

January 2018 Edition 25

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven. Ecclesiastes 3

A very Happy New Year to you all – I expect that for many of you the Christmas festivities are rather a distant memory by now. One of the things I find disconcerting about the New Year is how – for a couple of days at least – the newspapers are full of the ways in which we should be changing our lives. There is a strong sense in which turning over a New Year should represent a new start, and that can sometimes be a helpful thing. However, the reality often proves to be rather different. It will, as always, be interesting to see whether the gyms remain as full into February and March as they were on January 1st...

I wonder whether at St. Mary's we might take a slightly different approach to the New Year. When New Year's resolutions don't work, it can be because they lack a firm foundation. After a couple of months here, I know that we have

a very firm foundation on which to build. So perhaps we could take a little time this New Year to celebrate and appreciate what it is that we do well – as the foundation for all that lies ahead.

Simply looking back to Christmas there is so much to celebrate – the service of Nine Lessons and Carols was a joyful festival of music and worship; children and families joined in as we told the Christmas story at the Crib services; all ages found a home at St. Mary's for prayer, reflection, praise and thanksgiving.

Personally I am enormously grateful to everyone who made – and makes – that possible. Worship runs smoothly because of a huge team of people dedicated to everything from welcome and handing out books to setting the altar, lighting the candles and making tea afterwards. (The list is not intended to be inclusive, and my thanks extend to you all.)

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And worship is simply the start. From the Women's and Men's Groups to House Groups and Toddler Group; whether it's those who take care of the maintenance of the buildings or those who visit people in their homes and

hospital, St. Mary's is a place of genuine care and concern. So, let's take an opportunity to remember all that it is that is going well, as well as looking forward to all that lies ahead in 2018.

Rev Theresa Ricketts



On **Sunday March 4** we have our first Mission & Outreach talk for 2018. We are blessed to have Julie O'Brien from **Christians Against Poverty** also known as "**CAP**" coming to talk to us in the 9.30am Service. Julie works in the Sutton CAP Centre helping many people deal with their money problems.

With a small donation and big faith, John Kirkby started Christians Against Poverty in 1996. He believed God was calling him to sacrifice his career in finance and use his knowledge of the industry to help the poor. Since then, CAP has rapidly grown its debt centre network and expanded its services to tackle the causes of debt and poverty too.

As well as *CAP Debt Help*, they now help people step into employment through *CAP Job Clubs*, help people get control of their addictions through *CAP Release Groups* and a brand new service, *CAP Life Skills*, to equip people to live well on a low income. Their vision is to bring freedom and good news to the poor in every community through 1,000 CAP projects by 2021.

Come and listen to Julie speak about their work and impact in the Sutton area. They do fantastic work reaching out to many around us. They are passionate about bringing hope and freedom to people in our community. Whether they are feeling the weight of debt, struggling to find work or just need a bit of help with their budgets – they are here to help many. In Sutton, they currently run a Debt Centre, Job Clubs and Money Courses. She will also be with us after the service to take questions and talk on an individual basis about their work.

Jason Gray

Lent 2018

Lent begins on 14th February, Ash Wednesday, when we will have two services of Holy Communion with ashing, at 10am and 8pm. There will be a service of Holy Communion at 10am every Wednesday thereafter.

We will also be running a Lent Course entitled "Who is Jesus?" This will be a 5 week course, offered on Wednesday morning at 11am and Friday evening at 7pm. The Wednesday dates are: 21st February; 28th February; 7th March; 14th March; 21st March. The Friday dates are: 23rd February; 2nd

March; 9th March; 16th March; 23rd March. In the opening session we will be looking at the four Gospels and their portrayal of Jesus, and thereafter we will be delving into the stories of Jesus' life, from the Nativity to the Passion, among other things.

Each session will last about an hour with some teaching and discussion. The sessions on Wednesday and Friday will be the same. So if you miss one you may be able to catch up at the other.

For more information please speak to Theresa.

Epiphany

Epiphany has two related meanings. It is the Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles as represented by the Magi, or three kings, (Matthew 2: 1-12). The presence of the kings makes it clear that Christ came to earth for all humankind, not exclusively for the Jewish people. Epiphany also means a moment of sudden and great revelation or realization. The word is Greek and means manifestation.

Since the fourth century most of the Christian churches have

celebrated Epiphany on 6 January. Until the 19th century Epiphany was more important than Christmas Day and was the day used to celebrate both the three kings' visit to Jesus and Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist. The gifts the three kings brought to Jesus were symbolic of the importance of his birth with gold representing his royal standing, frankincense his divine birth and myrrh his mortality. The kings themselves, Melchior, Caspar and Balthazar represented Europe, Arabia and Africa respectively.

Our Website

We are very fortunate at St Mary's to have an interesting and welcoming website. This has kindly been set up by Kim Spickett, who also maintains the website and keeps it up to date with information provided by the vicar

and churchwardens. Kim provides this service free of charge and we are extremely grateful to her for this.

As a token of our appreciation, we are donating £100 to Prostate Cancer UK (Kim's charity of choice)

February Services and Events

Sunday 4	08.00	Holy Communion
	09.30	Sung Communion and Children's Groups
Sunday 11	08.00	Holy Communion
	09.30	Café Church followed by Holy Communion
	18.00	Choral Evensong
Wednesday 14	10.00	Holy Communion with Ashing
	20.00	Holy Communion with Ashing
Thursday 15	14.30	Thursday Club in Cuddington Hall
Saturday 17	10.00	Women's Group at Rowe Hall
Sunday 18	08.00	Holy Communion
	09.30	Sung Communion and Children's Groups
Wednesday 21	10.00	Holy Communion
	11.00	Lent Course 1
	20.30	PCC in the Choir Vestry
Friday 23	19.00	Lent Course 1
Sunday 28	08.00	Holy Communion
	09.30	Family Communion with Baptism
Wednesday 28	10.00	Holy Communion
	11.00	Lent Course 2

**Morning Prayer is said in church every weekday morning at 9 am.
All are welcome**

Please send feedback, photographs and articles to: **Linda Charlton**
(Editor) thelisteningpost@cuddingtonparish.org.uk Text 07778 127670.
Longhand welcomed. Please hand to me or leave in the C pigeonhole beside the choir vestry door.