

This Week at St Mary's

19 January 2020

UNSHAKABLE HOPE

In the birth of Jesus, hope dawned more brightly than anyone had ever seen before. This one life would bring everlasting hope and peace to anyone who would receive it. It would change the course of history. It is the reason this ancient Church stands.

In the movie *Frozen II*, but there is a moment when exasperated Anna says to her anxious sister Elsa, *'When will you see yourself as I see you?'* In the life of Jesus we are truly able to see ourselves as God sees us: in more desperate need of saving than we realised and yet, wondrously, more loved than we could ever imagine.

This eternal reality can fill us with hope even when we feel hopeless, not a hope based on resolving all our problems, nor proportional to how much we believe in God, but finding out how much God believes in us. We all need someone to believe in us. We don't need to find hope in ourselves, God's hope is more than enough.

It is the scarcity of something that most often destroys hope and creates fear: the scarcity of money, of friends, of love, of forgiveness, of truth and of justice. And ultimately a scarcity of something to hope for and someone to place our hope in.

Jesus comes to meet our scarcity with his abundance. St John announces, Jesus came *'full of grace and truth'*. Not as a remote spiritual force or like some cosmic dust, as in Philip Pulman's stunning trilogy. God in person reveals himself to us in all his fullness, and invites us to receive the truth about who we are, and why our world is broken as well as beautiful, but also to receive his grace which alone can draw us into God's presence and peace.

Here is the only source of unshakable hope.

BISHOP PAUL (Carol Service Reflection)

**A very warm welcome, especially to anyone
new or visiting St Mary's**

**We are usually open between 10am and 3pm Mon-Sat
and during services on Sunday**

LAST WEEK AT ST MARY'S...

Sunday 10.45 - Phil Williams, Archdeacon of Nottingham was with us for our Parish Eucharist. He highlighted three features of the baptism of Jesus; it **reconnected repentance** (and the message of John the Baptist to Jesus' ministry;) it **revealed royalty** as Jesus was anointed King as the Holy Spirit rested upon him in the form of the dove; and it **revealed relationships** in the affirming words of God the Father, from heaven (after 400 years of silence) and in the words of comfort to people (through the servant songs of Isaiah 40 to 55). Jesus was revealed as the One who holds in perfect tension the love and grace of God on the one hand with the call to avoid the judgement of God through repentance and faith in Christ.

Evensong - Helen Hall, reflected on the theme that "Good actions and good words are never futile."

Tuesday - students from Nottingham College sat their exams in the church. We hope this will lead to their having positive associations with St Mary's!

Thursday - having noticed evidence of deteriorating condition of the **Fra Bartolomeo painting of Madonna and Child**, Hall Young Conservation undertook a very thorough on-site examination. Clear that some of the paint is flaking. Report to follow.

NOW AND COMING UP SOON...

2 FEBRUARY - The 10.45 Service will not be a Eucharist (which will be at 6.30pm.) In the morning, we will be doing a first of a 'more family friendly' service. Aim is to create a service with worship true to our choral tradition, but one tailored draw in new people, not least families. Candlemas procession included (one also will take place at the Eucharist.) Please invite anyone you think might be interested.

WELLBEING AT WORK COURSE starts 5 February (7.15 - 8.30 am.) A new initiative led by Tom, and Jo Tatum (Workplace Chaplain). As a Church we want to be part of the realities people at work face each day, so that we can discuss key topics for flourishing and well-being.

FRIDAY 7 FEBRUARY LIGHT NIGHT AT ST MARY'S 6-9pm

Enjoy the ancient beauty of St Mary's church by candlelight, view some spectacular light sculptures and projection art and hear the mesmerising sounds of the choir of St Mary's with short performances throughout the evening. Team needed to welcome visitors and help the event run smoothly. If you are willing to help, either all evening or just for an hour or two, please let Ed Mills know (edwardmills1@hotmail.com)

SATURDAY 8 FEBRUARY 7.30-9.30pm Music by Puccini, Vasks and Fauré at St Mary's performed by Ewart Hodge (viola), the Choir of St Mary's and the Orchestra of the Restoration directed by John Keys. Tickets (unreserved) £15, £10 concessions, £5 student standby, details on website and posters.

WEDNESDAY 19 FEBRUARY 12-1.30PM Workplace Chaplaincy *INSIGHT* Meeting - 'AN INSIDE JOB' - Prison can be a closed world to most of us so Martin Tyack will give us an *INSIGHT* into what an average day for a prison chaplain involves - the role, functions, expectations and duties. Our host is **Nelsons Solicitors - Pennine House, 8 Stanford St, NG1 7BQ** (by the Broadmarsh Centre main entrance. As a buffet lunch is provided please email: lensimmonds@aol.com to confirm your attendance.

Sunday 23 Feb 1045. Richard Bull, Deputy Dean of the School of Architecture, Design and the Built Environment at NTU and a Professor of Energy and Behaviour Change, is our preacher, opening up one of our world's most urgent issues today, the environmental crisis. He will speak on Nottingham's recent Climate Emergency declaration and then facilitate a discussion afterwards (over lunch - please let Di know if you can come and/or help) and on the role of Nottingham's faith community in helping the city become carbon neutral by 2028.

Prayer Meeting

Wednesday (Vestry) 5.30-6pm
Praying for St Mary's & Nottingham

Upcoming Services

Sunday 10.45am Sung Eucharist
Sunday 6.30pm Choral Evensong
Wednesday 6.15pm Choral Evensong
Thursday 1.15pm Holy Communion

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Please continue to pray for

Estelle Barks  
John Bowers  
John Conway  
Harry Palmer  
Mike Ridley

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