

Saint Mary's Newsletter: February

Vicar: David Smithson 027 4213200 Fridays

07 8492761 Afterhours

Peoples Warden: Sally-Ann Riddell 07 8243850

Vicars Warden:



SERVICES FOR FEBRUARY

Sunday 3rd:

10am Candlemas family communion
Service

Refreshments - Sally-Ann Riddell

Sunday 10th:

10am Family Communion

Refreshments - Katy Cockerton

Sunday 17th:

10am Family Communion

Refreshments - Valerie Crowther

Sunday 24th:

10am Harvest Service & Family
Communion

Refreshments - Trish Smithson



Refreshment Roster:

Please see the roster on the table near the church entrance, and fill in the spaces / dates that you can provide after service morning tea.

Harvest Service: Sunday 24th A celebration of God's provision to us, and to use this as an opportunity to help those who are less fortunate. So please bring along non perishable food that will be given to the Food Bank.

Children/Youth:

Kids activity packs with a choccy treat, and youth: Friday's 7pm @ Oaks church, Gordonton, & Weds 7pm "Ignite" @ Horsham Downs Church.

Seismic Strengthening Fund:

In the light of St Mary's church now labelled a considerable risk during a seismic event, please consider giving to cover the cost of strengthening our church, and mark the donation as "Seismic Strengthening Fund".

Faith

Faith is a “means to a beginning”. When a believer chooses for the first time to believe and have faith in Jesus as their saviour, they are starting a brand new way of life. Faith is a choice that Christians make in believing that Christ was crucified and rose again, and that He is the One and only Son of God. Let us dive in deep into scripture and see what the Bible says about faith.

Faith is a Choice

Joshua 24:15 says, “Choose this day whom you will serve...as for me and my house we will serve the Lord.” Every day that we wake up as believers we must choose to stay devoted to God. It is a conscious decision that we make.

Faith is a Promise

Hebrew 11:1a says, “Faith is the assurance of things hoped for.” Our faith guarantees us the fulfilment of God’s promise to us for an eternal life with Him in heaven. Jesus said in the famous verse from John 3:16, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.” Our faith in Jesus’ death and resurrection is a promise that we will have eternal life with Him.

God is Faithful

There are numerous scriptures pointing to God’s faithfulness to us and to His promises. Here are some verses that convey His love through His faithfulness.

He is our protector “But the Lord is faithful. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one.” (2Thes 3:3)

He chose us “Because of the Lord, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.” (Is 49:7b)

He always provides a way out of temptation “No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation He will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.” (1Cor 10:13)

He loves us “Know therefore that the Lord your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love Him.” (Dt 7:9a)

The Fruits of Faith are Shown in Serving

James 2:18b says, “I will show you my faith by my works.” This is a true test of faith. If you have ever wondered if your faith was real, examine your life. Are you helping those in need? Are you actively serving in your church? These kinds of things should come natural to you. A “redeemed life” is a “transformed life.” “Be transformed by the renewal of your mind.” (Romans 12:2a)

Your Faith Will be Tested

“Consider it pure joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.” God allows your faith to be tested because He wants you to be holy. The book of Job is a great example of this. Job’s faith was not shaken when everything he had was taken away. He was so solid in his faith that he worshipped the Lord after his own children were taken from him. He is a great one to look at when you go through trials and tribulations of this life.

A Lack of Faith Creates Loss

“But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord.” (Jas 1:6-7) When you come to God in prayer, remain faithful for He is faithful. The ultimate sacrifice of all time was Christ’s death on the cross to defeat sin. It truly is a miracle that your own life will be spared from hell by having faith in Christ’s death and choosing Him as Saviour and Lord of your life. If you can have faith in the most important thing, life eternal with Christ in heaven through His death, then have faith on the smaller issues here on earth.



This Month in Christian History:



Born in Picardy, St. Anskar was the apostle to the Scandinavians.

He was educated at Corbie, a Benedictine monastery, and taught at

Corvey, a daughter house in Westphalia. Louis I the Pious had at

that time allied himself with Harald of Denmark in a dynastic

dispute on the condition that Harald and his country become

Christian. When Louis sought a missionary, Archbishop Ebbo of

Rheims and Abbot Wala of Corvey recommended Anskar. His

mission began c. 826 in Schleswig and ended the following year

with Harald's defeat. Bjorn of Sweden later permitted Anskar to

preach in Sweden, where he established the first church in

Scandinavia at Björnskö. Louis named Anskar

first bishop of Hamburg in 831, and the following year, Gregory

IV appointed him papal legate to the Scandinavians. The Swedish

mission collapsed in 845, after Vikings destroyed Hamburg.

Appointed Archbishop of Bremen in 851, Anskar renewed his

missionary work and converted Haarik II of Sweden. Anskar did

as much as he could to alleviate the harsh conditions of the Viking

slave trade. He also founded hospitals. The archbishop died on

February 3, 865. He spent the night before in prayer for his

mission. On the morning of his death, "he lifted up his hand and

prayed that God in His goodness would forgive whoever had done

him any wrong. Then he began to say over and over again the

verses: 'According to Thy mercy think thou upon me, according to

Thy goodness, O Lord,' [Ps 25: 6] and 'God be merciful to me a

sinner,' (Luke 18:18) and 'Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my

spirit.'" (Luke 23:46) When he could not speak for lack of breath,

he ordered one of the brethren to continue saying the same words

for him. "And so, with his eyes fixed on heaven, he breathed forth

his spirit which had been commended to the grace of the

Lord.