



St Andrew's Church

Seeking God Together

NEWS AND NOTICES FOR SUNDAY 10th JANUARY 2021

Worship during Lockdown 2

We are in lockdown again and whilst the government has stated that communal worship can continue, the advice from the Diocese is that we should not meet together in church. We continue to be one of the worst hit areas of the country and our hospitals are now under extraordinary pressure. We must do all that we can to protect the most vulnerable in our communities and the NHS. The key message is to stay at home as far as possible. So sadly there will be no services in our church building whilst we continue to be in Lockdown.



But of course, we remember that the church is so much more than the building, the church is made up of living stones, the people of God, so the work of the church continues in our lives and homes.

Please pray for the PCC that meets next Tuesday, 12th January, as we consider and discuss the ongoing work and ministry of the church.

SEEKING GOD TOGETHER

Last Sunday some of us were able to join together from our homes for a service via Zoom. Those of us who were able to join felt part of the service and we enjoyed being able to see each other – especially without masks on! It was lovely to be able to chat together afterwards in a virtual coffee morning.



Our services in January will all be via Zoom and we will then review the situation again.

We are very aware that some people do not have access to the Internet and we are sorry that you may not be able to join us. We will continue to send you mailings every other week with church news, Bible reflections, prayers and service leaflets. We do hope that you might sit down at 10.00 am and worship and pray in your homes, knowing that other members of the church family are doing the same. We will of course do our best to phone you regularly as well. If there is anything else that you might find helpful, please do ask.

If you have access to the internet and feel you would like to access ZOOM, let us know and we will try to support you to do so.

Sunday 10th January

The service will take place at 10.00 a.m. on Sunday and it will be a service of the word. It will be led by our worship team who will be in their own homes, not in church.

The link for the invitation to this Sunday's Zoom service is in the email which contained this newsletter.

Services in January

10th January – Service of the Word – 10.00 a.m. on Zoom

17th January – Family Service – 10.00 a.m. on Zoom

24th January – Holy Communion – 10.00 a.m. on Zoom

31st January – Holy Communion – 10.00 a.m. on Zoom

Religious programming



The morning faith show on BBC Essex is from 6.00 a.m. to 10.00 a.m. on Sunday.

Every Sunday a service is broadcast from 8.00 – 8.30 a.m.

The show will be on BBC SOUNDS for 30 days after broadcast.

The Church of England is streaming a service every Sunday at 9.00 a.m.

You can find it on this link

<https://www.churchofengland.org/news-and-media/church-online/weekly-online-services>



DailyHope, a free national telephone line, offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of the phone.



A free phone line of hymns, reflections and prayers

Sharing news



It was Iris Brown's birthday last Wednesday. Happy Birthday Iris!

If you have any thoughts or news to share, do let us know.

WITH LOVE AND PRAYERS FROM THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

The BAPTISM OF JESUS MARK 1 1-13



I received a lovely email in the week from John Bourne “Christmas has been cleared from the church”. Thank you, John. Many of you I am sure have been up in the loft to put decorations away, it was of course twelfth night in the week.

Some people observe the tradition of keeping decorations up until Candlemas. Some churches leave their crib sets up.

In our lectionary readings we have travelled away from Bethlehem and the birth of Jesus to the Baptism of Jesus at the river Jordan, around 30 years later.

Marks Gospel starts here, there is no nativity story.

Over the last months we have watched many ministerial broadcasts haven't we.? In the days of the Roman Empire the equivalent would be a message, an official proclamation. The word that Mark uses in the Greek *euangelion* which we translate good news is just that, an official proclamation, a proclamation that has profound life changing consequences. This proclamation is about the arrival of Jesus the anointed, the Son of God.

After this earth-shattering proclamation, Mark quotes two old testament prophecies before moving straight to the appearance of John the Baptist followed by the Baptism of Christ. All in 11 short verses. This is a life changing, game changing, world changing announcement. This is the moment when God breaks in, where Gods power is revealed and Gods purposes for humanity and the world is revealed.

As we journey into this new year may we not leave Jesus in the manger, or pack him away, may we allow him to grow in our lives, may we continue to encounter him in unexpected places, especially whilst we are not physically in church.

The Baptism of Jesus can be found in all four gospels. Why is the Baptism of Jesus important? We get a real glimpse of who Jesus is by the fact that he was baptized. This is the kind of Messiah that Jesus will be.

John the Baptist as foretold in Isaiah was preparing the way for Jesus. John's baptism was a baptism of repentance, confession, and forgiveness of sins. He talks of one who will come after him, one who is more powerful, one whose sandals he is not worthy to untie.

And then Jesus himself comes to be baptized. In Mathew's account we read that John was reluctant to baptize him and tried to deter Jesus. Jesus was sinless, there would have been no need for him to be baptised, no need for him to repent or be forgiven

Jesus by being baptized is this time publicly demonstrating the type of ministry which he has chosen. Baptism is about both putting off the old self and putting on of the new.

So too the baptism of Jesus is not a washing away of the past, but rather a putting on of the new, preparing himself for the great task, setting out his style of ministry.

The baptism of Jesus just like the Christmas story, (the son of God being born as a baby) shows God entering flesh and becoming one of us. At his baptism Jesus goes down into the waters with us. Privilege and power can remove powerful political and religious leaders from the people they are called to serve. The ordinary person can feel leaders live in a very different world. But Jesus being baptized in the waters of the river Jordan comes up close to us, lets the waters that covered the repentant sinners flow over him. Jesus is not found in the palace of the king, he is in the same river as the ordinary people, who were acutely aware of their own poverty, both spiritual and material. Again, Jesus lives up to his name of Emmanuel God with us.

As Jesus comes up out of the waters the spirit descends on him like a dove and the Father's voice is heard *"You are my Son whom I love. with you I am well pleased."*

We see in this moment, the trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit at work. The son is affirmed by the Father and the spirit is upon him.

We too are loved by God and called by name. As we come to Jesus and share in his death and resurrection, we become children of God, part of God's family. May we follow Jesus example and discover the places where God is calling us to be, the things God is calling us to do our ministry.

For Jesus who was baptised in the river Jordan takes what is weak and wavering, makes us his disciples and strengthens with his spirit those who would follow him. May we too hear the still small voice of the Father affirming us.

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

AND SO WE PRAY

THANKSGIVING;

Thank You God, that at the Baptism of Jesus, You revealed Him as Your Son, and anointed Him with the Holy Spirit. As baptised people, may we be faithful to our calling, and hear you say "This is my son, my daughter, in whom I am well pleased."

FOR THE CHURCH;

For Oasis, Melbourne - Melbourne, The Healing Bus -Nick and Marina Price.

For Brothers and Sisters around the world, who hold us in prayer, as we hold them.

FOR ST ANDREWS;

For our plans, and preparation for worship and prayer, for January.

For those who brought us to faith, and baptism, that we may continue to grow in wisdom, and knowledge of God.

FOR THE WORLD;

For leaders of all nations, that Christ's voice for peace, would guide them in all they do.

For medical workers around the world, where resources and protective equipment are always in short supply.

FOR OUR NEIGHBOURS;

For those who live, and work in Grampian Grove, Havisham Way, Hobart close

For all who have been baptised in St Andrews, and for families waiting for baptism for their children.

FOR THE SICK AND THOSE IN NEED;

Give strength and courage Lord, to those who are sick, or in need, and we remember Daniella, Hazel, Sarah, June and Tony, Debbie and others on our hearts.

For all affected by Coronavirus, through illness, isolation or anxiety.

FOR THOSE WHO HAVE DIED;

We commend to Your love, Lord, those who were baptised, and were close to you in this life, remembering our own departed loved ones, and members of our church and community. By Your grace, may we, and they, be one in you.

LORD OF LIGHT HEAR OUR PRAYERS, AMEN

