

Saint Mary's Newsletter: March

Vicar: David Smithson 021 985530 Fridays

07 8492761 Afterhours

Peoples Warden: Sally-Ann Riddell 07 8243850

Vicars Warden: John Heaton 021 702871



SERVICES FOR MARCH

Sunday 1st:

10am Lent 2, St David's Day Holy Communion Service

Refreshments: Rosalie

Intercessions: Rosalie

Sunday 8th:

10am Lent 3 Holy Communion Service

Refreshments: Majella

Intercessions: Majella

Sunday 15th:

10am Lent 4 Holy Communion Service

Refreshments: Melanie

Intercessions: Melanie

Sunday 22nd:

10am Lent 5 Holy Communion Service

Refreshments:

Intercessions:

Sunday 29th:

10am Lent 6 1662 Holy Communion Service

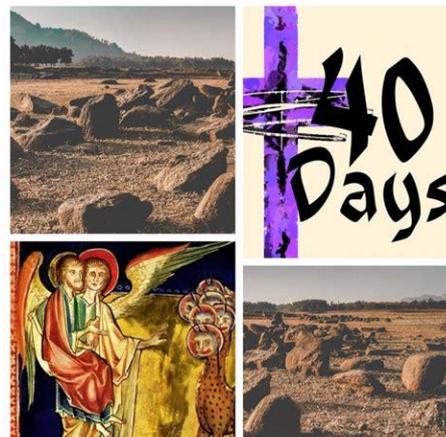
Refreshments: PARISH LUNCH



AGM: Immediately after the service 22nd March. It is always brief, and held along with a cuppa.

Parish Giving: 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: 02 0410 0103053 00

Lenten Study: *Wisdom in the Desert, 40 Days in the wilds of Faith with the Desert Fathers & Mothers*
Every Weds 7pm @ the church.





Christian baptism is one of two ordinances that Jesus instituted for the church. Just before His ascension, Jesus said, *“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age”* (Matthew 28:19–20). These instructions specify that the church is responsible to teach Jesus’ word, make disciples, and baptize those disciples. These things are to be done everywhere (“all nations”) until “the very end of the age.” So, if for no other reason, baptism has importance because Jesus commanded it. Baptism was practiced before the founding of the church. The Jews of ancient times would baptize proselytes to signify the converts’ “cleansed” nature. John the Baptist used baptism to prepare the way of the Lord, requiring everyone, not just Gentiles, to be baptized because everyone needs repentance. However, John’s baptism, signifying repentance, is not the same as Christian baptism, as seen in Acts 18:24–26 and 19:1–7. Christian baptism has a deeper significance. Baptism is to be done in the name of the Father, Son, and Spirit—this is what makes it “Christian” baptism. When we are saved, we are “baptized” by the Spirit into the Body of Christ, which is the universal church. First Corinthians 12:13 says, *“We were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.”* Baptism by water, what is normally meant by the term Christian baptism, is a “reenactment” of the baptism by the Spirit. Christian baptism is the means by which a person makes a public profession of faith and discipleship. In the waters of baptism, a person says, wordlessly, “I confess faith in Christ; Jesus has cleansed my soul from sin, and I now have a new life of sanctification.”

Christian baptism illustrates, in dramatic style, the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. At the same time, it also illustrates our death to sin and new life in Christ. As the sinner confesses the Lord Jesus, he dies to sin (Romans 6:11) and is raised to a brand-new life (Colossians 2:12). Being submerged in the water represents death to sin, and emerging from the water represents the cleansed, holy life that follows salvation. Romans 6:4 puts it this way: *“We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.”*

Very simply, water baptism is an outward testimony of the inward change in a believer’s life. Christian baptism is an act of obedience to the Lord after salvation; although baptism is closely associated with salvation, it is not a requirement to be saved. The Bible shows in many places that the order of events is 1) a person believes in the Lord Jesus and 2) he is baptized. This sequence is seen in Acts 2:41, *“Those who accepted [Peter’s] message were baptized”* (see also Acts 16:14–15).

A new believer in Jesus Christ should desire to be baptized as soon as possible. In Acts 8 Philip speaks “the good news about Jesus” to the Ethiopian eunuch, and, *“as they travelled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, ‘Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?’”* (verses 35–36). Right away, they stopped the chariot, and Philip baptized the man. In most instances today, an immediate baptism after salvation is not feasible. Still, a new believer should seek water baptism at the earliest possible opportunity.

Baptism illustrates a believer’s identification with Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection. Everywhere the gospel is preached and people are drawn to faith in Christ, they are to be baptized.

St. David (St. Dewi) was the son of King Sant of South Wales and St. Non. He was ordained a priest and later studied under St. Paulinus. Later, he was involved in missionary work and founded a number of monasteries. The monastery he founded at Menevia in Southwestern Wales was noted for extreme asceticism. David and his monks drank neither wine nor beer - only water - while putting in a full day of heavy manual labour and intense study. Around the year 550, David attended a synod at Brevi in Cardiganshire. His contributions at the synod are said to have been the major cause for his election as primate of the Cambrian Church. He was reportedly consecrated archbishop by the patriarch of Jerusalem while on a visit to the Holy Land. He also is said to have invoked a council that ended the last vestiges of Pelagianism. David died at his monastery in Menevia around the year 589, and his cult was approved in 1120 by Pope Callistus II. He is revered as the patron of Wales. Undoubtedly, St. David was endowed with substantial qualities of spiritual leadership. What is more, many monasteries flourished as a result of his leadership and good example. His staunch adherence to monastic piety bespeaks a fine example for modern Christians seeking order and form in their prayer life. His feast day is March 1st

