

# Saint Mary's Newsletter: Nov 2021

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## SERVICES FOR NOVEMBER

### Sunday 7<sup>th</sup>:

10am Holy Communion Service

**Refreshments:**

**Readings:**

**Intercessions:**

### Sunday 14<sup>th</sup>:

10am Holy Communion Service

**Refreshments:**

**Readings:**

**Intercessions:**

### Sunday 21<sup>st</sup>:

10am Holy Communion Service

**Refreshments:**

**Readings:**

**Intercessions:**

### Sunday 28<sup>th</sup>:

10am Advent 1: Holy Communion Service

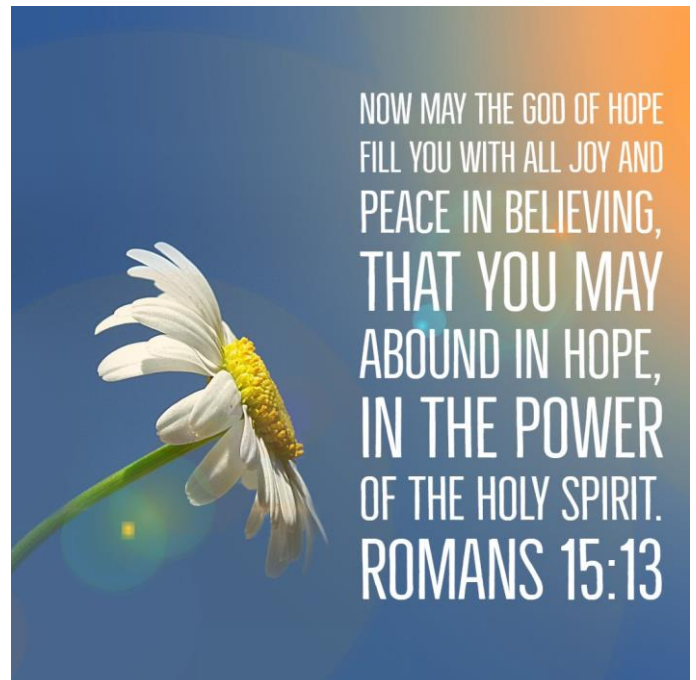
**Refreshments:**

**Readings:**

**Intercessions:**



## Scripture for the month:



## A very apt thought for the month:

Do not look forward to what may happen tomorrow; the same everlasting Father who cares for you today will take care of you tomorrow and every day. Either He will shield you from suffering, or He will give you unfailing strength to bear it. Be at peace, then. Put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginations, and say continually: "*The Lord is my strength and my shield. My heart has trusted in Him and I am helped. He is not only with me but in me, and I in Him.*"

## What is Repentance?



The word *repentance* in the Bible literally means “the act of changing one’s mind.” True biblical repentance goes beyond remorse, regret, or feeling bad about one’s sin. It involves more than merely turning away from sin. *Eerdmans Bible Dictionary* includes this definition of *repentance*: “In its fullest sense it is a term for a complete change of orientation involving a judgment upon the past and a deliberate redirection for the future.”

In the Old Testament, repentance, or wholehearted turning to God, is a recurring theme in the message of the prophets. Repentance was demonstrated through rituals such as fasting, wearing sackcloth, sitting in ashes, wailing, and liturgical laments that expressed strong sorrow for sin. These rituals were supposed to be accompanied by authentic repentance, which involved a commitment to a renewed relationship with God, a walk of obedience to His Word, and right living. Often, however, these rituals merely represented remorse and a desire to escape the consequences of sin.

When the ancient prophets beckoned the people to repent and return, they were calling for a complete turnaround inspired from within the heart and will of the individual. The prophets called both the nation of Israel and individual people to surrender their lives, to turn away from a life ruled by sin to a relationship with God, the sovereign ruler over all: “Even now—this is the LORD’s declaration—turn to me with all your heart, with fasting, weeping, and mourning. Tear your hearts, not just your clothes, and return to the LORD your God. For he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, abounding in faithful love, and he relents from sending disaster” (Joel 2:12–13, CSB).

The theme of repentance continues in the New Testament, beginning with John the Baptist (Matthew 3:2) and then Jesus Christ (Matthew 4:17); both urgently called people to repent because the arrival of the Kingdom of God was at hand. Many chose this radical reorientation of their lives and demonstrated repentance through baptism (Mark 1:4) and profound changes in lifestyle and relationships (Luke 3:8–14).

Three Greek words used in the New Testament help us understand the full meaning of *repentance* in the Bible. The first is the verb *metamelomai*, which denotes a change of mind that produces regret or even remorse for wrongs done, but not necessarily a change of heart and action. This word is used in Matthew 27:3 to describe the guilt Judas felt over betraying Jesus.

The second verb, *metanoeo*, means “to change one’s mind and purpose, as the result of after knowledge.” This verb and its related noun, *metanoia*, denote true biblical repentance, which is characterized by four elements:

- 1) True repentance involves a sense of awareness of one’s own guilt, sinfulness, and helplessness (Psalm 51:4–10; 109:21–22).
- 2) True repentance apprehends or takes hold of God’s mercy in Jesus Christ (Psalm 51:1; 130:4).
- 3) True repentance means a change of attitude and action regarding sin. Hatred of sin turns the repentant person away from his or her sin to God (Psalm 119:128; Job 42:5–6; 2 Corinthians 7:10).
- 4) True repentance results in a radical and persistent pursuit of holy living, walking with God in obedience to His commands (2 Timothy 2:19–22; 1 Peter 1:16).

The focus of Jesus Christ’s mission was to call sinners to repentance: “I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Luke 5:32). His call of absolute surrender goes out to all people: “But unless you repent, you too will all perish.” (Luke 13:5). In His farewell to the disciples, Jesus commanded that they take His message of repentance and faith to all the nations (Luke 24:47).

Repentance in the Bible involves a complete and irreversible change of mind, heart, and actions. Repentance recognizes that our sin is offensive to God. To repent means to make an about-face, heart-directed turn away from self to God, from the past to a future ruled by God’s commands, acknowledging that the Lord reigns supreme over one’s existence.

## Parish Giving

We have missed many cash offerings during the lockdowns, so if you are a cash giver *please* consider giving to the parish via Automatic Payment. 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:

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### This Month in Christian History:

**23 Nov 947:** Eliezer L. Sulenik of Jerusalem’s Hebrew University receives word of the existence of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The ancient documents (200BC-AD70) had been discovered the previous winter by two Bedouin shepherds in the vicinity of Qumran



### A Prayer for November

May my horizon this day, Lord,  
not be so foreshortened that I notice little.  
Instead, open my eyes  
that I may see afar and above  
as well as in front and beneath me.  
Lead me to keep my life in perspective and  
balance  
and discover that the thread of your presence  
is interwoven through the events and people of  
this day.