

Welcome to the United Benefice of St. Helen, St. Mary and St. John the Baptist

It's great to gather together as the Body of Christ in this beautiful part of Derbyshire. Though we have differences, we have one Lord, one Faith and one passion for the Gospel. May we spend time this morning praying together and sharing fellowship.

All are welcome to take part fully in our services. If this is a Service of Holy Communion, you are very welcome to receive Holy Communion at the appropriate time. (Gluten free wafers are available. Just ask anyone leading the communion.)

Our Worship today, 4th February, Second before Lent

- 9.00am Holy Communion at St. John's**
- 10.00am Holy Communion at St. Mary's**
- 11.00am Holy Communion at St. Helen's**

**Readings: Proverbs 8:1, 22-31
John 1:1-14**

Regular Midweek Services

- Tuesday – Morning Prayer at St. Helen's 9.30am
- Thursday – Morning Prayer at St. John's 9.30am

Regular Home Groups & Prayer Meetings

- Mon. 5th Home Group, Whitworth House, Dale Road
- Tues. 6th Home Group, 5 Sir Joseph Whitworth Lane
- Thur. 7th Prayer Meeting, 14 Park Avenue

Our United Benefice Services next Sunday

- 9.00am Holy Communion at St. John's**
- 11.00am Family Service with St. Mary's at St. Helen's**

Prayer: Fridolin Wieschhues, Robert & Margaret Pearse and family, the Hopper family, the Parnell family, Tony & Marie Thrower, Stan Codd, Dorothy Ash, Stephen Porter, Anne & Susan ChinChen, Andrew Brown, the Stoker Family, Claudia Jeffrey, Steven Gill.

Please let Pauline know of anyone you would like to put on the list, and also when someone's name can be removed. For St. Mary's, please pass names to David Gadsby (734922) and for St. John's to Marion Bowler (650261).

Today and This Week:

This evening, Feb. 4th at 6pm, Holy Trinity Church, Ashford in the Water, has an augmented Choral Evensong. Singers from Bakewell, and others, will join the resident choir. The Evening Canticles are 'Stanford in B-Flat'; the Introit is Henry G. Ley's 'A Prayer of King Henry VI'; the anthem is Malcolm Archer's 'Come, O come, our voices raise'. There will be the usual Ferial responses and a sung Psalm (No.65). Everybody is welcome! Come and enjoy this special service.

Mothers' Union AGM Meeting, Mon. 5thFeb. 7pm. This will include a short reflection on Mother Julian of Norwich.

Mothers' Union, Tues.6th Feb. 1.30 p.m. St. Helen's church hall. Members are asked to bring their favourite games to enjoy a games afternoon, after which will be the usual cake and tea. Visitors are always welcome.

The Presentation or Candlemas

This week we celebrate Jesus Christ, Light of our World, being presented in the Temple in Jerusalem. We too, by our baptism, are called to be lights in the world. *How can we shine in the world this week?*

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Annual Parochial Church Meeting, 2018

Our Annual Meeting is on **Sunday, 15th April**, approx. **12 noon** (after 11 a.m. service). Reports need to be sent to Penny Dakin no later than Friday, 16th Feb. This may seem early, but the report has to be collated, taken to the PCC for approval at its March meeting, then printed ready for 15th April.

Monday Munchers. We are a group of people who, in the main, live on our own but enjoy a meal out with others. Because there are so many of us, we are split into two groups. Each person receives a phone call the week before, inviting them to the meal. Usually 12 – 14 of us make the date, and we can order just what we want to eat. The Terrace Tea Room are extremely helpful. This month's dates are: Salt – Mon. 12 Feb., Pepper and Mustard – Mon. 19 Feb. If you think you might like to join us, do phone Kathleen on 732805.

New Date - Winster PCC. This is now **26th Feb. 10.30am** in the meeting room. Please pass this on to all members.

PCC REPORTS - please remember to get your PCC reports to the appropriate person in the next week or so. Thanks.

Calling Everyone!!

I've asked a few times for more volunteers to help in our churches. We need readers, intercessors, helpers with Holy Communion, and so on. Everyone is very welcome to help. If you are interested, please speak to me, to your churchwardens or the coordinators.

Our Next Family Service, St. Helen's, 11th Feb. 10 am.

This service will be dedicated to those who are lonely, ill, or in any other state of need. Everyone is welcome to come, as we ask the Lord to heal us and, as the prayer says, '*raise us up*'. This means raising us to wholeness and healing, even to contentment. If you know anyone who may be helped by this service, please do invite them to come along.

A Thought on Forgiveness

Last week was Holocaust Memorial Day (on the Anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz). Six million people were murdered, destroyed, their memories scrubbed from existence.

A few years ago, there was a lot of discussion about survivors, as well as all the families involved, being able to forgive. Sometimes there's a light in the darkness - we hear a Jewish person speaking words of healing and forgiveness. We can barely imagine the suffering, but can witness their bravery in speaking words of healing and forgiveness, even of love. Remember the Franciscan priest, Maximilian Kolbe, who joyfully gave himself up in Auschwitz for another prisoner who'd been chosen to die. Kolbe prayed the psalms and sang hymns until he was injected with poison. We too, as Christians, must (and I mean *must*) practise the gift of forgiveness. Both in the giving and in the receiving.

For there are two sides to forgiveness: giving and receiving. At first sight *giving* seems to be harder, but often we are not able to offer forgiveness to others because we have not been able to receive it ourselves. Only as people who have *accepted* forgiveness can we find the inner freedom to give it. Why is receiving forgiveness so difficult? It is very hard to say, 'Without your forgiveness, I am still bound to what happened between us. Only you can set me free.' That requires not only a confession that we have hurt somebody but also the humility to acknowledge our dependency on others. Only when we are prepared to *receive* forgiveness can we, in turn, give it.

To forgive another person from the heart is an act of liberation. We set that person free from the negative bonds that existed between us. We say, 'I no longer hold your offence against you.'

But there is more. We also free ourselves from the burden of being the 'offended one'. As long as we do not forgive those who have wounded us, we carry them with us.

Or worse still, we pull them as a heavy load. The great temptation is to cling in anger to our enemies, and then define ourselves as being offended and wounded by them.

Forgiveness, therefore, liberates not only the other but also ourselves. It is the way to the freedom of the children of God. I know this is a difficult journey - to forgive and to be forgiven - but I hope this reflection helps us all as we enter the Lenten Season in a few weeks.

With love and prayers. Stephen.

Annual Christian Day, 11th Feb. We shall be praying for those who are sick - whether physically, mentally or spiritually - and for those who are terminally ill.

This will be remembered in our Joint Family Service (10am at St. Helen's). Someone has commented, 'that's' not a very family friendly service!!' But healing is a great part of our Christian tradition and the younger members of the community need to remember that Jesus is (not was) the Divine Healer. So please support this service and do invite friends, family or neighbours who are unwell in any way. Within the service we will pray that the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, will bring peace to all of us who carry illness or pain

Rest Eternal

Many people are mourning the loss of a loved one at the moment. Please keep an eye open for those in need in our communities, as well as in our church families.

Improving Life at St. John's!

One of the most annoying and painful things in parish life is red tape and paper work! But on Thursday, 8th February, at 11am, we have people from the Diocese coming to St. John's to help us look at new heating and to discuss the removal of two benches. We're trying to make this church more user friendly and warmer! Please keep the project in your prayers.

Brief thoughts for the Week Ahead

*'We are perishing for lack of wonder, not for lack of wonders'.
(G.K. Chesterton)*

*'Nothing teaches us about the preciousness of the Creator as much as when we learn the emptiness of everything else.
(Charles Spurgeon)*

*'Next to the Word of God, music deserves the highest praise. The gift of language combined with the gift of song was given to man that he should proclaim the Word of God through music.'
(Martin Luther)*

*'Who will deny that true religion consists, in a great measure, in vigorous and lively actings of the inclination and will of the soul, or the fervent exercises of the heart? That religion which God requires, and will accept, does not consist in weak, dull and lifeless wishes, raising us but a little above a state of indifference."
(Jonathan Edwards)*

*'Put it this way: if your idea of God, if your idea of the salvation offered in Christ, is vague or remote, your idea of worship will be fuzzy and ill-formed. The closer you get to the truth, the clearer becomes the beauty, and the more you will find worship welling up within you. That's why theology and worship belong together. The one isn't just a head-trip; the other isn't just emotion'.
(N.T. Wright)*

Psalm 24

Refrain: The Lord of hosts: he is the King of glory.

- 1 The earth is the Lord's and all that fills it,
the compass of the world and all who dwell therein.
- 2 For he has founded it upon the seas
and set it firm upon the rivers of the deep.
- 3 'Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord,
or who can rise up in his holy place?'
- 4 'Those who have clean hands and a pure heart,
who have not lifted up their soul to an idol,
nor sworn an oath to a lie;
- 5 'They shall receive a blessing from the Lord,
a just reward from the God of their salvation.'
- 6 Such is the company of those who seek him,
of those who seek your face, O God of Jacob.
- 7 Lift up your heads, O gates;
be lifted up, you everlasting doors;
and the King of glory shall come in.
- 8 'Who is the King of glory?'
'The Lord, strong and mighty,
the Lord who is mighty in battle.'
- 9 Lift up your heads, O gates;
be lifted up, you everlasting doors;
and the King of glory shall come in.
- 10 'Who is this King of glory?'
'The Lord of hosts,
he is the King of glory.'

Please take this pew sheet home for details of what is coming up and also for prayer.