

Saint Mary's Newsletter: May 2016

Vicar: David Smithson 027 4213200 Fridays

07 8492761 Afterhours

Peoples Warden: Sally-Ann Riddell 07 8243850

Vicars Warden: Roger Jennings 07 8243712



SERVICES FOR MAY

Sunday 1st:

10am Family communion Service

Refreshments - Hazel Wilson

Sunday 8th:

10am Family communion Service

Refreshments - Kim Simpson

Sunday 15th:

10am Praise Service.

Refreshments - Majella Heaton

Sunday 22nd:

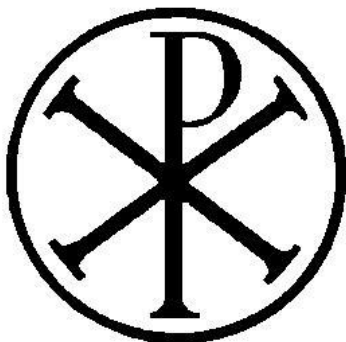
10am Family communion Service

Refreshments - Brenda Kebbel

Sunday 29th:

10am Fresh Expressions

Refreshments: Melanie Holdsworth



Salt & Light: A bible study group is starting up soon and covers everything from the beginning and beyond! See the vicar for more info if you are interested.



Children's Church/Juniour Youth: This month -Children's church/Juniour Youth is on the 15th.

Youth Group (Year 9+): Combined churches youth Meet Fridays 7pm at Oaks Church Gordonton.

Scripture for the month:

And in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ give thanks every day for everything to our God and Father.
(Ephesians 5:20)

THE LIFE EVERLASTING: The Bible speaks clearly of the existence of

Heaven. It describes a place in which sadness, pain and death itself end once and for all. Beyond that, it gives only hints of what humans will experience beyond death. However, the hints are sufficient to thrill us that humans should anticipate an exhilarating and beautiful experience in the magnificent presence of the Lord God. Christians look forward to Heaven as place where people will find complete healing and everything about their identity enhanced to its full potential. In that context they will enjoy the love of God and enjoy the love of each other forever. The Christian faith has no suggestion of reincarnation. Hell is also spoken of in the Bible, but its nature is even more sketchy. When Jesus described the destiny of sinners who refused to change their ways, he compared it to Gehenna, which was a rubbish dump outside Jerusalem. People in wretched poverty picked their way through it to find scraps, and fires burned. Church leaders of mediaeval times took Jesus' picture of wretchedness literally. They preached of a judgment after death in which the wicked were thrown by devils into flames, while obedient churchgoers were lifted by angels into bliss. Pictures of this divide can still be seen on the walls of ancient churches. Today, those who seek to understand what the Bible means when it describes Hell are more likely to consider the complete misery of being separated from God once the reality of his plans for eternity have been made plain. That would be a spiritual desolation equivalent to the woe that Jesus could see in Gehenna. Some Christians are confident that the death and resurrection of Jesus took place for every single man and woman in the planet's history. Everyone will be welcomed into his presence, forgiven and accepted because his love is triumphant. Other Christians maintain that a decision on earth to seek God's forgiveness through Jesus is required in order to be sure of being accepted into Heaven. People who reject God during their lives will have their earthly decision respected, and be rejected in their turn. They will either cease to exist altogether or suffer an eternity of agonising regret. There is a belief among some Roman Catholic and Orthodox Christians that there is a transitional state between this life and Heaven known as Purgatory. This is a place where human souls can be purified and made ready to spend eternity with God. It is seen as joyless, because justice needs to be done for a lifetime's wrongdoing, but it can be shortened by the prayers of those still alive on earth. Purgatory is not mentioned in the Bible, but the concept has existed since the early centuries of the Christian church. During the 16th century there were very substantial upheavals in the Christian church. Churches which have been founded since then (Protestant churches) do not have this belief. It is obviously not possible to know beyond doubt what the future holds. However, Christians face their deaths with two confident beliefs that are both invigorating and comforting. Firstly, God is just. It is absolutely inconceivable that someone will suffer a fate that they do not deserve. Secondly, God is endlessly loving. Nothing in either life or death can separate people from the love of God that is in Jesus Christ the Lord.

Parish Giving

Please consider giving to the parish via Automatic Payment. Did you know that St Mary's has to pay for our Vicar and all other costs of running a Parish, as well as giving a proportion to the Diocese? Please help us to be sustainable by giving via Automatic Payment. It is an easy way to give and is useful for the parish in running its budget. The Parish Bank Account is:

02 0410 0103053 00

CHEQUES TO ST MARY'S:

If you are writing a cheque towards the parish, please ensure it is made out to: "Gordonton Anglican Church"

This Month in Christian History:

9 May 1983: Pope John Paul II announces the reversal of the Catholic Church's 1633 condemnation of Galileo Galilei, the seventeenth-century scientist who first espoused the Copernican (sun-centred) theory of our solar system



Healing & Confession:

Should you require prayer for healing, please indicate to the vicar at the altar rail during Communion so anointing with oil can be given. The confidential act of Reconciliation/Confession (see page 750 of the Prayer Book) is also available on Friday's at the church 9am – 2pm