

St David with St Michael and All Angels, Mount Dinham, Exeter Newsletter for the First Sunday of Lent, 6 March 2022

Dear Friends,

The beginning of Lent has been dominated by invasion of Ukraine and by the dreadful violence which we are witnessing against the Ukrainian people and their country. We must continue to pray for a reduction in harm and for the protection of life. There are many ways to help to perhaps donating to the Disasters Emergency Committee is one of the best as many of the members (including Christian Aid) already have wide experience in helping refugees and people who know the area. Donations can be made through [dec.org.uk](https://www.dec.org.uk) or by ringing 0370 6060900. One of our other church charities, YMCA, is also doing important work supporting refugees.

On this First Sunday of Lent we hear Luke's account of the Temptations of Jesus. The second temptation, is particularly relevant to the present time – that the glory and authority of the nations will be given to those who bow down to worship the Devil. The lust for power over others, if unchecked, can so easily lead to hideous conflict, as it is now.

Today we invite you to stay for a congregational meeting (with coffee) after the 9.30am service at St David's to learn and pray about the role of Churchwarden in our parish.

Our Lent Groups and Reading Group also begin this week.

In view of the continued incidence of Covid infections we encourage you to wear face-coverings in church unless you are exempt, to maintain social distancing and to use hand sanitizer on entering the building. We are pleased to be serving refreshments after our services and are grateful to those who are making this possible. Please be patient, kind and respect the personal space of other people if they don't wish to get too close!

Our services today are:

9.30am Parish Communion at St David's with celebrant, Belinda Speed-Andrews and preacher Nigel Guthrie. (live streamed on St David's Exeter Facebook page)

11am Sung Mass at St Michael's with celebrant and preacher Dominic Cyrus.

4pm Thrive – in Church – 'Share the Good News' with guest speaker Justin Slade.

6pm Evening Prayer at St David's Church led by Bill Pattinson.

6pm Choral Evensong and Benediction at St Michael's led by Nigel Guthrie.

Services in church and online this week

Tuesday 8 March, 9.30 – 9.55am Morning Prayer on Zoom. Please join us on this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6602261392?pwd=VzdOaU1XUFBjWk9jV0xvMDZWajZBQT09>
Meeting ID: 660 226 1392 Passcode: 196651

1pm Funeral for Dave Stanley at St David's Church

6pm Sung Vespers at St Michael's (live streamed on Friends of St Michael's Facebook Page)

Wednesday 9 March, 9.30am Mattins and 10am Mass at St Michael's

2pm Funeral for Edward Hammond at St David's Church

Thursday 10 March, 10.30am Holy Communion at St David's Church with address by Howard Friend

6pm Sung Vespers at St Michael's Church (live streamed on Friends of St Michael's Facebook Page)

Friday 11 March, 9.30 Morning Prayer in St David's Lady Chapel and live streamed on St David's Facebook Page

Sunday 13 March – The Second Sunday of Lent

9.30am Parish Communion at St David's Church with celebrant, Nigel Guthrie and preacher, Ash Leighton Plom (live streamed on St David's Exeter Facebook page)

11am Sung Mass at St Michael's with celebrant and preacher, Ash Leighton Plom

3pm Commissioning of Anna Chaplains by The Bishop of Exeter at St David's Church

6pm Evening Prayer at St David's Church led by Belinda Speed-Andrews

Covid-19 Safe for Public Worship

At St David's we encourage people to wear face coverings to come forward to receive Holy Communion and then to consume the host after moving away from the altar rail.

At St Michael's the priest will distribute Holy Communion to people in their seats.

Please mingle with care before and after services and be mindful not only of your own wellbeing but also of your neighbours' safety.

Please do not attend church if you are feeling ill or are shielding. Although we will do all we can to make the church safe, you attend at your own risk.

Church Meeting – Sunday 6th March

We invite you to a church meeting at St David's after the 9.30am service today. Coffee and tea will be served! We will learn about the role of Churchwarden and hear from some of those who have served in the role. We would like to establish a small group of people who would be willing to share in the work of churchwarden and who would be willing to take on the role for a year or two ... or more. This is crucial for the well-being and future of our parish and I would ask you to pray for the right people to be called forward to represent our parish and her people. With thanks, Nigel

Congratulations!

Our warm congratulations to Peter and Michelle Smith on the safe arrival of a daughter, Jasmine Rose, on Friday 24th February. Every blessing to the whole family!

Knit and Natter

We will meet next on **Saturday 26th March** at St David's Church from 10.30am until 12noon. All are welcome to knit, natter or learn! Tea and coffee available.

Men's Breakfast

The next Men's Breakfast will be next **Saturday 26th March at 10am** at the Farmers' Union. Please contact Nigel if you would like to be on a mailing list reminder for this.

Men's Walk for Hospiscare

We have formed a team for the Men's Walk on Saturday 12 March but it is not too late to join! Please just have a word with Clive Wilson as further entries can be linked to our Just Giving page. As you may know fundraising for Hospiscare has taken a real hit during the pandemic so it would be good to raise as much as we can to help support their services. We would be delighted if you would be willing to support the Men's Walk fundraising please find the Just Giving page at:

<http://www.justgiving.com/team/StDavidsExeter22>

Tuesday Café

We are opening the Tuesday Friendship Café at St David's Church for the first time this week as a drop-in for people to find a Christian welcome and company. We will initially be open from 10.30am to 12noon on Tuesdays. Thank you to those who have already offered to help or to bake cakes. There is now a rota at the back of church to sign up when you can help. And do just come along if you would like to and help us to welcome any visitors who come into church.

Thrive in church – Sharing the Good News

Thrive continues this week with a course called 'Share the Good News' with visiting speaker Justin Slade. Please speak to Ash if you would like to support Thrive as a welcomer, musician or in any other way.

Parish Quiz – Tickets Available!

St David's Social Committee is organising a Quiz on **Friday 18th March** at 7.30pm in aid of St David's church funds. Tickets are now available for £10 including Ploughmans Supper and a drink. Under 16 tickets are £4. Please aim to make up teams between 6 and 8 people, although you are welcome to do this on the night, of course.

An hour of music – Thursday 17th March, 7.30pm

Christabel invites you to her assessed performance including music by Mendelssohn, Chopin and song arrangements - for piano, violin and string ensemble. The grand piano in St David's is on loan from Christabel and this is an opportunity to hear her play it as part of her music course assessment (no charge but donations to church are welcome).

Lent Groups

St David's church are offering 2 different courses

On Tuesday afternoons 2pm at 95 Howell Rd on 8, 15, 22, 29 March and 5 April
York Course '**Caring for Creation**' Please email nigel.guthrie1@gmail.com to book a place or sign the list at the back of church. A course booklet will be available for £4.

On Tuesday evenings 7pm Venue TBC on 8, 15, 22, 29 March and 5 April

Sanctuary Mental Health Course: <https://www.sanctuarymentalhealth.org>

This will be led by Revd Belinda Speed-Andrews. If you would like to join or know more details, please contact her on bspeedandrews@gmail.com

Also on offer in the city churches churches:

Chris Bryan will be running a Lent course: on **Thursdays 3rd, 10th &**

17th March from 10.30am to 11.45am in St Petrock's church. 'Son of God': What does this term really mean? How is it used in the bible? Over the three sessions

Chris Bryan will examine and discuss the matter, expanding our understanding of this and related enigmatic expressions. Everyone is welcome to join this group

and....Clare Bryden from the Cathedral will lead a series of Compline services in St Olave's on Monday evenings at 8pm during Lent.

Lent Reading Group at St Michael's

On Wednesdays 9, 16, and 30 March at 7 pm the **Lent Reading Group** will discuss Bede's *Historia* with Oliver Nicholson

St Michael's Survey

A survey has been prepared following on from the Archdeacon's proposals for St Michael's Church. We invite all those who are regular worshippers or on the Electoral Roll for St Michael's or who use the church regularly for other activities to complete and return the survey not later than 27th March 2022. It is available on paper at St Michael's Church, and online from nigel.guthrie1@gmail.com

Church Electoral Roll

The revision of the Church Electoral Roll is currently underway. If you are a regular worshipper but not already on the Roll please pick up a form from church. You need to be on the Roll to vote at the APM or stand for election. Any queries please contact Sue Wilson at St David's or Paula Lewis at St Michael's.

New Leaves

The March edition of our Parish Magazine with lots of great news and views is now available. Thank you to all our contributors and our editorial team.

Green Team

Thank you to everyone who helped with the **Churchyard Morning** yesterday. Several graves near the paths were cleared of overgrowth and spring plants put in the borders. Unwanted saplings were removed and the recently planted fruit trees were tended. The nest boxes were checked and it is clear that at least some were used last year even though they had only just been installed.

Thank you again to all those who donated the fruit trees. Those recently planted are 2 Cox apple, 2 Katy apple, 1 Scrumptious apple, 1 crab apple. We look forward to enjoying and sharing some fruit in due course!

Thank you also to the Community Payback Team from Probation who are continuing to weed around the church and clear rubbish from the churchyard most Saturdays. Do say hello to them if you are passing!

Phone Network and Home Communion

If you would like to be phoned by someone from the church community or know someone who would appreciate Communion at home, please let Nigel know at nigel.guthrie1@gmail.com or by ringing him on 01392 660226 or Ash on 07855305519.

St Michael's services and prayers

If you would like to access the service details and prayer list for St Michael's please contact Oliver Nicholson at virtualsaintmichaels@gmail.com and he can add you to that weekly mailing.

Your Prayers are asked for...

Please remember those who are suffering including: Marian Barnes, Charlotte, Paul and Grace; Maggs Bedford; Monica Darch; Andrew Francis; James Ibbetson, Liz Rimmington; Anne Smith; Grace Tointon; Mary Tout; Pam Smith; Iris Sutton; Bessie Wilkins; Sarah, Justine, Nelli and Zoe; Paul; Ellie; Rob; Mark

Please remember those who have died recently including:

Marion Barnes, Edward Hammond, Dave Stanley, Diane Susan Evans

In the **Parish Cycle of Prayer:** Women's World Day of Prayer and the Church Women's group

A Prayer for Ukraine

God of peace and justice, we pray for the people of Ukraine today.

We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.

We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow,
that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.

We pray for those with power over war or peace,
for wisdom, discernment and compassion
to guide their decisions.

Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at-risk and in fear, that you would
hold and protect them.

We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace. Amen.

Please also pray for:

the people of Ukraine and all those suffering and displaced by the invasion;
for the leaders of Ukraine and NATO countries;
members of our community to consider standing as church and chapel wardens or
assistants;

the consultation during March about the future of St Michael's;
purposeful follow-up from the COP26 conference;
those being impacted by the rising costs of energy and housing in this country;
those suffering in Afghanistan through lack of food and medical facilities;
the people of Yemen and Ethiopia facing continued conflict and famine;
those facing long waits for treatment in the NHS;
those suffering from Covid and long-Covid around the world.

With every blessing,
Nigel Guthrie

Prayers, Readings and Address for the First Sunday of Lent, 6 March 2022

Collect

Almighty God,
whose Son Jesus Christ fasted forty days in the wilderness,

and was tempted as we are, yet without sin:
give us grace to discipline ourselves in obedience to your Spirit;
and, as you know our weakness,
so may we know your power to save;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

First Reading Deuteronomy 26: 1-11

When you have come into the land that the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess, and you possess it, and settle in it, you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from the land that the Lord your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place that the Lord your God will choose as a dwelling for his name. You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time, and say to him, 'Today I declare to the Lord your God that I have come into the land that the Lord swore to our ancestors to give us.' When the priest takes the basket from your hand and sets it down before the altar of the Lord your God, you shall make this response before the Lord your God: 'A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt and lived there as an alien, few in number, and there he became a great nation, mighty and populous. When the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, by imposing hard labour on us, we cried to the Lord, the God of our ancestors; the Lord heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. The Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with a terrifying display of power, and with signs and wonders; and he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O Lord, have given me.' You shall set it down before the Lord your God and bow down before the Lord your God. Then you, together with the Levites and the aliens who reside among you, shall celebrate with all the bounty that the Lord your God has given to you and to your house.

Gospel Reading – Luke 4: 1-13

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. The devil said to

allies including Britain was evident. But we were greeted with a friendly welcome and warm hospitality. By then there was a real desire to break away from the sphere of the Soviet Union and for East Germany to join West German. But one of the things that surprised us was the thirst for information about life in Western Europe. People really didn't know what life was like due to the way in which information was controlled. Although, to be fair, we had little idea about the realities of life in East Germany. Of course, with the internet, that can't happen in the same way now and many, if not all, younger Russians must have some idea about what is really going on in Ukraine in spite of efforts to close down social and other media inside Russia.

But what should our response be as we keep Lent against the traumatic backdrop of war and uncertainty?

We must certainly pray, and know that our prayers are appreciated by Ukrainians, the majority of whom practice the Christian faith. And our prayer might well include lament and the asking of questions like the psalmist. We can't know the answers and we certainly can't know what will happen next but we can offer our questions and despair to God knowing that God will accept our desire to support those who are suffering and our longing for peace.

And we can offer practical or financial help. I understand that donations through the DEC are being doubled by the Government at the moment and the need is growing rapidly as well over a million people are now displaced from Ukraine. I have included an internet link and phone number in the mailing.

dec.org.uk 0370 6060900

It was the immense refugee crisis caused by the Second World War that brought Christian Aid into being. Now many organisation including YMCA and Christian Aid are putting their resources towards the support of those fleeing from Ukraine and our support for them will be an effective way of getting help to those most in need.

And then perhaps we should get involved politically because the government is likely to be responsive to public pressure. There is always a reluctance in some quarters to accept refugees, or to accept as many as we might. Yet this is one of the best things we can possibly do in a time of conflict. Those who have come here as refugees in the past have made immense contributions to our life and remain ever grateful to this country. Most will want to return home when conditions improve. To close our

doors to refugees at this time would be an act of shame which would stain this country for many years to come.

And finally we should keep ourselves informed about the terrible war – but we should not get obsessed with it. I heard the term ‘doom scrolling’ for the first time this week. It refers to the practice of scrolling down through news reports on social media or elsewhere always finding the next terrible story. There are two reasons why this might just be the temptation we need to resist this Lent.

Firstly, it is bad for us. People are increasingly realising the overwhelming negative effect that such behaviour can have on our emotional lives. I know that several people are giving up Social Media for Lent and if we feel it is getting to us then perhaps that is the fast we should make. And certainly to limit our exposure to the news through the day is good practice in self-care.

But secondly it distracts us from attending to those around us many of whom need our kindness and our listening ear. Most of us can't do very much to help the people of Ukraine directly but we can all do something to support our families, neighbours, friends and colleagues many of whom are finding life difficult and stressful at the moment. We have entered a period of uncertainty following the Covid pandemic which is unlike anything most of us have experienced. We need to keep our focus on being good friends, family members and neighbours because many people are feeling distinctly shaky at the moment. As we face uncertain and challenging times we need each other, and we need to the assurance of God's presence with us. I am pleased that we are now able to offer simple things again like refreshments after church on Sunday and Thursday, like our café and Lent Groups. The Covid Pandemic has revealed a pandemic of loneliness in our country and that is something that we can all help to address.

In the wilderness Jesus was tempted at every turn to follow what would bring him comfort, power and certainty. He resolutely stood against these temptations and reaffirmed his reliance on God's grace and provision. And in our first reading, too, God's provision is celebrated in the Harvest by the bringing of offerings and the telling of stories of the ancestors who had been delivered by God's hand from harsh oppression of the Egyptians. We are challenged today to put our trust in the unfailing mercies of God and to pray and assist those who are suffering so tragically on the borders of Europe.

Post-Communion Prayer

Lord God, you have renewed us with the living bread from heaven;
by it you nourish our faith, increase our hope,
and strengthen our love:
teach us always to hunger for him who is the true and living bread,
and enable us to live by every word
 that proceeds from out of your mouth;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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