

This Week at St Mary's

29th May 2022

GOD SINGING

*'The Lord your God will exult over you with loud singing'
(Zephaniah 3.17)*

I don't recall thinking much before of God singing - a big oversight. It's obvious on reflection that He would sing. In *The Magician's Nephew*, C.S. Lewis so describes Aslan's voice at creation,

'A voice had begun to sing.. it seemed to come from all directions at once. Its lower notes were deep enough to be the voice of the earth herself. There were no words. There was hardly a tune. But it was beyond comparison, the most beautiful noise he'd ever heard.'

It's in the context of redemption that the prophet Zephaniah locates God singing to His people. Displaced Jews return home, hope is rising, now is a time of planting and rebuilding, of colour and plenty, dancing and joy. Lots of echoes from around our world today, many dreaming for that day.

I imagine Jesus singing with and to His disciples after His resurrection, this the greatest moment of redemption. For us, now is the time to become familiar with what we will be doing in the new creation. Singing with God is our destiny, as the final book of the Bible, Revelation underlines; *'the sound of many waters'* in uninterrupted flow.

Choral music aims to allow human voices to join with the 'singing Lord God' especially for the greatness of Jesus' redemption. At St Mary's we mainly currently use music we have inherited, which we aim to make our own. Other churches use more a contemporary repertoire. Some is celebratory and upbeat, some gentle and reflective, for renewal. St Paul urged Christians in his day to 'sing in the spirit', ex tempore and not limited to a learnt language. Under the Holy Spirit's inspiration, the different voices and tunes become blended with the singing voice of God, in a wonderful symphony of praise.

Tom Gillman

REFLECTING ON MY CONFIRMATION

My confirmation at the Minster by the Bishop of Sherwood on Easter Eve marked the culmination of God's work in my life over the past 25 years as a Christian. While the other St Mary's candidates had been baptised the previous week, mine had occurred as an infant, placing me in what felt like a different dynamic, as I had never made that same decision for myself.

The coronavirus pandemic and its attendant disruption resulted in my confirmation plans falling to the back of my mind. St Mary's was shuttered and I was prematurely thrust onto the hospital frontlines. Yet it was during this period of upheaval, uncertainty and tragedy, that God drew me closest.

He took me with Him not to comfortable places, but to wards full of COVID, to be among overworked colleagues and scared patients, where He nurtured in me a habit of prayer, witness and compassion. In the fits and starts of re-opening between lockdowns, St Mary's too felt ever more valuable a community in which to meet and worship, yet with an echo of the sense of surrounding danger felt by the earliest Christians when they met. As part of the Exploring Faith group, I heard how the tumult of the pandemic had shaped the other candidates' lives.

It was in Holy Week that I realised I had as little control over my baptism as an infant, as I did over the path leading up to my confirmation. And still then, confirmation was not a thing *I* was doing for God, but a thing *God* was achieving for me, and what it did was provide a beautiful and visible sign of the grace of the God who, from my baptism - despite all my missteps and rebellion - had been patiently and mercifully drawing me back to His truth.

JAMES PERSICO

LAST WEEK AT ST MARY'S

Saturday Craft and Flea Fair - over 600 passed through the doors

Also, **Firefighters Memorial** which honoured 23 who had died during the Covid 19 lock-down, with restricted numbers at their funerals.

Wednesday First **Workplace Wednesday**, with space set aside for workers. Then **Insight Meeting** with David Astill, MD of NCT who gave a fascinating overview of Nottingham post pandemic

Nottingham College exams have been continuing.

Please note that St Mary's will be open as usual 11.00 - 2.30 on Monday - Wednesday this coming week, but the church and the office will be closed on Thursday 2nd and Friday 3rd. There will be NO THURSDAY COMMUNION.

In the week starting 6th June we will only be open on Wednesday 8th but Thursday Communion will take place.

ANNUAL MEETING. PCC members are Peter Bartlett, Tess Clothier, Rachel Fiskin, Jean Hammonds (Lay Vice Chair and Treasurer) Kevin Hancox (Deanery Synod and Safeguarding Officer) Ruth Lindstrom, Ed Mills (Church Warden) James Persico, Len Simmonds, Jonathan Stork, Matt Triggs (Secretary) Heather Walpole, Margaret Wiedemann (Church Warden)

SPECIAL REFRESHMENTS today after the 1045 service as Grant finishes his time as curate here at St Mary's. All welcome.

QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE SERVICE 5th June. NB 11am start. Come to & let others know of this special celebratory civic service. Amongst others, Michael and Rosemary Clark will be sharing memories. Ben Staniforth is singing a solo. Violin piece from Sapphie Johnson.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES - Please note that there are many opportunities to volunteer, both in the services, with children's work and in many other ways - please see last week's TWASM.

GIVING TO ST MARY'S Still with no collections we very much rely on your financial support. Kindly use online banking (NatWest 56-00-61, St Mary's PCC a/c 00834602); cash or cheque in the donations chest; the card reader; or via the website. Please use Gift Aid if you are a UK tax-payer. Standing order forms are by the south porch.

FROM MEADOWS FOODBANK Needed please - UHT milk; 500g bags sugar; coffee; jam; small bottles cooking oil; tinned meat, tuna, fruit, sweetcorn, tomatoes, potatoes; toiletries; laundry tabs; washing-up liquid; or cash donations. Tues 5.30-7.15, Fri 10-12, Sat 11-1pm NG2 2JD

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

FORTHCOMING SERVICES

10.45am SUNG EUCHARIST

also Audio Broadcast live via our website
(follow the link, including for Order of Service)

6.30pm EVENSONG Live & Broadcast

6.15pm WEDNESDAY EVENSONG

NO THURSDAY COMMUNION THIS WEEK

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

ST MARY'S REMAINS COVID SENSITIVE,
especially to the most vulnerable,
in respect of the use of masks, distancing and sanitising.

PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY FOR

Estelle Barks Jenny Du May & her husband Peter
Stephen Morris Kirsten Solway

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