

St David with St Michael and All Angels, Mount Dinham, Exeter Newsletter for the Sunday next before Lent, 27 February 2022

Dear Friends,

Welcome to this week's e-newsletter.

The invasion of Ukraine has been weighing on our minds this week and is a tragedy for so many people. We keep all those affected in our prayers and pray that peace and justice may prevail.

On this Sunday before Lent the account of the Transfiguration of Jesus reminds us of the glory of God is always there, even when we can't see it or otherwise perceive it. It helps us to hold onto 'the hope that is set before us' even when that hope seems fragile or distant.

Please look out for our Ash Wednesday services and Lent Groups and for our congregational meeting (with coffee and toast) next Sunday at St David's .

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, Ash Leighton Plom and preacher Bill Pattinson. (live streamed on St David's Exeter Facebook page)

11am Sung Mass at St Michael's with celebrant Nigel Guthrie and preacher, Bill Pattinson

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

6pm Evening Prayer at St David's Church led by Ian Cartwright

Services in church and online this week

Tuesday 1 March, St David, Patron of Wales, 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

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

Wednesday 2 March, Ash Wednesday, 9.30am Mattins only at St Michael's

7.30pm Holy Communion with the imposition of ashes at St David's Church with celebrant, Belinda Speed-Andrews and preacher Ash Leighton Plom

7.30pm Sung Mass with the imposition of ashes at St Michael's Church with celebrant and preacher Nigel Guthrie

Thursday 3 March, 10.30am Holy Communion at St David's Church with address by Charlotte Townsend

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

Friday 4 March, 9.30 Morning Prayer in St David's Lady Chapel and live streamed on St David's Facebook Page

Sunday 6 March – The First Sunday of Lent

9.30am Parish Communion at St David's Church 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 St David's Church

6pm Evening Prayer at St David's Church led by Ian Cartwright

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. Seating will be distanced to approximately 2 metres. Please sit on the seats where service books are placed.

Please mingle with care before and after services and be mindful not only of your own wellbeing but also of your neighbours' safety and make sure that you are not sitting directly behind other people especially if you would like to sing.

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.

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 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.

Church Meeting – Sunday 6th March

We invite you to a church meeting at St David's after the 9.30am service on Sunday March 6th. Coffee and toast will be served! to learn about the role of Churchwarden and to 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

Men's Walk for Hospiscare

We have got team together the Men's Walk 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 planning to open St David's Church for a Tuesday café time – as a drop-in for people to find a Christian welcome and company. Our initial plan is to open St David's from 10.30am to 12noon on Tuesdays and we are recruiting a team who would not only help to serve tea and coffee but also to talk with people. We would plan that people would help about once a month. Is this something you would like to be involved with? Or would you like to bake a cake for us? If so please sign up on our "Tuesday Café" sheet at the back of church. Thank you to those who already offered to be part of this. We are planning to open first on Tuesday 8th March.

Thrive in church – Sharing the Good News

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the launch of Thrive in church last Sunday. 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 – save the date!

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 16, 23 and 30 March at 7 pm the **Lent Reading Group** will discuss Bede's *Historia* with Oliver Nicholson

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

There will be a **Churchyard Morning** at St David's on **Saturday 5 March** from 10am until 12noon to: work on wild flower areas, tidy up and remove unwanted saplings. Everyone is welcome and refreshments will be provided.

Clive has now planted the remaining fruit trees. Thank you again to all those who donated towards the 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

In the **Parish Cycle of Prayer:** Those making 'Thursday Teas' for the vulnerably housed. Fairtrade Fortnight, Fairtrade stall at St David's.

Please also pray for:

the people of Ukraine and all those affected by the invasion this week;
members of our community to consider standing as church and chapel wardens or assistants;
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 Sunday next before Lent, 27 February 2022

Collect

Almighty Father,
whose Son was revealed in majesty
before he suffered death upon the cross:
give us grace to perceive his glory,
that we may be strengthened to suffer with him
and be changed into his likeness, from glory to glory;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

First Reading Exodus 34: 29-end

Moses came down from Mount Sinai. As he came down from the mountain with the two tablets of the covenant in his hand, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God. When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, the skin of his face was shining, and they were afraid to come near him. But Moses called to them; and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him, and Moses spoke with them. Afterwards all the Israelites came near, and he gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face; but whenever Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him, he would take the veil off, until he came out; and when he came out, and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, the Israelites would see the face of Moses, that the skin of his face was shining; and Moses would put the veil on his face again, until he went in to speak with him.

Gospel Reading – Luke 9: 28-36

Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. And while he was praying, the

appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, 'Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah'—not knowing what he said. While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, 'This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!' When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.

Address by Bill Pattinson for Sunday, February 27th 2022

Transfiguration Sunday or the Sunday before Lent

Dad was always meticulously dressed when he attended church on Sunday morning. He expected the same from his wife and two sons. "We are going to God's house" he would say, "so, of course, we must look our best." Sunday best for dad meant jacket and tie, best white shirt with smartest detached collar and studs. Always a hat. Never a cap. Caps were for work and never to be worn on Sundays. This contrasted greatly with my dad's clothes during the week, his work clothes. Dad worked at a local factory about two miles from our home, which he covered on his push bike, cap on head, old trousers with braces, shirt with no collar and an old coat. So, on Sundays you had to say dad was transformed. "Church dad" contrasted greatly with "work dad". And somehow I still am sympathetic to Sunday best. I wouldn't dream of wearing jeans to church on a Sunday morning and I never wear my cap on Sunday. I think if I did I'd probably hear dad's voice saying, "What on earth are you wearing our Wills? It's Sunday! Go and get properly dressed." By the way, I think it's great that there is now freedom in what you wear in Church.

Unlike Matthew and Mark, Luke does not use the term "transfigured" in his story of Jesus' glorious appearance on a mountain with Moses and Elijah. Luke simply recounts that "the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white." Jesus was revealed in his glory, as he was in the very presence of his father. He was transformed, or to use that word, he was "transfigured". Now I'm not saying

in any way that dad was transfigured when he attended church, but because he was going to speak to God and be in the presence of God, he was transformed. His clothes were not “dazzling white”, just extremely smart and, in a way, I believe his face was indeed a different face on Sundays.

So, what exactly do we take today from this story of Jesus’ transfiguration and why do we hear the story just before the challenging season of Lent begins? The feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord is actually celebrated on August 6th, but the account is also traditionally read on Transfiguration Sunday, the Sunday before Lent. The transfiguration is one of four occasions in the Bible when Jesus is revealed in all his glory showing who he really is - God’s son, the Messiah, the one who will set us all free. The other three occasions are his Baptism, his Ascension and his Resurrection. Remember how the disciples in the Upper Room did not recognise him when he first appeared in his resurrected form - his face had changed.

Jesus climbed a high mountain with his close disciples, Peter and James and John. The three disciples were tired. It was a tough climb and it had been a very tiring, last few weeks. No wonder “they were weighed down with sleep”, but they had stayed awake and...

“Suddenly they saw him the way he was,
the way he really was all the time,
although they had never seen it before,
the glory which blinds the everyday eye
and so becomes invisible.”

The words of Madeleine L’Engle in her poem “Glimpses of Grace.” The first real purpose of the transfiguration is to show us who Jesus really is.

Luke tells us that two men appeared with Jesus, Moses and Elijah. They also appeared in glory and were talking to Jesus about his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. On this mountain of transfiguration we see Jesus accompanied by the two greatest prophets of the Old Testament. Moses had led the great Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt to the Promised Land. Jesus was soon to experience his own Exodus from his earthly life, his crucifixion, on another mountain top, Golgotha. On this occasion he would be accompanied by two thieves, one on his left and one on his right. Jesus was preparing his disciples for his death and resurrection, which we ourselves will begin to consider as Lent starts on Wednesday of this week.

The forty days of Lent leading to Christ's passion and the events of Holy Week constitute a wonderful opportunity to pause on our faith journey; to pray realising that whether we are on the mountain top of ecstasy, or in the valley of despair or on the plateau of stability, we have just seen Jesus in his glory; a time to consider our own and perhaps others' transformations and transfigurations. He will be with us in the middle of everything; we can listen to him; we can speak to him; we can share our silences with him, seeking his glorious transfigured presence.

One of the significant details of the story, unique to Luke, is that the transfiguration occurs in the context of prayer. "Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed..." This challenges us to seek something higher in prayer than mere words, to seek the powerful presence of God. Of course, glimpses of the glory of God are rare and swift, not easily put into words or shared with others. Peter tries to hold onto the situation by suggesting the building of three dwellings, but no sooner does he suggest this than a cloud covers the whole proceedings. We are also told that the disciples "kept silent and in those days told no one of the things they had seen." The transfiguration had to be experienced, not described.

"Transfiguration" is a strange churchy word, rarely used in regular conversation. It focuses on appearance. As we consider our own and others' journeys this Lent, we can reflect on how faith gives us the equipment to change how we see, how we are seen, and how we see others. We need to examine the adventure of faith; we need to reflect the glory of the transfigured Christ, for he is the light of the world. And this transfiguration, this divine transparency, transcends time and personal space. We are, I believe, always changing, discovering new light and love in ourselves. Consider, for example, the recent cultural acceptance of gay marriage or transgender people - who would have thought we would hear on TV the Olympic gold medalist, Tom Daley, after finishing his "Hell of a Homecoming" challenge for Comic Relief, say how relieved he was to receive a hug from his husband? Such transformations reflect our desire to see more clearly with the eyes of love; our desire to knock down walls and build communities of forgiveness and reconciliation.

So before the austere, strong challenge of Lent, beginning this Wednesday, let us this morning dwell in the glory of Christ's transfiguration. Let us seek in prayer and action what Malcolm Guite describes as:

“The love that dances at the heart of things
Shining out upon us from a human face.”

Then we shall be transfigured!

Post-Communion Prayer

Holy God, we see your glory in the face of Jesus Christ:
may we who are partakers at his table
reflect his life in word and deed,
that all the world may know his power to change and save.
This we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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