

## Month Ahead- February 2022

Thurs 3 <sup>rd</sup>	10.30am	Communion followed by refreshments
Sat 5 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am	Coffee and Chat- Church Servery
Sun 6 <sup>th</sup>	8.00am	Communion
4 <sup>th</sup> before Lent	10.00am	Communion followed by refreshments
	7.30pm	Poetry and Prayer
Mon 7 <sup>th</sup>	7.15pm	SPH Youth Group- The Transformation of Jesus
Tues 8 <sup>th</sup>	2.00pm	Mothers' Union – Speaker Val Jeal Bristol's first lady to receive Freedom of the City of Bristol
Thurs 10 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Communion followed by refreshments
Sat 12 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am 1.30pm-9.30pm	Coffee and Chat- Church Servery Westbury Park Orchestra- Rehearsal & Concert
Sun 13 <sup>th</sup>	8.00am	Communion
3 <sup>rd</sup> before Lent	10.00am	Communion followed by refreshments
	7.30pm	Julian Meeting
Mon 14 <sup>th</sup>	7.15pm	SPH Youth Group – Out and About Social
Wed 16 <sup>th</sup>	2.15pm	Ladies Guild Meeting – Jane Thomas 'My Life in Education'
Thurs 17 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Communion followed by refreshments
Fri 18 <sup>th</sup>	12.00pm	Thanksgiving Service for John Griffin
Sat 19 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am	Coffee and Chat- Church Servery
Sun 20 <sup>th</sup>	8.00am	Communion
2 <sup>nd</sup> before Lent	10.00am	Communion with Healing Prayer
	7.30pm	Taizé Service
Thurs 24 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Communion followed by refreshments
Sat 26 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am	Coffee and Chat- Church Servery
Sun 27 <sup>th</sup>	8.00am	Communion
Sunday before Lent	10.00am	Communion followed by refreshments
	7.30pm	Iona Evening Prayer and Meditation
Mon 28 <sup>th</sup>	2.00pm	Home Instead Film Club in Hall showing 'Red Joan'

Further information is available [www.stpetershenleaze.org](http://www.stpetershenleaze.org) or from the Parish Office Tues, Wed & Fri 9.00am-12.00pm tel 0117 962 4524

NewsLink



February 2022

### SUNDAY EVENINGS at St. Peter's – OUR CONTEMPLATIVE SERVICES

#### *What do we do on Sunday evenings? What IS a contemplative service?*

The short answer to these questions is that on Sunday evenings at 7.30 there is a chance to come together - currently on Zoom- to share a simple service of prayer, readings and sometimes music and thoughtful talk. Over the course of each month of four, or sometimes five Sundays, the services each have a slightly different form, but reflection and a simple and graceful liturgy are common to them all. It's a chance to take time to be quietly focused, to think and to feel and to share those thoughts and feelings – or not - with a small group of people. If that sounds like some kind of counselling session, I can promise you it isn't!! We are always focused on some aspect of faith, not on heart searching!

#### *This is how it goes:*

**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday is Poetry and Prayer** Many people say to me something like “ I don't really *get* poetry” or “I don't really *do* poetry” perhaps remembering rather deadly sessions of reading round the class at school or being asked to *respond* to a collection of words that doesn't really mean much to them. As teenagers our minds are usually on something else, whatever we are doing, and poetry just seems a fancy way of stating the obvious. What delights me though is how that changes with time and experience and this has been true of our Sunday evening poetry reading and discussions. We are lucky that so many of the greatest poets writing in English over the centuries have had a rich spiritual life and explored it in their work. We discover that what they say isn't just 'fancy' but opens up our own spiritual questions and experiences in ways that surprise and satisfy us. Sometimes we are so engrossed in sharing responses and ideas arising from the poem of the month that Mark has to call time in order to complete the service within the hour we usually spend. We have read poems by Wordsworth, Milton, T.S.Eliot, R.S. Thomas, George Herbert, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Christina Rossetti, Walter de la Mare and contemporaries like Malcolm Guite, Luci Shaw and Jay Hulme – to name a few! The service is a simple Compline with its peaceful evocation of evening and the coming of night, the poem and discussion give us something rich to take away and ponder.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday is a Julian Meeting.** We have just started holding this form of service and it feels like a tiny retreat, at the heart of which is time clearly set aside for reflective silence. How often do we promise ourselves to stand still and clear our minds for quietness? How often do we seek for, or use, silence in our lives in a positive way? The Julian meeting prepares us for creative silence with meditative music and a reading and gives us the gift of 20 minutes(!) silence to slip away and focus inwards, undisturbed. The thoughtful conversation that happens when that is complete can be ordinary or special, but follows a precious time of inner life.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday is a Taizé service.** The beautiful songs that come from the Taizé monastery in France are now widely used as basis for simple, contemplative worship all over the world. The uncomplicated, haunting melodies and words of each song are repeated unbroken six or more times, earning them the alternative name of ‘chants’. Repeating something as simple and beautiful as these musical breaths of worship can have a deeply calming and inspiring effect. We listen to a lovely recording and sing along if we wish – at home and muted, being on Zoom!

**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday is an Iona Evening Prayer and Meditation.** The Iona liturgy for this service has a beautiful clarity which seems to connect us to faith and worship down the ages. We are led by the Rev Hazel Trapnell from St. Mary’s Stoke Bishop, who also guides us through a meditation she has prepared, thought by thought, on a reading from the Bible, often a psalm. She often precedes it with music, following it with a poem. We don’t necessarily discuss, we follow and explore in our own minds and hearts, and we learn more about the meaning of what may be familiar or surprisingly new.

**5<sup>th</sup> Sunday -when there is one – Faith and Film.** Yes, what a great idea. This is a recent addition to Sunday evenings and we have seen films from some of the movie Greats like Clint Eastwood in his own ‘Gran Torino’ – shocking and immediately thought provoking! – as well as the more introspective talent of Ingmar Bergman. Respectful Bible stories these are not! Lively talk follows, needless to say – a staple feature of our Sunday nights at St.Peter’s .....do come and join us.

*Lindsey Traub*

## **Mother Julian of Norwich (1343-1416)**

The way we often pray came into my mind and how, through lack of knowing and understanding of the ways of love, we make use of petitions.

Then I saw truly that it gives more praise to God and more delight if we pray steadfast in love, trusting his goodness, clinging to him by grace, than if we ask for everything our thoughts can name.

All our petitions fall short of God and are too small to be worthy of him, and his goodness encompasses all that we can think to ask.

The best prayer is to rest in the goodness of God, knowing that that goodness can reach right down to our lowest depths of need.

## **CHRISTIANITY FOR HEATHENS**

**By Jay Hulme**

Love everyone as if everyone is holy,  
As if everyone’s intrinsically worthy,  
As if the streets are strewn with Christ  
taking naps in empty doorways.

Love yourself as if you are loved,  
as if you were never an accident,  
as if everything you were meant to be  
waits for you to claim it.

Love the world as if it were a gift,  
As if you were made as part of it,  
As if you were meant to tend to it –  
Every inch of earth is Holy Ground

Love justice and kindness and truth,  
As if everything depends on it,  
As if everything depends on it.  
Everything depends on it.

You were given a gift and trusted.  
Love it all, love it all,  
Love it always.

Know this, if you know anything at  
all:  
Life is no challenge or test;  
Life is love.

Reflect it back in abundance.