

## Birthday celebrations for Prayer Bear

On 25<sup>th</sup> February, *Prayers and Bears*, our service for the under 5s, turned one.

It has been a very special year. Children from as young as six weeks up to four and half years old have come along, bringing with them parents, grand-parents, god-parents and carers.

We have sung action songs, listened to and acted out stories, made crafts and said prayers (ending with a long "Aaaaaaaaamen!") Each week we have found Prayer Bear in his basket, gone on treasure hunts and learnt to care for one another. And parents and carers have found it a great place to chat and get to know others over a cup of coffee.

If you care for an under-five on a Wednesday morning, do come and join us!



**Prayers and Bears meets at Earlsdon Methodist Church every Wednesday morning in school term-time from 9.30am-10.00am (free drinks and refreshments are served from 8.45-10.45am).**

## Being Ready

One of the certainties of life for all of us is that one day we will die. Whether we feel that day is far off or drawing closer, it can be a very helpful thing for ourselves, and for those we love, to have given the way we will mark the end of our lives some thought. The most moving, authentic and beautiful funerals I have had the privilege to take have been those where the deceased had thought about and planned their funeral, and passed on their wishes to loved ones. It has also made it easier for the family, knowing that they are doing what their loved one would have wanted.

So here are a few pointers of things you might want to think about:

**Where would you like to have a funeral service?** Did you know that everyone is entitled to a funeral service in their local church? So, if you receive this newsletter, you are almost certainly in St Barbara's Church parish, and so would be entitled to have a funeral at St Barbara's Church. You don't need to be a church-goer or feel you are particularly religious to have a church funeral.

**Who would you like to take the funeral service?** Even if you do not have a service at a church, vicars are still very happy to take a service at the Crematorium or at a green burial ground.

**What music would you like played or sung at the service?** At St Barbara's, we will often play CDs of people's favourite songs at the beginning and end of the service (recent requests have ranged from classical to jazz to pop), and an organist can be available to play favourite hymns if you would like, such as The Lord's My Shepherd and Abide with Me.

**Would you like anyone to speak about you at the funeral?** Church services give space for tributes to be offered or poems to be read or pieces of music to be played. And as the vicar will spend time with your loved ones in preparation for the service, hearing more about you, they too will be able to speak about you too.

Having thought about these things, why not write your thoughts down and pop them in an envelope for safe-keeping. And if you would like to talk to me then please do also get in touch on 024 7501 7889. To find out more, two helpful websites are [www.churchofenglandfunerals.org](http://www.churchofenglandfunerals.org) [www.dyingmatters.org](http://www.dyingmatters.org)



## Contacts

**Vicar** Rev'd Tulo Raistrick  
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The vicar is always ready to help in an emergency but would like to keep Monday as his day off.

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For more information go to  
[www.stbarbarasearlsdon.org.uk](http://www.stbarbarasearlsdon.org.uk)



# St Barbara's Newsletter

[www.stbarbarasearlsdon.org.uk](http://www.stbarbarasearlsdon.org.uk)

St Barbara's Parish Church, Earlsdon

March/April 2016

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## Join us for Easter

There are many ways that you can join us for services over the lead-up to, and the celebration of, Easter this year: Do join us for one or more of our **main services** during Holy Week:

**Palm Sunday** (20<sup>th</sup> March; 10.00am)– join us as we re-live Jesus' entry into Jerusalem as we process around the church

**\*Buzz at St B's Easter Special** (20<sup>th</sup> March; 5pm- 5.45pm) – join us as we literally walk through the Easter story, going to different parts of the church and garden to imagine and re-live the events of Easter, through drama and music. It is a special way to introduce children to the Easter story. We finish with sandwiches, cakes and tea.

**Maundy Thursday** (24<sup>th</sup> March; 7.30pm) – an intimate and beautiful service as we share communion and reflect on the events of the Last Supper through music and words

**\*Good Friday Workshops** (25<sup>th</sup> March; 1-2pm) – join us to explore the significance of Good Friday through a range of craft and reflective activities for children and young families.

**Good Friday Service of the Cross** (25<sup>th</sup> March; 2.00pm) – a quiet and moving service as we remember afresh the suffering and death of Christ. (Further supervised activities will be provided for children following on from the workshops for those adults who wish to stay for this service)

**\*Easter Sunrise Service** (27<sup>th</sup> March; 6.00am) – an unforgettable way to start Easter with a bonfire, candles and the welcoming of the dawn, and with a hearty breakfast for all afterwards. This service, which mixes ancient liturgy, inspiring readings, visual wonder and joyful celebration, is for many, young and old, the most memorable service of the year.

**\*Easter Sunday Service** (27<sup>th</sup> March; 10am) – a wonderful, uplifting service as we celebrate the resurrection of Christ and the new life he brings

Those services marked with an (\*) are particularly suitable for **children and young families**.





## Drawing the curtains

What memories of Easter do you have as a child?

I remember sitting inside the house, curtains drawn, in high expectation as my mum or dad disappeared into the garden for a few minutes. I knew they would be hiding eggs – but where? And how many? And how big would they be?

Then, at the allotted time, I burst outside, tearing round the garden, basket in hand searching. I would find eggs under bushes, next to our garden gnomes, peeping out from under flower pots. Our baskets would mysteriously empty and then a few moments later we would discover yet more eggs in places we were sure we had checked before. There seemed to be an endless number of them, from the shiny papered little chocolate eggs, to the onion dyed mottled brown hen eggs.

It was a morning of expectancy, then high excitement, followed by the essential chocolate gorging session.

But a strange thing has happened in recent times. The chocolate-gorging nature of Easter seems to be getting

earlier. No sooner has Christmas finished and the shops are filling up with Easter eggs and chocolate bunnies. Everyone is so keen to get to the next celebration, we want to miss out the time of waiting and preparation in-between.

But the weeks leading up to Easter are exactly that - a time of waiting and preparation. Not unlike the darkened, curtain-drawn living room of my childhood, it's a time when we hold ourselves back from getting to the celebration of Easter too early. In fact if we get to Easter too soon, if we jump out into the garden whilst the eggs are still being hid, some of the joy is lost.

But if we hold ourselves back, if we reflect in particular on the dark events of Jesus' suffering and death that are the precursor to Easter, the joy, indeed the surprise, of Easter Sunday is all the greater. For if Easter Sunday proclaims that Jesus is God, Good Friday tells us the remarkable extent that God loves his world, that he should be willing to die for us.

## A Big Thankyou

Over the last year, St Barbara's has given over £7,500 to charities, through the generous commitment of all those who come to our services.

We have been able to support the work of Carriers of Hope, who do a fantastic work in supporting refugees and asylum seekers living in Coventry, many of whom are destitute and without adequate food or housing. We have also supported Coventry City Mission, the Coventry Night Shelter and other local churches as they work alongside those suffering during this time of austerity.

Further afield, it has been a real privilege to support the work of CORD, an international aid charity based here in Coventry, in their work of providing water to poor communities in Africa, and in helping the Nurses on Motorbikes initiative in Tanzania.

And over recent months, we have built links with Coventry Cathedral's Community of the Cross of Nails, that is pioneering peace and reconciliation work in many of the most troubled parts of the world. Indeed, a recent gift from the church is enabling a member of the Cathedral team to provide training and support to the church in Burundi, as it seeks to address the growing ethnic tensions there.

So a big thank you to all of you who have attended services in recent months and helped us in sharing with others.



## WHAT'S ON AT ST BARBARA'S

### Every Sunday

#### 8.00am Holy Communion

This is a quiet, meditative service which takes place in the beautiful side-chapel inside St Barbara's Church. The service lasts about 40 minutes and is attended by between 10-15 people each week.

#### 10.00am Parish Communion

This is our main Sunday service, lasting just over an hour, attended by adults and children of all ages. We sing hymns and modern songs, led by an excellent choir, there is a thought-provoking talk, and time for prayer.

It is attended by about 100 people each week and children are especially welcome. We have groups that cater for pre-school, primary and secondary school ages, that meet during the service.

### Mid-week Service

**Holy Communion:** Every Wednesday at **11.30am**

This is a small, intimate communion service that follows the Book of Common Prayer. It provides a space of quiet and stillness in the middle of the week to pray and reflect, and receive communion.

**Prayers and Bears:** Every Wednesday in term time at **9.30am** at Earlsdon Methodist Church. A service for the under-fives and their parents/carers, followed by snacks and crafts

### Every Month

**All Age Service** 10am 6th March

10am 10th April

10am 8th May

An informal 50 minute service with drama and music, ideal for all ages

**Buzz @ St B's:** 20th March 5pm

17th April 5pm

15th May 5pm

This is a fun, creative and interactive service for families. The service involves lively songs, craft, drama and other activities. It lasts 40 minutes and is followed by tea, with a delicious range of sandwiches and cakes.

### Special Services

**Soul Space** 13th March 6.30pm

10th April 6.30pm

8th May 6.30pm

A simple 40 minute service of silence, meditation, prayer and reflection, allowing one's soul to breathe.

**6th March 10am -**

**Mothering Sunday Service**; a special all age service as we take the opportunity to give thanks for our mothers, whether old or young

**20th March 10am - Palm Sunday**

**24th March 7.30pm—Maundy Thursday Service**

**25th March 2pm - Good Friday Service** (children's workshops at 1pm)

**27th March 6am & 10am - Easter Sunday Services** (please note no 8am communion on Easter Day)

**1st May 6.30pm—Choral Evensong**

A beautiful service of readings & prayer set to music led by our excellent choir.

### Other Events

#### Friendship Group

This has merged with the Earlsdon Methodist Group which meets every fortnight in Wellspring at 2.15pm

**16th March 1951: A very long year** (Ilse Wilson)

**30th March The Dog's Trust** (Jane Hiron)

**13th April My life in academia** (Ian Leitch)

**27th April My Travels** (Victor Keene)

#### Social Events

**Film nights** - 7pm for 7.15pm in the church hall, on the first Thursday of the month.

April 7th The theory of Everything.

May 5th Annie.

### From the Registers

#### Funerals

**22nd December Lesley** (Richard Aldridge)

**25th January Cora** Savage

**4th February Gladys** Caser

### Churches Together in Earlsdon & Chapelfields

**Prayer Breakfasts** Saturdays 8am

**6th March Earlsdon Methodist**

**2nd April St Barbara's**

**7th May All Souls**

**Lent Lunches** Tuesdays 12noon—1.30pm

**1st March St Barbara's**

**8th March Earlsdon Methodist**

**15th March All Souls**

### Would you like prayer for someone or for yourself?

Feel free to e-mail Christine on cob27@mac.com or telephone the vicar on 024 7501 7889 . Prayers could be said at the Wednesday or Sunday services as well as being added to the prayer chain that can be confidential if desired.

