



CANALSIDE NEWS

Sunday 10th January 2021

THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST

Following the introduction of the latest Covid-19 lockdown the Ministry Team and PCC Standing Committees have decided that our worship should now be focused online rather than in church. In this way we can keep everyone as safe as possible. Hopefully the lockdown measures and vaccine programme will mean that soon we will be able to gather together again for worship in church.

This Sunday's service will be a Methodist Morning Worship for the Baptism of Christ led by Eric Clifford with an address by John Rees the link to watch the service online, together with all our other recorded services, is

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCS6_E8D47JK0aDFP89UvBrQ

Coffee and Chat

Now we are back in Lockdown we are re-introducing Coffee and Chat. The first will be this Sunday, with another on Sunday 24th January, both at 11am. The Zoom code for this week is:-

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85364151523> and the phone dial in number is 0203 481 5237 United Kingdom with a meeting ID of 853 6415 1523. Details for 24th will be given nearer the time.



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

IS HERE
FOR YOU

Whatever situation you are in, we are here for you through our local presence and national resources.

We know this is a difficult time for everyone. We hope that we can bring you God's comfort and peace.

Why not pray this short prayer with thousands of others across the world?

**A prayer for all those
affected by coronavirus**

**Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy.
Sustain and support the anxious,
be with those who care for the sick,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may find comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us
from your love.
In Christ Jesus our Lord.
Amen.**

The Collect

Heavenly Father,
at the Jordan you revealed Jesus as your Son:
may we recognise him as our Lord
and know ourselves to be your beloved children;
through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

The First Reading: Acts 19.1-7

19 While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul travelled through the interior regions until he reached Ephesus, on the coast, where he found several believers. ²“Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” he asked them.

“No,” they replied, “we haven’t even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.”

³“Then what baptism did you experience?” he asked.

And they replied, “The baptism of John.”

⁴Paul said, “John’s baptism called for repentance from sin. But John himself told the people to believe in the one who would come later, meaning Jesus.”

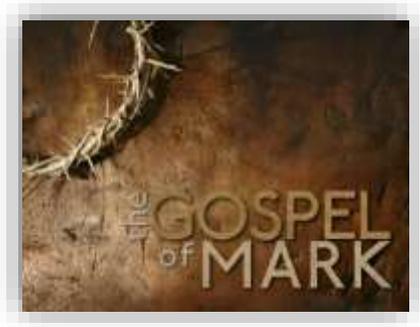
⁵As soon as they heard this, they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶Then when Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in other tongues and prophesied. ⁷There were about twelve men in all.

The Gospel: Mark 1.4-11

⁴The messenger was John the Baptist. He was in the wilderness and preached that people should be baptised to show that they had repented of their sins and turned to God to be forgiven. ⁵All of Judea, including all the people of Jerusalem, went out to see and hear John.

And when they confessed their sins, he baptised them in the Jordan River. ⁶His clothes were woven from coarse camel hair, and he wore a leather belt around his waist. For food he ate locusts and wild honey.

⁷John announced: “Someone is coming soon who is greater than I am—so much greater that I’m not even worthy to stoop down like a slave and untie the straps of his sandals. ⁸I baptise you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit!”



⁹One day Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, and John baptised him in the Jordan River. ¹⁰As Jesus came up out of the water, he saw the heavens splitting apart and the Holy Spirit descending on him like a dove. ¹¹And a voice from heaven said, “You are my dearly loved Son, and you bring me great joy.”

The Post Communion Prayer

Lord of all time and eternity,
you opened the heavens and revealed yourself as Father
in the baptism of Jesus your beloved Son:
by the power of your Spirit
complete the heavenly work of our rebirth
through the waters of the new creation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reflection for the week by John

Our readings today are about Baptism. On this Sunday, at the beginning of a New Year, I have often preached about new starts. However, this year, with the Prime Minister’s announcement earlier this week that we need to enter another lockdown in order to contain

the very worrying increase in Covid-19 infection rates, I suspect that many of us emotionally feel that we have gone backwards to the stress, shock and restriction of the first lockdown. In my view that is totally understandable. Emotionally this year doesn't feel like a positive new beginning. As someone posted on Twitter this week "I've had the 7-day free trial of 2021 and I want to send it back!"

When I met with members of the ministry team and PCC Standing Committees via Zoom earlier this week we were unanimous that, to keep everyone as safe as possible, we need to cease from physically meeting together until the virus is more under control. We strongly regret having to make that decision, but we believe we have no alternative.

Because of this I would like us to reflect on Baptism in a different way. In our C of E Baptism service, we ask candidates, or parents and Godparents of small children, to make declarations about their faith before Baptism takes place. The first of these questions and the response is: -

Do you turn to Christ?

I turn to Christ.

Turning to Christ, placing our fears, concerns and hopes for ourselves, our families, neighbours and friends and our suffering nation and world into His hands is, I believe the most important, healthiest and most hopeful thing we can do. We can do this through worship, prayer and practical action.

Our Baptism service explains why turning to Christ is so important.

God calls us out of darkness into his marvellous light. To follow Christ means dying to sin and rising to new life with Him

It is in turning to Christ we focus on the light of God's love that broke into the world in the person of Jesus rather than the darkness that surrounds us.

The crowds who approached John the Baptist in the wilderness by the river Jordan needed new hope. They needed a new beginning, a new beginning with seeking God at the centre. In being Baptised by John they sought forgiveness not only from wrongdoing but from a past in which they tried to live their lives by relying on their own inner strength, rather than on the power of God. Yet, as John told those who came to him, the Baptism they received from him was just the beginning. John pointed them to the coming of Jesus, through whom they would receive Baptism of the Holy Spirit, and through whom they would be filled with a new revelation of God's loving presence and power.

Paul, at the start of his third missionary journey, invited those who he met in Ephesus who had been Baptised by John as a sign of repentance from their past to be Baptised in Jesus' name, as a sign of their belief in him as Son of God- and as a sign of their commitment to being his followers, his disciples. On receiving this Baptism, they were filled with the Holy Spirit, and had a new awareness of God's loving presence and power as had had been promised by John. In their cases they were empowered to prophesy and speak in tongues. Some people, on being Baptised, receive those gifts today; others – as Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 12 – are given different gifts. We are all given unique gifts, gifts to be a blessing for us and gifts to be used for the benefit of others.

Too often, as followers of Jesus, many of us live as if we have received John's Baptism rather than really appreciating that we have been Baptised in Jesus' name. We are not always confident of the depth of God's love for us or of his power to transform our lives. We feel inadequate and unsure, rather than hope filled.

When God spoke from Heaven after Jesus had been Baptised by John, saying *“You are my dearly loved Son, and you bring me great joy,”* He was announcing, as the heavens opened, not a one off event but that the invisible curtain between Heaven and Earth was being removed; a new awareness of the reality that God’s loving presence is everywhere had come into the world through Jesus. God’s words to Jesus *“you are dearly loved”* are his words to us, too. Do dwell on them, and let them sink into the depths of your being.

When we follow the examples of the shepherds and Wise Men and look for signs of God’s presence, when we, like them, search Jesus out, we will be given the strength to endure the difficult days ahead. And amazingly, just as John the Baptist pointed others to the hope we have in Jesus, we can do this too. This doesn’t have to be through dramatic actions; it can be through an encouraging word, a prayer for those on the front line in our NHS and schools, a prayer for those seeking to uphold democracy in the USA, and (hopefully before long) through a smile and a “thank you” to a hard pressed nurse administering our vaccine; all these can be signs of hope to others. It can give them the strength to keep going, too.

Private Prayer during Lockdown

Although our churches are generally closed at the moment St Michael’s will continue to be open for private prayer each Thursday from 10am until Noon.

If you would like to visit any of our churches at other times for a period of private prayer please let Michael know and we will do our best to arrange that for you.



Support during Lockdown

If you need support or are aware of others who may need support, please contact one of our Churchwardens, John, Joy or Michael. Similarly let us know if you are able to offer shopping or other help – and thank you to those who have already offered this. If you would like someone to pray with you or for you, or if you would like to speak with someone, please do not hesitate to contact John or Joy.

Prayer Requests

It is important that we pray for all those who seek our support, especially at this time. Please let Michael know of anyone who particularly needs our prayers. Do ensure that you have their permission.

This week we pray for...

Andree Cradock

Ann

Baby Christian &
Family

Barbara & David

Barbara

Humphries

Mary Humphries

Barry & Brian

Brigit Hall

Celia & Colin

Jackson

Collette and Shin

Miyagawa

David Franklin
Deanna and Family

Doreen

Dylan & Family

Edna Matthews

Elizabeth

(Anne's sister)

Emelia

Hannah & Ash

Jacqui Fudge

James Vincent

Lilly & Phil

Michael & Clem

Mike Aldridge

Ottie

Pat & Stan Thompson

Pauline Burbage

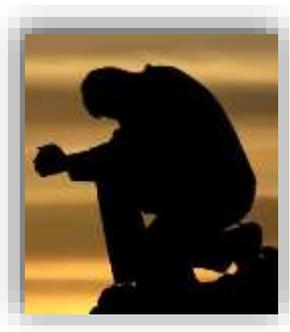
Phyl Brown

Rob Dewsbury

Rosa Light

Sheila Farthing

Sophia & Family



- Please continue to pray for Muriel Forsey and her family as they prepare for Roy's funeral later this month.
- Please continue to pray for all those who mourn but particularly we remember the families of Ken Duck, Gwen Davis and Les Ferneyhough.
- Let us thank God for the continuation of the Covid-19 vaccination programme and the ray of hope it brings to all our lives.
- We pray for all the staff, pupils, parents and governors of our 3 schools as they grapple with the new arrangements for online learning etc during the lockdown.
- Please pray for all those grieving at this time around the World for all those who have died from the Coronavirus.
- Lord we bring before you all those suffering from the effects of Coronavirus in any way and thank you for the NHS, scientists, health professionals, politicians and key workers working so hard to help us through the crisis.

In memory of Andrew Matthews

As you know Andrew (Marian Matthews' son) passed away last year from Motor Neurone's disease. We understand from Marian that an amazing £3,500 has been given in memory of Andrew to the Motor Neurone Disease Association. Marian and all the family thank everyone who donated.



Congratulations to Edna Matthews

Best wishes and many happy returns to Edna (Hill Street, Hilperton) who celebrates her 90th Birthday on Friday (15th).



Wood for sale

We recently had to have a tree felled in St Michael's Churchyard. If anyone would like any of the wood for a donation to church funds please contact Michael and he will let you know where to pick up the wood etc.



Vaccine Scam

Some of you will already be aware of this scam but for those of you who aren't..... A fake NHS text message has been circulating, telling people they're eligible to apply for the COVID-19 vaccine. The link in the text message leads to a fake NHS website that asks for your personal details, including your bank/card details in order to 'check your identity' **PLEASE NOTE,,,,,,,,** This is a scam because when you are invited for your vaccine you **WILL NOT** be asked for bank details or payment of any kind so please ignore the message.

Christian Books

January us a time of year when we may start to think about having a 'sort out'. If that is the case and you have any Christian books, (not daily reading notes or hymn books) you would like to pass on Bill & I have a link to a charity which sends Christian books to countries which are in desperate need. Happy to collect any donations. Thank you, Bill & Marilyn

Used Stamps

At this time of year especially we all have more post coming through our letterboxes. May I ask you to cut off the stamps from the envelopes and at some point in time either give to Bill or myself? All used stamps we have will be posted to the Bible Society as they are able to sell them and the money will bless many by their work. Thank you very much indeed. Marilyn 01225 753118

Foodbanks Update

A message from Trowbridge Storehouse: A huge thank you to everyone for your support and donations over the Christmas season, as you can imagine, we have seen an increase in need over the past months as covid has hit so many families. Please continue to support us as we enter 2021. Every donation makes a difference. If you would like to support is regularly or give a one off donation, please follow the link below and select storehouse.

Westwiltsvineyard.churchsuite.co.uk/donate/ Items for our local foodbanks can be left in the porches of our churches at the Somerset Arms in Semington and in local supermarkets.

Daily Hope Free Phone Line

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, has launched a free national phone line as a simple new way to bring worship and prayer into people's homes while church buildings are closed because of the coronavirus. Daily Hope offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line. The line – which is available 24 hours a day on 0800 804 8044 – has been set up particularly with those unable to join online church services during the period of restrictions in mind. Please share this with your friends and family members who are not online. All calls are free.

Our website: www.canalsidebenefice.org.uk

The Website has details of how the Churches are operating during the pandemic including ideas and resources for all ages. We are continuing to provide online services every Sunday. Details of how to access these are on the home page. If you do not have access to the internet, please contact Michael Gamble if you would like a copy of prayer resources.

Support

If you need support or are aware of others who may need support, please contact one of our Churchwardens, John, Joy or Michael. Similarly let us know if you are able to offer shopping or other help – and thank you to those who have already offered this. If you would like someone to pray with you or for you, or if you would like to speak with someone, please do not hesitate to contact John or Joy.

Find details on our Facebook page & our website:

www.canalsidebenefice.org.uk

BENEFICE CONTACTS:

Rector: Rev John Rees 01225 764365 canalsiderector@gmail.com

Curate: Rev Joy Albone 07931638524 canalsidecurate@gmail.com

Office: Michael Gamble 07795400262 canalsideoffice@gmail.com



BENEFICE DIARY 2021



The
Canalside
Parishes

JANUARY

Date / Time		Event details	Location
Tu	12 th	0930 Hilperton/Staverton Morning Prayer https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88326941179	Online
W	13 th	1000 Communion and Coffee https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86833181830	Online
Th	14 th	0915 Semington Morning Prayer https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84008141990	Online
		1000 - 1200 Private Prayer	St Michael's
Su	17 th	Pre-recorded Holy Communion Service	Online