



Services today:

8am	Holy Communion BCP (CC)
9.30am	Sung Eucharist with Junior Church (CC & Halls)
9.45am	Nursery Church (Halls)
11am	Morning Prayer CW (STM)
5.30pm	A Place (CC Vestry)
6.30pm	Healing Service (CC)

Eucharist Readings & Hymns:

Psalm 24. 7-end
Hebrews 2. 14-end
Luke 2. 22-40

394 Tell out, my soul
702 Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us
396 Faithful vigil ended
719 Shine, Jesus, Shine

The Collect for the Week:

Almighty and ever-living God, clothed in majesty, whose beloved Son was this day presented in the Temple, in substance of our flesh: grant that we may be presented to you with pure and clean hearts, by your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Prayers:

Those who are in need of prayer: Kay Kingham, Molly Liok, Richard Coy, Janet Plastow, Andrew Bass, Liz Hickson, Jackie Wilkins, Jane Heath

RIP: Wendy, Charles Rumsey, Terry Gadd, Julie Black, Sophia Goldman

Year's Mind: Robert Edwards (1st, 00); Leslie Baptist (2nd, 81); Edwin Wallis (6th, 90)

Wanstead Prayer Diary: The Green Café, Evergreen Surgery, Wanstead Osteopaths, Wanstead Village Dental and Health centre, Public Sector Recruitment, New Wanstead Road, Homesdale Retirement Homes, Trent Court, Selworthy Close, Weavers' House (Almshouses and retirement), Our Lady of Our Lourdes Primary School, Cambridge Road, Spratt Hall Road, Greenstone Mews, Voluntary Place

NOTICES

A PLACE: A group for spiritual wellbeing - meets in the Vestry at Christ Church at 5.30pm **today – Sunday 1st February** - All welcome.

THIS YEAR'S LENT COURSE: focuses on the Gospel of John. Our chosen book, 'Finding God in John' (£10.99 SPCK) is written by David Ford, formerly Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge University. Don't worry though - it's not a complex religious textbook! Instead, Professor Ford has written an accessible book that helps us to explore who John says Jesus really was. **Sunday evenings, starting 22nd Feb for five sessions: 7.30pm-9pm in Christ Church Vestry** (you're welcome to bring along some wine or other refreshments!) **Thursday mornings, starting 19th Feb for five sessions: 11.45-1pm in Christ Church Vestry**

READ THE WHOLE OF JOHN'S GOSPEL through with us on **Shrove Tuesday evening** (pancakes will be provided!) **The Rectory, 6.30pm onwards, Tues 17th Feb.**
Sign-up sheets in both churches for both the Gospel reading and the Lent course.

PERGOLESI STABAT MATER, GOOD FRIDAY 3RD APRIL, 12 NOON, ST MARY'S:

We are inviting singers from our area to join the Parish Choir for this performance as part of our Good Friday Liturgy. There will be 4 rehearsals from 7-9pm at St Mary's on the following dates: Feb 19th, March 5th, March 19th & March 31st. (We ask people to commit to at least 3 rehearsals.) To sign up for more details, please contact Alison Wells: wansteadparishchoir@gmail.com

RECRUITING BUDDIES AND MORE WELCOMERS AT 9.30: After our Welcome-themed service in October last year, we promised to set up a Buddy system to help support and welcome newcomers at our 9.30 service in Christ Church. We are now recruiting people willing to be buddies or to augment our welcomer team. If you might be interested, please look out for the leaflet giving more information about this (at the door and on the side near the welcome noticeboard) to learn more; and sign up on the sheet (also on the side near the welcome board). Signing up does not commit you to anything except to explore with us what the roles might look like. You can make a decision after that. If you want to discuss further, you can email me at ehorwell@hotmail.com or phone me on 077930 36805. If you want us to be the best welcome we can be, then I encourage you to sign up!
Revd Liz 😊

WALSINGHAM PILGRIMAGE: The annual pilgrimage to Walsingham will take place on 17th-19th July 2026 and we have a limited number of places available to offer. The cost of the weekend is £209.78 per person on a full-board basis. A non-refundable deposit of £40 is payable when reserving a place and the final balance payment is due by the end of June. Please contact the Parish Office to book a place or for further details.

EXPLORING THE BASICS: If you are new to the church and would like to learn more about the faith, please speak to Fr Charles or contact him by email: chbrown1816@gmail.com

HOME AND HOSPITAL VISITS: Please let the Parish Office know if you would appreciate a visit by a member of the clergy, or if you know of someone who would. Mthr Anne can offer one-off visits for prayer and discussion (perhaps concerning a specific issue), in addition to on-going visits in the case of the elderly, sick and housebound.

SAFEGUARDING: For safeguarding concerns please contact Avril Carnelley on 07905 764343 or at wansteadparishsafeguarding@gmail.com. In an emergency, contact the relevant authority such as the Police.

A reflection on this week's readings:

From the readings for Sunday 1st February

Hebrews 2:14-18

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage... Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

AV (King James Bible)

Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage... Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people. For because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted.

RSV

Since the children are made of flesh and blood, it's logical that the Savior took on flesh and blood in order to rescue them by his death. By embracing death, taking it into himself, he destroyed the Devil's hold on death and freed all who cower through life, scared to death of death... That's why he had to enter into every detail of human life. Then, when he came before God as high priest to get rid of the people's sins, he would have already experienced it all himself—all the pain, all the testing—and would be able to help where help was needed.

The Message

In today's gospel reading, Simeon prophesies that Jesus will be "the glory of Israel" but also "destined for the falling and rising of many in Israel and a sign that will be opposed". Hebrews takes us into the middle of this world. In some ways it's the most mysterious book in the NT, long attributed to St Paul, but few people accept that now. It's not even a letter, more like a sermon or perhaps a meditation on the divine and human nature of Jesus, and the nature of his saving mission for us. It's addressed to Jewish Christians who may be wavering in their faith and tempted back to mainstream Judaism, and in places it takes the form of a *midrash*, a commentary on texts from the OT to bring out their (Christian) significance. But it's not dry or pedantic; it's a powerful and eloquent defence of Christianity as the fulfilment of key elements of Judaism. It's written – probably no later than the 60s AD as it refers to the Temple rituals in the present tense – in an elegant literary Greek style (said to be the best in the entire NT), which suggests that the intended audience is sophisticated Jewish Christians around the Roman world rather than the communities in Palestine.

In the Temple ritual at Yom Kippur there was a blood sacrifice (of a goat) for the expiation of sins. Hebrews picks up on this idea, arguing that Jesus is both the true High Priest (in the order of Melchizedek, the priest-king of Jerusalem who meets Abraham with bread and wine in Genesis 14, so outranking the Temple priests – the image of Jesus as High Priest is only found in Hebrews) but also the sacrificial victim who is killed in atonement for our sins. Hebrews combines a very high vision of Jesus (pre-existent before all creation, involved in the creation of the world) with an insistence, as we see here, on his full humanity, including being subject not only to the weaknesses of the flesh, but also to real temptation. He does not sin (Hebrews insists on this in 4:15) but unless the temptations are real, he couldn't represent our fallen humanity.

The climax (though not the conclusion) of Hebrews is 10:19-23: "We have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain (that is, through his flesh), and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful." Lord, may we share the confidence that the writer of Hebrews is encouraging his (or her) readers to show.

REGULAR WEEKLY EVENTS:

Tuesdays:	9am	Morning Prayer (CC)
	10.30am	Prayer Group (CC)
Wednesdays:	9am	Morning Prayer (CC)
	8pm	Compline (St M's)
Thursdays:	9.45am	Morning Prayer (CC)
	10.30am	Holy Communion, coffee and chat (CC)
Fridays:	9am	Morning Prayer (St M's)
	10.30am	Forget-Me-Nots Choir (St M's)
	7pm	The Bridge Youth Club (Parish Halls) <i>Term time only</i>
	7pm	Parish Choir Practice (CC Vestry)

Bereavement Cafe: For all who have lost a loved one. Meets in CC vestry, 10.30 - 11.30am on the **third Tuesday** of the month.

A Place: A group for spiritual wellbeing. We warmly welcome you to join us in the Vestry at Christ Church at 5.30pm on the **first Sunday** of each month.

LOOKING AHEAD:

Sunday 8th February – Sexagesima

8am	Holy Communion BCP (CC)
9.30am	Sung Eucharist with Junior Church (CC & Halls)
9.45am	Nursery Church (Halls)
11am	Sung Eucharist (STM)
6.30pm	Choral Evensong (CC)

PARISH OF WANSTEAD:

Rector: Revd James Gilder
jbgilder@hotmail.com / 07729 109638
(Day off: Mondays)

Assoc. Priest: Revd Charles Brown
(Works: Thurs, Fri, Sun)

Curate: Revd David Lappano

Assistant Priests:

Revd Olive Thursby (High Street Chaplain)

Revd Richard Wyber

Revd Chris Mackenna

Revd Anne Mackenna (Parish Deacon)

Revd Liz Horwell

Parish Office: 020 8530 8743

office@parishofwanstead.org

Tue-Thurs 9am-1pm

GIVING:

It costs £4,000 per week to keep our parish running. Please consider making a regular donation.

Online: www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/wanstead-london/

Phone: 0333 002 1260

Parish code: 080608162

Email: info@parishgiving.org.uk

Parish code: 080608162

Contact Jill Steggle for more details by email:
giving.wanstead@gmail.com