



SAINT MARY'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Newsletter

Our Mission Statement:

Saint Mary's is a Christ-centred family, caring, sharing and working together, seeking to change through growth.

February 2016

Dear Friends,

I'm sure like me, you are wondering how January is already over. First let me say thank you to everyone for your continued kindness and support. I'm very grateful for all those who put so much work in preparing the church for Christmas. It was so wonderful to see so many involved, whether it was with the Christmas tree, the flowers, the decorations, the choir practice, cleaning the church or being involved in the services. My first Christmas with you was very special indeed.

Lent is upon us. I've been struggling this year with what to give up. I've had to reflect afresh on what Lent is all about, and so I share some of my thoughts with you. Why do we give up something for Lent? Well, the truth is, we don't just give up something; we also gain something. We give up something in order to gain awareness and the possibility of making different choices, choices that will root us more deeply in the life God intends for us.

We should give up something that will create a real absence in our lives, something that will disturb us, annoy us, get us thinking, get us itching, indeed, get us on our knees, praying. When we start to get irritated, and want to fall right back into the habit we've forsaken, we know we are ripe for real change.

The absence in our lives created by our Lenten fast will give us the freedom to give ourselves more fully to God and to our neighbours in love. To love is to will the good of the beloved. To love is not just to desire a person, whether God or our

neighbour. Love that is only desire is ultimately selfish, for love based on desire reduces the beloved to a means for satisfying oneself. In other words, it is not the other person who is loved, but the self. To truly love someone is to will or choose his or her good. This means love is essentially sacrificial, it is a giving of oneself to the other for their sake, not out own. Lent helps us practise such sacrifice.

All of this is to say that we should choose very carefully what we will deny ourselves during Lent. Don't just go for the trivial or even what are often called 'guilty pleasures' like sweets or social media. Choose something that will make you come face to face with aspects of your life that are not converted to sacrificial love. Give up something that really keeps you to yourself and keeps you from others.

I've decided that for Lent I am going to give up my 'downtime'. I usually like to spend the evening reading articles or watching interviews. It's a way to unwind. But as I've reflected, it's often a way to avoid my family. The fact is, I could be playing with the kids, talking with Allison or helping clean up during this time. By giving up my 'downtime', I will have to face my selfishness. But then I will gain the freedom to choose, the freedom to sacrifice, the freedom to give myself for the sake of my loved ones, the freedom to will their good.

I urge you to choose carefully what you will give up in Lent so that you might grow more deeply into the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Yours in Christ,

James

Normal weekly services:

Sunday: Holy Eucharist at 8a.m. and 10.15a.m.

Tuesday:
Morning Prayer at 7.45a.m.

Wednesday:
Holy Eucharist at 10a.m.

Thursday:
Morning Prayer at 7.45a.m.

From the Registers:

Deaths:

Alexander Reid (Sandy), 12th. December, 2015.
May he rest in peace, to rise in glory.

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Lent Study and Soup Group

Beginning in Lent and running through Eastertide, we will meet at 1p.m. in the church on Sundays for a soup lunch and a series on Living Well. Through Lent, we will look at patterns of living that take us away from a good life, and through Eastertide we will discuss a pattern of everyday spirituality. Sign up at the back of the church to attend and/or bring soup for one Sunday.



Open 4 Prayer

Open 4 Prayer resumed on 26th. January – watch out for further announcements!

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Vestry Report

The vestry has met twice since the last Newsletter was issued and the following are the main items discussed.

The engineer who serviced the heaters in church has failed to identify a supplier for spare parts so unfortunately some of the heaters are not working properly. The vestry is trying to find a solution with the present system as a completely new one would be too expensive for us to install at this time.

There was discussion about the website. Mary McKinnell resigned from the position as website manager and Carol Graham is updating the site at present. The vestry has decided the following: (1) the website needs updating as there is old

information and pictures of the previous Rector on the site; (2) the website needs more information about what it is like to worship at St Mary's, what we believe, some of the Rector's writings and information about baptisms, weddings and funerals; and (3) the website needs an aesthetical refresh, possibly including videos or interactive media. The vestry has asked Carol Graham to continue to populate the site with content and Allison Merrick to design the presentation and media of the site.

The quinquennial inspections of the Church and the Rectory have been carried out and we are waiting for a written report from the architect but he gave an illustrated feedback to the vestry in December and it is clear that there is a significant amount of work required on the short, medium and long term. In the meantime, the slater is to undertake some repair work on the roof of the Choir Vestry.

The sound system continues to be problematic but the Rector is in discussion with a company to try to rectify the quality of the sound.

Morag Kelly has resigned from the position of preparing the pew sheets for Sunday services and Avril has taken on the role now. The vestry would like to thank Morag for the tremendous amount of work she has done in that respect for a number of years now.

At the meeting on 20th January, the Vestry appointed Lydia Ross as treasurer for a further 12 months. Mary Allardyce had intended giving up the post of secretary last year having completed 12 years in the post but remained in post for a further year until Rev Merrick had 'settled in'. The vestry has appointed David Dillard for a period of 12 months.

Mary Allardyce

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St. Mary's A.G.M.

The Annual General Meeting will be held in the church after the 10.15 service on 7th. February. Nomination forms for posts on the vestry are at the back of the church. Any questions should be submitted in writing to the vestry beforehand.

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Church Heating – can we meet the challenge?

Many of us are uncomfortably aware that our old heating system is gradually failing us. It is now impossible to get parts for the gas heaters, and some of them have stopped working altogether, while others sometimes seem to overheat.

Obviously this is going to be an expensive undertaking, but here's an idea to kick-start the fundraising. Can we pledge £10 a week for a year? Some can, some can't, but even if forty people do, we'll have £20,000 and a great start to a new heating system that will look after our building and our wellbeing for years to come!

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Shrove Tuesday Pancakes

There will be a pancake party at the Rectory at 6p.m. – bring your family and friends! (but please sign up at the back of the church for numbers!)



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The Rector's Warden

In our new short series, we are looking at the roles in our church and what they actually involve – sometimes it seems like a mystery until you're actually doing them! This month we look at the Rector's Warden.

The Rector's Warden is invited to serve by the Rector. He acts as advisor and advocate to the Rector, and liaises with the People's Warden (in an interregnum, the two wardens share the chairing of vestry meetings and are the main link between the congregation and the Bishop).

In essence, he or she advises the Rector with regard to new ideas and discusses them with the People's Warden to find out if he or she agrees.

Sunday School

Just the one birthday in February: Evie Merrick will be three on the first day of the month. Happy Birthday!

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Choral Workshops Continue!



Jason continues to run entertaining Tuesday evening Choral workshops that will help us learn the hymns for upcoming services as well as other music. Come along at 7p.m. for an hour – no experience required, just enthusiasm!

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Job Evaluations ...

These are actual quotes taken from government employee performance evaluations

- His men would follow him anywhere, but only out of curiosity.
- He would be out of his depth in a car park puddle.
- Technically sound, but socially impossible.
- This Officer reminds me very much of a gyroscope- always spinning around at a frantic pace, but not really going anywhere.
- He has the wisdom of youth, and the energy of old age.
- Since my last report, this employee has reached rock-bottom and has started to dig
- I would not allow this employee to breed.
- This employee is really not so much of a has-been, but more of a definite won't be.
- Works well when under constant supervision and cornered like a rat in a trap.
- When he opens his mouth, it seems that it is only to change feet.
- This young lady has delusions of adequacy.
- He sets low personal standards and then consistently fails to achieve them.
- This employee is depriving a village somewhere of an idiot.

- This employee should go far, and the sooner he starts the better.
- Got a full 6-pack, but lacks the plastic thingy to hold it all together.
- A gross ignoramus - 144 times worse than an ordinary ignoramus.
- He doesn't have ulcers, but he's a carrier.
- He's been working with glue too much.
- He would argue with a signpost.
- He brings a lot of joy whenever he leaves the room.
- When his IQ reaches 50, he should sell.
- If you see two people talking and one looks bored, he's the other one.
- A photographic memory but with the lens cover glued on.
- A prime candidate for natural de-selection.
- Donated his brain to science before he was done using it.
- Gates are down, the lights are flashing, but the train isn't coming.
- He's got two brains cells, one is lost and the other is out looking for it.
- If he were any more stupid, he'd have to be watered twice a week.
- If you give him a penny for his thoughts, you'd get change.
- If you stand close enough to him, you can hear the ocean.
- One neuron short of a synapse.
- Some drink from the fountain of knowledge; he only gargled.
- Takes him 2 hours to watch 60-minutes.

(thanks to Jimmie Bain)

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An incredible way to look at GOD

When God solves our problems, we have faith in His abilities. When God doesn't solve our problems He has faith in our abilities. God's accuracy may be observed in the hatching of eggs.

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- those of the canary in 14 days;
- those of the barnyard hen in 21 days;
- eggs of ducks and geese in 28 days;
- those of the mallard in 35 days;
- The eggs of the parrot and the ostrich hatch in 42 days. (Notice, they are all divisible by seven, the number of days in a week!)

God's wisdom is seen in the making of an elephant. . . .

- The four legs of this great beast all bend forward in the same direction.
- No other quadruped is so made.
- God planned that this animal would have a huge body too large to live on two legs.
- For this reason He gave it four fulcrums so that it can rise from the ground easily.
- The horse rises from the ground on its two front legs first.
- A cow rises from the ground with its two hind legs first.

How wise the Lord is in all His works of creation!

- Each watermelon has an even number of stripes on the rind.
- Each orange has an even number of segments.
- Each ear of corn has an even number of rows.
- Each wheatstalk has an even number of grains.
- Every bunch of bananas has on its lowest row an even number of bananas, and each row decreases by one, so that one row has an even number and the next row an odd number.
- The waves of the sea roll in on shore twenty-six to the minute in all kinds of weather.
- All grains are found in even numbers on the stalks.

God has caused the flowers to blossom at certain specified times during the day. Linnaeus, the great botanist, once said that if he had a conservatory containing the right kind of soil, moisture and temperature, he could tell the time of day or night by the flowers that were open and those that were closed.

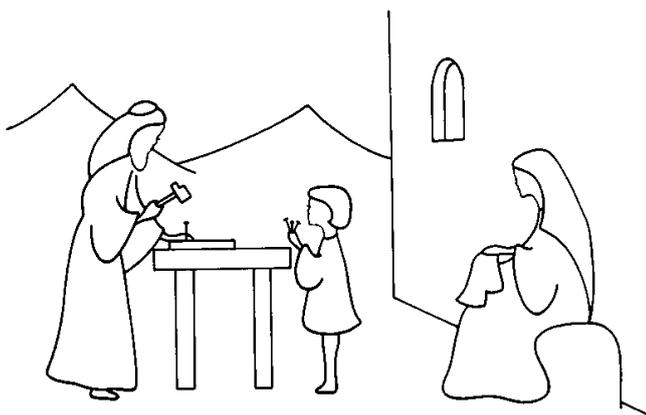
The lives of each of us may be ordered by the Lord in a beautiful way for His glory, if we will only entrust Him with our life. If we try to regulate our own life, it will only be a mess and a failure.

Only God, who made our brain and heart, can successfully guide them to a profitable end.



Saints' Days in February:

- 1st. St. Bride of Kildare
2nd. The Presentation of Our Lord
6th. The Martyrs of Japan
10th. St. Scholastica
14th. Ss. Cyril and Methodius
15th. Thomas Bray
17th. St. Finan of Lindisfarne
18th. St. Colman of Lindisfarne
19th. Martin Luther
23rd. St. Polycarp of Smyrna



Your Magazine

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CHURCH DIRECTORY

Rector: Rev. Dr. James Merrick (397414)
jmerrick@stmaryscardenplace.org.uk

Assistant Priest: Rev. Jason Hobbs

Rector's Warden: David Rose

People's Warden: T.B.A.

Vestry Secretary: Dave Dillard

Vestry Treasurer: Lydia Ross (864072)

Lay Representative: Nicola Mills

Sacristan: Mary Allardyce

Organist: Christopher Black

Sunday School: To be arranged

LEGO Young Adults Group: Mary
mjmckinnell@gmail.com

Protection of Vulnerable Groups Co-ordinator:
Elizabeth Smyth

Flower Convener: Lucy Fleming

Church Administrator: Avril Scott (561383)
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All copy for the March magazine must be with the Editor by 22nd February, 2016. Hard copy to Nicola Mills, or telephone 01224 488700, or e-mail to palaeography@aol.com. Thank you!

St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Carden Place, is a charity (Scottish Charity No. SCO 14062).