



CANALSIDE NEWS

SUNDAY 21st JANUARY 2024

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

HOLY COMMUNION

9.15am at St George's Semington

CELTIC WORSHIP

10.30am at St Michael's Hilperton

BAPTISM

12.15pm at St Michael's Hilperton

COMMISSIONING SERVICE

for Shirley (LWL) and Sandra (LPA)
6.30pm at St James' Trowbridge

The Service at St George's will be filmed and will be available to watch online later on Sunday.

Here is the link to watch any of our pre-recorded services:

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

The Collect

God of all mercy,
your Son proclaimed good news to the poor,
release to the captives,
and freedom to the oppressed:
anoint us with your Holy Spirit
and set all your people free
to praise you in Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Post Communion Prayer

Almighty Father,
whose Son our Saviour Jesus Christ is the light of the world:
may your people,
illuminated by your word and sacraments,
shine with the radiance of his glory,
that he may be known, worshipped, and obeyed
to the ends of the earth;
for he is alive and reigns, now and for ever. Amen

The First Reading: Revelation 19.6-10

⁶Then I heard again what sounded like the shout of a vast crowd or the roar of mighty ocean waves or the crash of loud thunder:

“Praise the Lord!

For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.

⁷Let us be glad and rejoice,

and let us give honour to him.

For the time has come for the wedding feast of the Lamb,

and his bride has prepared herself.

⁸She has been given the finest of pure white linen to wear.”

For the fine linen represents the good deeds of God’s holy people.

⁹ And the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb.” And he added, “These are true words that come from God.”

¹⁰ Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said, “No, don’t worship me. I am a servant of God, just like you and your brothers and sisters who testify about their faith in Jesus. Worship only God. For the essence of prophecy is to give a clear witness for Jesus.”

The Gospel: John 2.1-11

² The next day there was a wedding celebration in the village of Cana in Galilee. Jesus’ mother was there, ² and Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the celebration. ³ The wine supply ran out during the festivities, so Jesus’ mother told him, “They have no more wine.”

⁴ “Dear woman, that’s not our problem,” Jesus replied. “My time has not yet come.”

⁵ But his mother told the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.”

⁶ Standing nearby were six stone water jars, used for Jewish ceremonial washing. Each could hold twenty to thirty gallons. ⁷ Jesus told the servants, “Fill the jars with water.” When the jars had been filled, ⁸ he said, “Now dip some out, and take it to the master of ceremonies.” So the servants followed his instructions.

⁹ When the master of ceremonies tasted the water that was now wine, not knowing where it had come from (though, of course, the servants knew), he called the bridegroom over. ¹⁰ “A host always serves the best wine first,” he said. “Then, when everyone has had a lot to drink, he brings out the less expensive wine. But you have kept the best until now!”

¹¹ This miraculous sign at Cana in Galilee was the first time Jesus revealed his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

This week's reflection from Joy

What preparations do you make before a big social event, especially before a wedding? How do you decide what to wear? Attending such an event is a 'big deal' for most of us, and we spend time and energy planning every aspect of getting there, what to wear, and what gift to take.

Likewise, the bride and groom will have put a great deal of time and effort into planning the occasion, they will have spent many hours discussing who to invite, what was needed in the way of food and drink, what they were going to wear and so on. Wedding feasts take preparation, even the feast of the bride of heaven involved some preparation, as she was clothed in the purest white linen.

But despite all our planning and preparations, things can go wrong. A car breaks down at an inopportune moment, the heavens open when sun had been forecast, someone becomes ill or gets injured. Some of you may have even been to a wedding where there was insufficient food or drink, much to the embarrassment of the hosts.

When I conduct a wedding in church, I always remind the couple of the vows they have made to each other, to love one another and remain faithful to each other through all the ups and downs of life, for better or worse, for richer or poorer, in sickness or health, for we all know that life is not 'plain sailing' and there are times when things will go wrong, and life will be difficult. Now there is nothing surprising in this, we have all experienced the ups and downs of life, but there are times when the embarrassment of things going wrong can have major implications. Today, if we were to attend a wedding where the wine ran out, we would be aware of the embarrassment of the hosts, and probably laugh about it with them on a future occasion. However, at the time of Jesus it could be seen as a social disgrace, that could have reverberations for generations to come, and may have even resulted in a lawsuit between the families concerned. Maybe this is why Mary asked her son to intervene, and help out the host, ignoring his reluctance. I sometimes find it hard to read this passage without hearing a bolshie 'so what!' that you would get from a stropky

teenager, but Jesus is not the stropky teenager, and I am sure his response to his mother was spoken with respect.

From the very beginning of his ministry, Jesus is clearly aware of his destiny and there is nothing he can do the either prevent it, or pervert it. Jesus may not feel that the time is right to reveal his glory, but his subsequent actions show his respect for, and obedience to his mother, and so he does reveal his glory as he instructs the servants to refill the stone jars with water!

These stone jars would have contained water essential for the purification rites of the guests, the fact that so many jars were present that could hold so much water might be an indication of the size or extent of the gathering for this wedding. I wonder what the servants thought as they refilled the jars. I can only imagine their total astonishment on being told to draw some of the water from the jars and present it to the master of ceremonies. The servants knew that water was poured into the jars, but what was drawn out was wine, and not just any old supermarket plonk but the finest Chateau Lafite of the day, and between them the jars would have contained not just the equivalent of a few bottles of wine, but the equivalent of between 600 and 900 bottles of the best wine! I doubt even Mary expected such an abundant response to her request.

There was no need for so much wine to complete the celebration, so what we have here is a clear example of God's glory and the abundance of his grace, as Jesus changed the water of Judaic purification into the new wine of the Kingdom of God! God's grace poured out in total extravagant abundance!

We recall this abundance every time we celebrate Communion, when we remember the blood of the lamb, the new covenant, poured out for us for the forgiveness of our sins. Jesus' glory was revealed on the cross, for "his time" came when he died on the cross, that we might be forgiven and reconciled to God for all eternity, given our place at the eternal wedding feast of the Lamb.

By his actions, Jesus avoided the embarrassment of his hosts, and he demonstrated his concern for all aspects of our lives. Even some of the trivial minor problems we face daily. I know some people who recognising this, will

pray to Jesus for all manner of things: what clothes to put on in the morning; what to eat; for help in finding a car parking space; for a sunny day, and so on. And there is nothing wrong with this, although I tend not to do so. I am always aware that just because I left home late does not mean I have a greater need for the space in the car park, or the sunny weather I might like for my day out, would be wrong for the farmer desperate for rain for his crops. I don't want to limit God, but neither do I want to prioritise my needs over another's.

This does not change the fact that God is interested in even the small crises of our lives, he wants us to invite him in, he wants to be generous as he blesses us, he may even do the miraculous for us, but we have to ask first.

So, what is there in your life you would like to ask God to help you with? What crises are you facing?

Ask God, and give him space to respond, you may only need a bottle of wine, but you might end up with 900! At the same time do not be surprised that God does not answer your prayer the way you wanted. Maybe the space at the carpark you wanted was needed by another. We can ask, but we cannot dictate how God will respond, any more than Mary could say how Jesus would respond to her request.

So, just ask!

Welcome to Emily

This weekend we welcome Emily Marcie Payne, aged 7 months, into our church family as she is baptised at St Michael's on Sunday afternoon. We also welcome her parents Jessica and Andrew, her Godparents Kathryn, Jason, Joshua and Josie and all the family & friends who gather to support her. Please pray for Emily as she begins her Christian journey.

This Sunday (21st): Commissioning Service

On Sunday evening at 6.30pm at St James' Church in Trowbridge Sandra and Shirley will be commissioned as a Lay Pastoral Assistant, and a Lay Worship Leader, respectively. We are all invited to join Sandra and Shirley at this special service as they begin their new roles in the

Benefice. Congratulations to them both and please support them with your prayers and presence.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Evening at St Mary Magdalen's

Although it would be lovely for us all to gather at the Rectory for our annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Evening – the family currently living there might have other ideas! So our 2024 Pancake Evening will be held at St Mary Magdalen's in Horse Road, Hilperton on Tuesday 13th February from 6-8.30pm. ALL WELCOME. To help with catering please sign up for this event on the sheets which are now at the back of church.



Hilperton Churches Silent Auction Saturday 2nd March 2024

The Parish fundraising programme for 2024 will kick off with a Silent Auction at St Mary Magdalen's Church Hall in Horse Road, Hilperton on Saturday 2nd March from 10.30am-4.30pm. Please start thinking of things that you could donate for the auction – anything that you think will sell - Christmas presents that need a new home perhaps, ornaments, toys, furniture, books, electrical goods, jewellery etc etc etc. Although we don't need the items yet we will start to compile a list of the lots in the next week or so. Please don't use this as an opportunity to have a clear out – we only want good quality items. Anything that doesn't sell at the auction will be returned to you. How it works: on the day the "lots" are displayed around the church and people are invited to come in and take a look at them. In front of each lot is a piece of paper and if anyone wants to make a bid for it they write the amount on the paper. If anyone else comes along after that and wants that lot they can write down a higher bid. When the doors close the highest bidder on each item gets that lot. We can set reserves on lots where needed and if you would prefer not to fully donate

the item to church we can give you 50% of the total raised. More details to follow.

Congratulations to Stephanie Morris

The December Draw of the St Mary Magdalen's and St Michael's 100 Club was won by Stephanie who received £50.

Broken windows at St Michael's

As you may have seen a number of windows have been broken at St Michael's in the last few weeks in a spate of vandalism. The cost of the repairs is about £1,000 and is really something we could do without at the moment. If any of you see anyone acting suspiciously in and around the churchyard, please let Michael know as soon as possible.

We need your help with....

leading Prayers, readings, Welcome and Coffee at St Michael's and St Mary Magdalen's? If you would like to volunteer please contact Michael.

Used Stamps

A very blessed New year to you all. The first large package of used stamps for 2024 Bill has posted. I wonder how many will be sent this year, seven packages last year. Will we beat that number this year? Time will tell. Christmas 2022, Liuba received a Children's Bible in Donetsk province. More children received Christmas Scripture's Christmas 2023 and will receive Christmas Scriptures in Ukraine this year. Thank you for supporting the Bible Society with used stamps. Blessings be upon you all. Bill & Marilyn Stubbs

Reminder: Defibrillator Training

As you know there are now a number of defibrillators located in our communities including at St Mary Magdalen's and at Hilperton Village Hall. Janie Burch the health and safety officer at the village hall has arranged a training session on Tuesday 13th February from 7-9pm. The session will be at the Village Hall and led by Paul Cosh from the South West Ambulance Service

who is responsible for the defibrillators. If you would like to attend, please let Michael know by the end of January.

Foodbanks Update

Together with many other Foodbanks across the country both Melksham and Trowbridge are desperate for more donations, as the demand is very high at present, so please give as generously as you are able.

TROWBRIDGE STOREHOUSE:

This week the Food Bank would like all products but urgently need **Tinned meats - curry, chilli, stews, toilet rolls, cleaning, toilet products and UHT milk.** Margarine, butter and eggs are always needed, just drop off at the centre. Please drop into the building as they now do a breakfast for the homeless so eggs are always needed plus cheese, butter bacon etc as they have a fridge freezer, freezer and fridge. Fruit and vegetables are always welcome but do not put in a trolley.

If you prefer you can make a one off financial donation or support Trowbridge Storehouse regularly, please follow the link below and select storehouse.

<https://westwiltsvineyard.churchsuite.co.uk/donate/fund/zk54op3a>

Storehouse is always in need of carrier bags

MELKSHAM FOODBANK are in desperate need all food items but especially pasta sauce, tinned peas and sugar. (please ensure all items are well within the best before date). They can also take large bags of rice, tea bags, sugar & pasta as these can be decanted into smaller bags for distribution. Please take your donations to the porch at St George's, Semington before 6pm on Wednesday. Please support all of our local foodbanks.

A Prayer for Canalside Benefice

Loving God, during this time without a Rector, we pray for our Benefice, as we work together in unity to serve you in this place. Help us to grow in faith, as we love one another and care for those in need. Give us the strength to reach out to others, and offer a warm welcome to all in our communities.

Guide us during this time, as we discern your plans for our parishes, and as we seek the person you want to join us as our new rector. And may they know your heart, as they are drawn to come and share their ministry with us.

May our future together, in our villages, in our schools and in our churches be filled with your Holy Spirit as we make Jesus known in our every aspect of our lives in Canalside. Amen.

Prayer Requests

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

This week we pray for..

Aaron	Colin Jackson	Lilly, Phil & Louis	Sandie Baker
Alan and Rita	Collette Miyagawa	Margaret Hulbert	Sophia & Family
Alison Meader	Colston Carpenter	Marjorie Raymond	Val, Phil and family
Amelia-Lily and family	Dave, Rosemary, Matthew & Family	Maureen Mitchell	Winnie Curtis
Andrew Margetts	Deanna and family	Mike Aldridge	
Audrey Sheppard	Helen Thomas	Ntombi and Family	
Barbara & David	Hilary Heaton	Pat, Louise & family	
Beryl Curtis	Jeannette	Richard & Irene Hicks	
Chris Botha	Joyce Palmer	Roger Emes	
	Keith Joint	Rosa Light	
		Rosie Alice & Mark	



- We pray for all those who mourn at this time, especially the families of Mary Barber and Andy Smith.
- We pray for the people of Sudan at this time of conflict, including Archbishop Ezekiel as he leads the Anglican Church there.
- Please pray for the situation in Israel and Gaza.

- For all living in fear, as the result of the ongoing trauma of bombardments and retaliation.
- For all injured, killed, kidnapped or displaced. and those who mourn.
- For all providing aid and seeking an end to violence.

UKRAINE STILL NEEDS OUR PRAYERS

God of peace and justice,
 we pray for the people of Ukraine today.
 We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.
 We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow,
 that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.
 We pray for those with power over war or peace,
 for wisdom, discernment and compassion
 to guide their decisions.
 Above all, we pray for all your precious children,
 at risk and in fear,
 that you would hold and protect them.
 We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.
 Amen.

Archbishop Justin McCloskey

A PRAYER FOR THE HOLY LAND

This prayer has been approved by ++Hosam, Archbishop of Jerusalem:

O God of all justice and peace we cry out to you in the midst of the pain and trauma of violence and fear which prevails in the Holy Land. Be with those who need you in these days of suffering; we pray for people of all faiths - Jews, Muslims and Christians and for all people of the land. While we pray to you, O Lord, for an end to violence and the establishment of peace, we also call for you to bring justice and equity to the peoples. Guide us into your kingdom where all people are treated with dignity and honour as your children for to all of us you are our Heavenly Father. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

DIARY FOR THIS WEEK

Please pray for all events taking place this week

Month	Day	Date	Time	Event details	Location
JAN	Tu	23 rd	0930	Hilperiton/Staverton Morning Prayer https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89678887943?pwd=IKy2vBYNviwibNcoWUpqTtf4hpwQTA.1	Online
			1330	Lay Assistants Meeting	St Michael's Room
	W	24 th	1000	Midweek Communion	St Michael's
			1430	Collective Worship led by Joy	Hilperiton School
	Th	25 th	0900	Semington Morning Prayer https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88553953942?pwd=1EHGGg18bBggYKytMMRbYvZ5JZFZNm.1	Online
			0930	Interment of ashes: Mary Barber	Hilperiton Cemetery
			1045	Collective Worship led by Joy	St George's School
			1445	Collective Worship led by Joy	Staverton School
	F	26 th	0930	Toddlers@theTin	St Mary Magdalen's
			1100		

Sunday
28th January
THE
PRESENTATION
OF CHRIST

HOLY COMMUNION
10.30am at St Michael's Hilperiton

TEA@theTIN
4pm at St Mary Magdalen's

Find details on our Facebook page/ website: canalsidebenefice.org.uk

BENEFICE CONTACTS:

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