

The Parish of St David, Exeter

Parish Newsletter for Sunday, 4 May 2025

Our services this week at St David's:

Sunday, 4 May 2025, 3rd Sunday of Easter

9.30am Parish Communion with celebrant and preacher, Catherine Blundell (with banns)

6 pm Evening Prayer led by Robert Mitchell

Tuesday, 6 May, 9.00-9.30 am Zoom Morning Prayer. Please join us using this link (usual):

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/77269635517?pwd=Lb4OHa9TejMxaaXMc7XrFokjutLaZ1.1>

Meeting ID: 772 6963 5517

Passcode: 0q5ZR4

Thursday, 8 May (Julian of Norwich, spiritual writer, c 1417), 10.30am Holy Communion led by Mike Clark

Sunday, 11 May 2025, 4th Sunday of Easter

9.30am Parish Communion with celebrant and preacher, David James (with banns)

6 pm Evening Prayer led by Robert Mitchell

For services this week at St Michael's and All Angels CD, please see:
<https://www.stmichaelsmountdinhams.org.uk/worship/>

Message from the Vicar and Churchwardens

1. 8 May VE Day Anniversary – this Thursday marks the 80th Anniversary of VE Day. At 6:30pm, churches and cathedrals around the nation are encouraged to once again ring their bells to mark the anniversary and two of our team will be ringing at the Cathedral. On the Church of England website, there is an opportunity to light an online candle as an act of remembrance and of course anyone is welcome to light a candle in church. [Click here](#) to light an online candle.

2. PCC meeting immediately after the service today in the Lady Chapel – single issue: to approve the accounts previously circulated. If you have any questions please let Jonathan have them in advance.

3. Parish magazine – this month's parish magazine is out today. Don't forget to pick up your copy. A big 'thank you' to our Editorial team. Donations of the cover price in the wall box gratefully received.

4. Confirmation service, Sunday, 11 May, 10 am at the Cathedral

Four members of our congregation are to be confirmed at the service on Sunday, 11 May. Although it overlaps with our own service, it would be lovely if some members of our congregation would consider going to support our candidates. Bishop James will be taking the service.

5. Reminder of our Meeting of Parishioners and APCM (Annual Parochial Church Meeting) on Monday 19 May, 7.30 pm, in the church - do please come if you possibly can. Elections will be held for the two churchwarden positions that have come up this year. These are really important posts and our church won't be able to function without them so please think and pray about who from our community should stand. In addition, the year just gone will be reviewed, accounts presented and it is your opportunity to ask questions. The annual activity report and accounts will be circulated

prior to the meeting via email along with other relevant papers and printed copies should be available two weeks before the meeting.

6. Advance notice of the annual church fete, Saturday, 28 June, 11.30-2 pm

Please would you all start to think about helping at our annual church fete? We shall need bottles, plants, cakes, books bric-a-brac etc. Can you help on the day? Please sign up at the back of church to run a stall and/or help set up or clear up.

Draw tickets can also be collected from the back of church. For those new to the annual draw, we allocate a book of tickets (£5) to each person on the electoral roll to sell (or buy themselves). First prize is £100 and there will be many other prizes. It is a good way for everyone to help to raise necessary funds for church. If you know a local business who might donate a prize then please speak to Sam Wellbelove. We will give publicity to them at the fete.

7. Suki's ordination, Exeter Cathedral, 3 pm, Saturday, 28 June

As you know, we are going to have a new training curate join us. Suki Coe served as an LLM in the North West Hampshire Benefice before starting her ordination training. She will be ordained deacon at Exeter Cathedral at 3 pm on Saturday, 28 June. She has kindly allocated some tickets to us so if you would like to attend, please see Mike ASAP. Her first service with us will be Sunday, 29 June.

8. 'Try it out Tuesday' – 6 May

'Try It Out Tuesday': is a relaxed pressure-free space to try something new, enjoy a cuppa and cake, and build confidence at your own pace. To give an idea of numbers for the free activity, please book using the link on the poster, search on Eventbrite or just come along!

Visiting and home Communion

If you would like to be visited or phoned by someone from the church community, please let Howard Friend know by ringing him on 07733 739453; for Communion at home, either for yourself or someone you know, please contact Ian Cartwright on 07813 795616.

Tuesday Friendship Café

St David's Church is normally open on Tuesday mornings from 10.30 am to 12 noon as a drop-in for people to find a Christian welcome and company. All welcome.

Wednesday Walks NB NO WEDNESDAY WALK THIS WEEK

Wednesday walkers usually meet and enjoy convivial conversation, gentle strolls, the changing of the seasons and a coffee together. Would you like to join us? We'd make you very welcome! We meet at 9am at the door at the west end of St David's and we leave promptly. If you'd like to join us please just turn up, or speak to Helena in church.

Knit and Natter

Please see Glynis for details of future meetings.

Men's Breakfast

The next Men's Breakfast will be advised shortly. Please contact Alan Baker if you would like a reminder alan.baker1963@outlook.com

Parish Lunch

The next parish lunch will be on Thursday, 22 May at 12 noon at @34 at the College. A party from church will be walking over at 11.45. Please see Sue Wilson or Jenny Baker for more details.

Green Matters

Your Prayers are asked for...

those who are suffering including:

Caroline Speed-Andrews; Ann Barnet, Libby Clapham; Andrew Francis; Hazel Gowland; Eileen Jarman, Avril Pattinson; Anne Smith; Helena Walker, Sarah Wood; Clive and Jeanie; Beth; Charlotte, Paul and Grace; Will, Dave

those who have died recently

In our Parish Cycle of Prayer please pray for:

Travellers to St David's and Central stations, Transport Police

Please also pray for:

Our church

Our country and its leaders, both political and religious;

Our world, for wisdom for its leaders and a wish for peace not war.

Sunday, 4 May 2025, 3rd Sunday of Easter

Collect

Almighty Father,

who in your great mercy gladdened the disciples

with the sight of the risen Lord:

give us such knowledge of his presence with us,

that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life

and serve you continually in righteousness and truth;

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.

1st reading Acts 9.1-6 [7-20]

Meanwhile Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light

from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?' He asked, 'Who are you, Lord?' The reply came, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.'

[The men who were travelling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one. Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. For three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, 'Ananias.' He answered, 'Here I am, Lord.' The Lord said to him, 'Get up and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul. At this moment he is praying, and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight.' But Ananias answered, 'Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints in Jerusalem; and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who invoke your name.' But the Lord said to him, 'Go, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before Gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel; I myself will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.' So Ananias went and entered the house. He laid his hands on Saul and said, 'Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.' And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptized, and after taking some food, he regained his strength.]

Gospel Reading John 21.1-19

After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias; and he showed himself in this way. Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. Simon Peter said to them, 'I am going fishing.' They said to him, 'We will go with you.' They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, 'Children, you have no fish, have you?' They answered him, 'No.' He said to them, 'Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some.' So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, 'It is the Lord!' When Simon Peter

heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the lake. But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards off.

When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, 'Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.' So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, 'Come and have breakfast.' Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, 'Who are you?' because they knew it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my lambs.' A second time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Tend my sheep.' He said to him the third time, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, 'Do you love me?' And he said to him, 'Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep. Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go.' (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, 'Follow me.'

Sermon by Catherine Blundell for Sunday, 4 May 2025

I hope you have all had your breakfast. It is, we are told, the most important meal of the day. I am a particular fan of the hotel buffet breakfast. Last time I ate one I was asked if everything 'satisfactory with my breakfast'. With a full English and three croissants lodged under my ribs I might be comatose until lunchtime but apart from that, what could possibly be wrong?

I talk about breakfast because our gospel reading is sometimes called, 'breakfast on the beach', but I particularly want us to think about things being in between, not here, not there, not one thing or another.

To help us we have an in between meal, breakfast, we have an in between place, a beach, and the disciples with an in between belief.

We'll start at the beach.

Are you a fan of beach holidays, roasting in your deckchair while water laps at your ankles, and sand gets in unspeakable place in your swimming cozzie? Whether you are, or not, there is something rather different about a beach. It is the ultimate in between place, not the land, not the water, even the sand is neither rock, nor liquid, but something between the two.

Jesus is on a beach early one morning after his resurrection. He is there because his disciples had gone fishing and, as they were toiling away, as Jesus was there.

If we think about Jesus' resurrection appearances, there is something about them that is very in between. Jesus was fully resurrected, but he hadn't yet gone to his father. His mission on earth was finished, that happened Good Friday, but his earthly ministry was not over. He still had things to say and do, and in this passage he met with friends, he shared a meal, and he repaired a bruised relationship.

Jesus' resurrection appearances are about reconnecting with people. Mary in the garden, the disciples on the road to Emmaus, and now the fishermen at the beach. He reconnected, he reassured, and he reminded them that their lives would change.

For us, our lives are lived in an in between place. We are part of the kingdom of God, but not yet restored to our home in heaven. It is mostly up to us how we live in these in between times but if we need guidance we need look no further than meeting with friends, sharing meals, and repairing bruised relationships.

With that we move from the beach to breakfast, that meal between waking and starting the day. Back at the bible story, from somewhere Jesus has procured some bread, prepared a fish, and set it on a fire. He then called his disciples.

The simplicity of this act is stunning. If a modern organisation was to launch the next stage of its business there would be meetings, many of them, publicity drives, focus groups, planning, and many, many PowerPoints. Yet, for something that would change the world, Jesus cooked a fish and called his friends.

What follows is almost comic. First the disciples had no fish, then too many fish, then John says, 'it is the Lord', then they set out to shore, except Peter who was in a questionable state of undress, but then got dressed, and leapt into the water.

Eventually, they arrived on the beach, and I love that Jesus then fed them. One thing about breakfast, it is supposed to set you up for the day. It shouldn't be a rushed snack in between bed and whatever else the day brings. Our brains need food for processing and our bodies need energy to function, and, oh boy, did the disciples need their wits about them as they settled down to eat.

Picture the scene in your mind. The disciples gathered, the sand under their feet, the smell of the salt, the crackling of the fire, the aroma of cooking fish and, right there, a man who was supposed to have died, offering them breakfast.

It must have been mind blowing.

But, on that beach, during breakfast, we see there is something of in between belief in Jesus. There, in verse 12, 'None of the disciples dared ask Jesus, "Who are you?"

It was Pope Francis who said, 'If one has the answers to all the questions - that is the proof that God is not with him. The great leaders of the people of God, like Moses, have always left room for doubt'.

Doubt. Doubt is not the opposite of faith, blind certainty is, and, I think, in verse 12 there is a little space for those who are uncertain to stand. They knew it was the Lord...but...

It is such an odd sentence, so why include it? I wonder if the writer of John's gospel was trying to show that the disciples were still in an in between time. The resurrection had happened, but it was going to take Pentecost to turn faith into fiery action. It will be the coming of the Holy Spirit that won't sweep away all doubt, but will make the risen Christ clear.

We have to compare this passage with, say, Acts 2, which happened just a few weeks later. Here, no one dare ask. There, Peter proclaims in front of the crowd, "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, both Lord and Messiah."

So, there we go. Breakfast on the Beach. It was more than just a meal. It was a stepping stone to eternity.

Post Communion

Living God,

your Son made himself known to his disciples

in the breaking of bread:

open the eyes of our faith,

that we may see him in all his redeeming work;

who is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

Amen

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please tell us at notices@stdavidschurhexeter.org.uk

Please send notices/content/prayer requests or amendments to Hilary
on todd.stdandm@gmail.com)

(All readings can be found via Oremus Bible Browser: <https://bible.oremus.org/> in the
New Revised Standard Version (anglicized edition))