Lindsay Dobson	07809 836896
Gift Aid, Legacies and Parish Giving Scheme	Martin Thompson	578923
Organist and Choir Director	Micky Clare	538306
Babies and Toddlers Group	Jane Farquharson	07765 620017
Baby Basics	babybasics@saintjohns.org.uk	458128
Bell Ringers	Jane Farquharson	07765 620017
Bible Reading Fellowship	Jenny Welbourn	825541
Cathedral Link	Nick Bond	579462
Children's Society representative	Judith Sampson	571847
Christian Aid Organiser	Natalie Excell	natalie.excell@saintjohns.org.uk
Electoral Roll	Carole Burtonwood	carole.burtonwood@saintjohns.org.uk
Flower coordinator	Helen Chambers	846574
Magazine Advertisements	Alan Thorn	adverts@saintjohns.org.uk
Merrow C of E Infant School	Louisa Dormer (Executive Headteacher)	
	Emma Hooper (Deputy Head)	561501
Church Governors	Helen Chambers	01483 846574
	Lindsay Dobson	07809 836896
Safeguarding Officer	Rosanne Bond	579462
St John's Merrow, Pre-School	Amanda Bazley (Manager)	454625
Diocesan Lay Pastoral Assistant	Helen Chambers	846574
Readings and Intercessions Rota	Joe Bullock	07521 960480
Weekly News Sheet		office@saintjohns.org.uk
Wednesday Coffee Mornings	Gerald Hunt	07545 256114
Transport	Rosanne Bond	579462
Website contact	Parish Office (as above)	

For any changes to Who's Who, please email cathy.thompson@saintjohns.org.uk

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