



ST BARBARA'S PARISH CHURCH EARLSDON // ISSUE NO.484 // SPRING 2025

ST BARBARA'S NEWSLETTER

stbarbaras.com



A Whale of a Time with Open the Book

A whale recently stopped the traffic in Earlsdon. The previous week, it was an outsized shield and spear.

They were props crossing the Albany Road pedestrian crossing on their way to Earlsdon Primary School for an *Open the Book* Bible storytelling assembly. A team from several local churches, including St. Barbara's, has the great privilege of going into the school each week to act out a well-known story from the Bible, such as the tale of Jonah, or David and Goliath (pictured).



Using a prepared script, short reflection and prayer from the Bible Society's *Open the Book* resources, the assemblies are very popular with the year 1 and 2 pupils. Faces light up as they see us rehearsing, and there are plenty of opportunities in the assembly itself for the children to join in, which they do with great enthusiasm, playing characters in the stories or responding to the drama unfolding on 'stage'.

The team thoroughly enjoys this weekly opportunity to bring the Bible to life, and tell the unfolding story of God's love in an accessible, fun way.

'Being church' around the parish

What pops into your mind when you hear the word 'church'? Chances are it's a particular building, or maybe the people who meet there Sunday by Sunday. But actually, church happens whenever and wherever people come together to worship God and learn how to become more like Jesus.

'Church' happens in several of our parish's care homes and a retirement housing complex. Faithful members of our congregation visit Belvedere Park Nursing Home, St. Andrew's House and Beechwood Gardens care homes and Aylesdene Court retirement complex to lead services. Typically, these include a Bible reading, a short talk, hymns and prayers, and time to chat to residents afterwards over refreshments. Additionally, St Barbara's choir and friends visit some of the residences to sing carols at Christmas, which is always much appreciated.

Staff and residents are always helpful and welcoming. A good number of residents attend services, and Aylesdene Court residents are actively involved in running the services with us, which are growing in popularity. In addition, Herald Lodge watch St Barbara's services online. It's a privilege for St. Barbara's to 'be church' in these places across the parish where we meet Jesus in the lives of residents and staff.

Thought for the Season: 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 and 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 small 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.

So maybe this year you may want to draw those metaphorical curtains, and think again about Jesus' death on the cross, so that, come Easter Sunday, you can burst out into the garden, ready to be surprised and overjoyed again.

Rev Tulo Raistrick

Why not visit stbarbarasearlsdon/talks to read more reflections on faith and life?



Quiz time!

We are holding our next Quiz Night on Saturday 17 May 2025.

The quiz is a fun evening and all the family are very welcome. It will take place in St Barbara's church hall, with a break in the middle for fish and chips (alternatives available, including vegetarian options). Tickets (to cover the cost of the meal) are £7 per person or £5.50 for children and should be booked in advance.

Please arrive by 6.15 ready for a prompt start at 6.30. Either come with a team of up to six or join one when you arrive. For

more information, or to book tickets, contact Ian Leitch on 024 7667 7683 or at ianleitch094@gmail.com.



Church Services

Every Sunday

8.00am Holy Communion - a quiet, simple service.

10.00am Parish Communion - hymns, choir, Sunday school (*also livestreamed at stbarbaras.com*)

Every Wednesday

9.30am Prayers and Bears - songs, treasure hunts & prayers for the under-5s (at Earlsdon Methodist Church)

11.30am Holy Communion - a pause for prayer and reflection in the middle of the week

Once a month

(16th March, 13th April, 18th May & 15th June)

5.00pm Buzz at St B's for Young Families - crafts, drama, songs and tea

Special Events and Services

Mon 5th May 11am-4pm - **May Day Earlsdon Festival and Church Fete**

Sun 11th May 11.30am - **St Barbara's Church's Annual General Meeting**

Sat 17th May 6.30pm - **Quiz Night and Fish and Chip Supper** (see p2)

Sun 8th June 11.30am - **Games, sports & barbecue**

Holy Week & Easter Services

Palm Sunday Service (13th April, 10.00am) - a service remembering Jesus' entry into Jerusalem the week before he dies

Buzz at St B's Craft Workshop & Easter Service (13th April, 4pm-5.30pm) – a wonderful service for young families, we begin with fun Easter-themed craft activities, followed by a unique re-telling of the Easter story, as we walk to different parts of the church building and garden, to imagine and re-live the events of Easter, and finishing with sandwiches, cake, hot cross buns and tea.

Holy Week Compline (Monday 14th, Tuesday 15th, Wednesday 16th April, 7.30pm each day) - A short, meditative service, following in the footsteps of Christian communities throughout the centuries, reflecting on the events of the last week of Jesus' life.

Maundy Thursday Communion Service (17th April, 7.30pm) – A service of choral music, reflection and symbolism as we remember the events of the Last Supper.

Good Friday Service of the Cross (18th April, 2.00pm) – A quiet and moving service as we remember afresh the suffering and death of Christ.

Easter Sunrise Service (20th April, 5.30am) – an unforgettable way to start Easter with a bonfire, candles and the welcoming of the dawn, and with a hearty breakfast for all afterwards. (Note that this replaces our usual 8am service).

Easter Sunday Service (20th April; 10.00am) – a wonderful, uplifting service as we celebrate the resurrection of Christ and the new life he brings, followed by an Easter bonnet parade.

Would you like prayer for someone or for yourself? Feel free to email Christine on prayerchstb@gmail.com or telephone the vicar on 07869 603216. Prayers can be said in church services or confidentially—just let us know.



People of the Parish - Louise Moore

What does St Barbara's mean to you?

I started worshipping at St Barbara's on the 18th Sunday after Trinity in October 1981. I was 11 years old and curious/worried about the meaning of life? (I was a fun child too!) So I started coming every week to St Barbara's, sat at the back on my own and loved the whole Sunday Service (sermons, worship, seasons and rituals). I was confirmed at St Barbara's in October 1984. Apart from time away at University it has been my spiritual home ever since. Every part of my life has been lived through it, my wedding, children's christenings and my parents' funerals. I've spent happy moments watching my children in the 'legendary' 5pm Christmas Eve nativity and I've spent time praying during what feels like hopeless times.

What do you like about St Barbara's?

The range of services we offer, from joyous celebrations to more peaceful reflective services. My favourite service is Easter sunrise, for me it emphasises all it means to be a Christian in just one hour (at 5:30am!). The support you get, not just from Tulo but the whole church family. I also like that St Barbara's is part of the community within Earlsdon.

What else do you do outside of church?

I work at Grace Academy as a teacher. I enjoy being in the outdoors, cycling, walking or gardening and I love spending time with family and friends which usually involves eating too.

Christians Against Poverty (CAP)

CAP is an organisation that primarily helps people who find themselves in debt. The service is completely free and starts with a person contacting one of the debt centres in the UK. They will then be put in touch with a debt coach who arranges to meet them.

When this first meeting takes place, a volunteer (often called a befriender) will accompany the debt coach. At St Barbara's, we have two such volunteers - Bodunrin Fabunmi and myself, Keith Wright. The debt coach and volunteer arrive early to pray together before we meet the client. We always ask the client if we can pray with them - some will be happy to do so and others not. Although the service is offered by a Christian organisation, it is open to anyone. At this first meeting, the whole process is explained to the client.

The debt coach I have accompanied is very professional but also unfailingly polite, friendly, positive and patient, giving as much time as is necessary. By the time of the third and (usually) final meeting, the professional financial advisors will have seen all the paperwork and come up with a debt management CAP plan or, if that is not appropriate, advise on insolvency options.

It is a privilege to be a small part of this process and know that we are helping someone in need and showing God's love in a very practical way. At a get together last year for volunteers we heard personal testimony from someone who became debt-free. She was so grateful for the befriender who was there for her when she was following her CAP plan and when she just needed someone to support her and to be there for her. St. Barbara's and many other local churches support CAP with regular donations via Hope Coventry. The Hope Coventry website <https://hopecoventry.org.uk/cap/> has lots more information about the many other ways that CAP help people with money worries.

Keith Wright



CONTACTS

Vicar: Rev'd Tulo Raistrick

07869 603216

tulo@raistricks.com

Hall Bookings:

Elaine Parnell 024 7671 5583

stbarbarashallbookings@outlook.com