

# ***This Week at St Mary's***

**14<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

## **GOD PERSUADING US HE IS GOD**

As a young adult thinking about Christianity, someone asked me, 'How, were God to exist, do you think He would go about persuading us humans that He did?' I thought about it then and have regularly come back to it.

Many might first suggest He would perform amazing miracles. Surely for us to confronted with something really eye catching and dramatic, beyond the explanation of science, would persuade us that 'He is out there'? But we're sceptical aren't we, assuming it'll be only a matter of time before science gives a rational explanation of what we once thought was miraculous. However, it's also the case for many today, as it was 2000 years ago, that to see someone (or themselves) healed or wonderfully set free following prayer can really help them engage with the truth of God.

For others, it may be by brilliant teaching and explanation, as we come to understand ourselves, our world and the cosmos everything making complete sense that might be persuaded of the reality of God. We'd have a real vision to live by, to inspire and direct. Better still if it was in brilliantly told, in beautiful prose or poetry or song. That doesn't sound too far off Bible territory. Many however, find all sorts of reasons to remain unpersuaded.

Christians emphasise that because God is personal and relational, pure love, that is where we need to start (and end). To demonstrate this, He came to live among us, shared our lives, He drew close and was vulnerable to suffering. In particular, he faced death head on, in its most awful reality, but He emerged victorious over it. It's only when we decide to live differently, following the vision Jesus has given of 'resurrection living', that we're likely to be persuaded.

*Tom Gillman*

## OUR EASTER SERVICES

Easter is only three weeks off. The Services before and especially on the day itself are intended to help us enter into the amazing and wonderful things God has done for us.

**Palm Sunday**, the start of Holy Week. At our 11.00 Eucharist we hear the cheering crowds. There is more than a sense of foreboding of dark clouds gathering. Our ideas of 'success' may not coincide with how God sees things.

**Maundy Thursday**, the last meal Jesus enjoyed with His disciples, when He surprised them by washing their feet, an example for them (and us) to follow. As the Eucharist ends, we will 'strip the altar', a bare church revealing the side of us which would prefer there to be no evidence of our being followers of Jesus. A silent prayer vigil follows.

### **Good Friday.**

- The 3 hours over the middle of the day reach their terrible finale with the death of Jesus on the Cross. The strong liturgy includes poems which anticipated this, as well as a dramatically read account of the Passion. Stations of the Cross will be set around St Mary's for meditation and devotion.
- 7.00pm via Youtube Reinhard Keiser Markuspassion arranged by J.S. Bach, who arranged and enlarged earlier work attributed to Keiser five times during his life. This devotional performance uses material for the first performance given at the Weimar Court c1713. It is sung in German and will have English subtitles.

### **Easter Day.**

- A 5.30am start is HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, the women on the day of the resurrection set the example. Weather permitting, we will be outside for the Easter vigil, with traditional readings. At sunrise the Pascal Candle will be lit as we celebrate Jesus' defeat of death and the breaking in of the New Creation.
- 11.00 - more celebration of Christ's resurrection, with wonderful Easter music in the glorious setting of St Mary's.

**EASTER MONDAY** - a special service for our children with Easter egg hunt, Easter garden and more.

## **FOSTERING NOTTINGHAM'S MOST VULNERABLE CHILDREN.**

The church led 100 Homes Campaign has resulted in 23 new foster homes in the last 3 years, with more on the way. See the video in the News section of our website as Rob and Jo share their experience.

**LENT RESOURCE** Download onto your phone or tablet and follow the devotions

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/liv Lent2021-church-resources-gods-story-our-story>

**MEADOWS FOODBANK** the current level of demand is around **3 times higher** than in the same period a year ago. Increased numbers are experiencing financial difficulties and many other foodbanks in the City are closed or operating on a limited basis. A **financial donation** would be welcome. Also if you are a **CO-OP member**, consider nominating the Foodbank as your '**local community cause**', just access your account on-line and select 'choose a local cause' at the top of the page, go to 'start supporting this cause' and nominate the Meadows Foodbank & Community Café. Items needed: **Sugar (white/500g bags), Long-life milk, Curry sauce, Macaroni cheese, Toilet rolls, Fruit juice, Jam.**

**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 560061 00834602) For **one-off donations, cheque, cash** yellow envelope, in chest by South Porch Door (or by post - full address below).

## **BEST LARGE CofE WEDDING VENUE IN NOTTINGHAM**

has gone to St Mary's in the Lace Market. At the 6th annual Global Wedding Awards 2021, proudly hosted by LUX Life magazine, subject to their rigorous internal vetting procedure, we were declared the winner. They draw attention to their *extensive research and judging process* meaning that this award is *driven by merit and centred around an in-depth evaluation of skills and services on offer*. They hope we will be part of their annual celebratory magazine, the primary vehicle for making the official announcement.

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

**11.00am SUNDAY SERVICE in St Mary's Church  
also Audio Broadcast live via our website  
(follow the link, including for Order of Service)**

**6pm THURSDAY EVENING PRAYER (skype) Contact Grant  
(gwalton@stmarynotts.org)**

**CHURCH OPEN for private prayer & reflection  
11.30-2.30 Monday-Friday**

**PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY FOR  
Estelle Barks, John Bowers, Harry Palmer, Mike Ridley**

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