

This Week at St Mary's

29 November 2020

OUR GENEROUS BENEFACTORS

I'd be fascinated to find out more of the origins of St Mary's inherited funds. I'd hazard a guess that they represent a combination of generosity from bequests and donations, as well as from the sale of property over the years and canny investing, and maybe some from surprising sources. I strongly suspect that anyone who was part of creating what we now have would be pleased to see how important it's proving in this time of financial strain. If now isn't the proverbial 'rainy day' when will it be?

I feel the same gratitude when I look at 'the oldest door in Nottingham', when I hear still being rung Henry Oldfield II's 'fourth' bell (dating to 1595) and lots more at the finest medieval building in Nottingham. Things which have lasted centuries underline the debt we owe our forebears.

With the unforeseen losses of both income from 'events' as well as from Sunday collections, yellow envelopes, etc, we are heading for a deficit this accounting year in the order of £50,000. With our reserves, there is no crisis. But with all money there for a rainy day, once it's gone, it's gone.

As I have done before at this time of year, may I appeal to everyone please prayerfully to consider what you can now give to St Mary's? This is between you and God, as the Holy Spirit, the Encourager comes alongside to nudge you, maybe to help you turn intention into action. Nothing is ever too small, nor should there be limits on our generosity.

If something done now which in the future evokes gratitude, we will be delighted. All of us have that opportunity. I find it helpful to see it as an investment, not so much for me, rather each of our participation in God's Kingdom.

Tom Gillman

GIVING MONEY - Best done **online** via **Donate button** on the website. Preferable from St Mary's viewpoint is a **Standing Order** (NatWest St Mary's PCC Nottm 560061 00834602) For **one-off donations**, **cheque**, **cash** yellow envelope, in chest by South Porch Door.

PUSHING BACK STEREOTYPES (Denis Tully's Sermon)

If you met Gemma you would not know that she has any experience of homelessness. Her father had poor mental health and as a consequence of trying to intervene to support him she found herself the victim of domestic abuse. Her subsequent relationship with her boyfriend to whom she turned for solace ended similarly.

Gemma did not intend becoming street homeless. It just happened as a consequence of circumstances that were beyond her control. Throughout her time of being homeless she did everything she could to maintain her dignity. She worked on keeping herself safe. She kept herself tidy and using facilities in public toilets she kept herself clean.

It was another homeless woman who told Gemma about Emmanuel House. There she met a support worker and was able to shower and get fresh clothes. That is how Emmanuel House began sharing her journey out of homelessness.

Her story is a pushback against usual stereotypes. She is young and female. She is not a drinker nor a drug taker. She doesn't have mental have illness. Gemma's story provides insight into the story behind the story.

The reading from Matthew 25.31-end highlights how Christians might begin to respond to someone like Gemma, reminding her of her human dignity, her worth as a human being and that explicitly or implicitly they are loved by God. A small act of love towards an individual and a reminder to Christians and the Church what we should be about. When we look on a homeless person we look upon Christ himself.

In Nottingham 80 and 100 families become homelessness every week. Recently 150 individuals were (over a month) counted rough sleeping. Emmanuel House supported 94 people in the 26 weeks of the *Everybody In* initiative, supporting 49 people into move on accommodation. The results have been remarkable, improved mental health and physical wellbeing, some reducing their drinking.

CHRISTMAS - The new guidelines are awaited, not least in hope that congregations will be allowed to sing. As numbers will be restricted, there will be **two Carol Services** (duplicated) and we hope to have **two services on Christmas Day**.

Friday 18 th	1.00pm	Lace Market Carol Service
Sunday 20 th	6.30pm	Carol Service
Christmas Eve	7.00pm	Carol Service
Christmas Eve	11.30pm	TBC
Christmas Day		TBC

ADVENT RESOURCES. Advent is a time of change, with prayer and reflection central. The CofE has produced resources. <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/preparing-advent-christmas-2020-comfort-and-joy>

See also ***Finding Light in the Deepest Dark: Journeying through Lament to Gratitude*** which combines biblical reflection with activities and music, and features work by artist Scott Erickson. Designed to be used in one sitting, either by an individual or in a group www.sanctuarymentalhealth.org/uk

CHRISTMAS CARDS - instead of these being left at St Mary's for collection by members of the congregation, as this is not possible in 2020, please consider donating the money instead to Emmanuel House. We have the DONKEY and DOVE Christmas cards left over from last year - if you'd like some, let us know, no charge, but please make a donation to Emmanuel House via their website or by cheque payable to Emmanuel House. <https://www.emmanuelhouse.org.uk/category/donations/>

EMMANUEL HOUSE SUPPORT CENTRE premiered their film 'Lone' recently and it is now available to watch on their website emmanuelhouse.org.uk. Launching their Winter Appeal in an alternative way, 'Lone' is a short film highlighting actual experiences of homeless people in Nottingham. Do watch & give.

THE MEADOWS FOODBANK - this week they welcome toiletries; washing up items; sugar; packet jelly; pasta sauce; tinned veg, fruit & meat. Contact Beth Mitchell 07775707855 0115 947 6736 tony.m1941@icloud.com

Wherever you are, we extend a very warm greeting to you, especially if you've recently discovered St Mary's

*St Mary's is usually open for private prayer and reflection
11.30-2.30pm each weekday - please call to confirm if visiting*

WORSHIP SERVICES THIS WEEK

NO CONGREGATIONS ALLOWED

11.00am ADVENT SUNDAY SERVICE Preacher Tom Gillum
(Broadcast - see our website and follow the link, including Order of Service)

6.30PM SERVICE FOR ADVENT
(Broadcast)

6.15PM WEDNESDAY EVENSONG
(Broadcast - see our website and follow the link, including Order of Service)

6pm THURSDAY EVENING PRAYER (skype) Contact Grant

PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY FOR Estelle Barks, John Bowers,
Rosemary Clark, Barbara Davis, Harry Palmer, Mike Ridley

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