

## **St David with St Michael and All Angels, Mount Dinham, Exeter Parish Newsletter for 17 March 2024 – 5th Sunday of Lent/start of Passiontide**

Our thoughts this morning turn to the cross of Christ at the start of Passiontide.

Death is often an unwelcome visitor to our lives, yet the death of Jesus is restorative offering new life and the fruits of his kingdom. “We wish to see Jesus” the Greeks request in our Gospel Reading. How fortunate it is that we can see Jesus not only in the Gospels but in the lives of the saints, those who have gone before us and those who live in our lives today. Thanks be to God!  
Bill

### **Our services this week:**

#### **Sunday 17 March 2024 – 5th Sunday of Lent/start of Passiontide**

9.30am Parish Communion at St David’s Church with celebrant, David James and preacher, Bill Pattinson

11am Sung Mass at St Michael’s Church with celebrant and preacher, Andrew Beane

4pm Thrive led by David Blundell

6pm Evening Prayer at St David’s Church led by Robert Mitchell

### **Services in church and online this week**

**Tuesday 19 March** (Joseph of Nazareth) 9:30-10 am Morning Prayer on Zoom. Please join us using this link:

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/75330401184?pwd=MIUTonKQK9bgFKV6lpn9rMbQUDyI8H.1>

Meeting ID: 753 3040 1184

Passcode: 5RWhXs

We use this app for our prayers – details here or via a

phone: <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer/daily-prayer-app-and-podcast>

6pm Sung Vespers at St Michael’s Church (live-streamed via

Facebook [facebook.com/stmichaelsmtdinhamexeter](https://www.facebook.com/stmichaelsmtdinhamexeter) )

**Wednesday 20 March** 6 pm Stations of the Cross at St Michael’s

**Thursday 21 March** (Thomas Cranmer, archbishop, Reformation martyr)

10.30am Holy Communion at St David’s Church

6pm Sung Vespers at St Michael’s Church (live-streamed via Facebook)

#### **Sunday 24 March 2024 – Palm Sunday**

9.30am Parish Communion at St David’s Church with celebrant and preacher, Bishop Jackie Searle

11am Sung Mass at St Michael’s Church with celebrant and preacher, Bishop Jackie Searle

4pm Thrive led by Ash Leighton Plom

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

**Message from the Churchwardens:**

- 1. Visit by Bishop Jackie Searle:** on Sunday 24 March, Palm Sunday, we are delighted to be welcoming our bishop, Jackie Searle, who will be both presiding and preaching at our two churches. We look forward to making her very welcome.
- 2. Update on the vacancy:** this week on 21 March, there will be a PCC meeting, and our section 11 meeting at which we need to sign off the parish profile, appoint from the PCC our two representatives to be on the interview panel, and agree the advertisement. We will also be voting on resolutions concerning the future of worship at St Michael's. If you are on the PCC, please come if you possibly can; if not, please pray for all concerned.
- 3. The APCM will be on Thursday, 25 April, at St David's.** In advance of that, the Electoral Roll is being revised. If you have been worshipping regularly at either church for at least six months, and would like to be on the Roll, please speak with Sue Wilson or Paula Lewis before 28 March. There are some forms at the back of church at St David's or contact Paula Lewis at St Michael's.
- 4. New Leaves:** The February/March issue of the magazine is available in church this Sunday so do please pick up a copy. The editors are very grateful for the fantastic support of all contributors and readers. *Copy date for the next issue is Sunday 24 March.*

**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.

**Parish Lunch – Thursday, 21 March 2024, 12 noon**

Our next parish lunch is this coming Thursday, 21 March. If you would like to come, please let Sue Wilson know, either by email at [susan.mwilson@btinternet.com](mailto:susan.mwilson@btinternet.com) or by signing up with your choices at the back of St David's, by tomorrow, 18 March. Menus are available at the back of the church. A group of us walk over from St David's to the College at 11.45, if you would like to join us.

### **Knit and Natter, Saturday, 23 March 2024**

Knit and Natter will be changing its day of operation after Easter, as we will share time with the Tuesday cafe once a month. Until then it remains on a Saturday, the last being Saturday 23rd March. Subsequent dates are 16 April and 14 May.

### **Other dates for your diary**

Saturday, 23 March – deep clean of St David’s – much help needed

Thursday, 25 April - APCM

Sunday, 12 May – proposed date for Christian Aid Week brunch

Saturday, Saturday, 22 June – Parish fete – much help needed

### **Thrive – Sundays @4 at St David’s Church**

As well as music and food, we are doing the Romans Course. Get intrigued, here: [www.biblesociety.org.uk/resources/the-romans-course](http://www.biblesociety.org.uk/resources/the-romans-course)

### **Tuesday Friendship Café**

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

### **Wednesday Walks**

Wednesday walkers have met all but two or three times during the past year and have enjoyed 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! Why not make Wednesday mornings with friends your new year’s resolution? 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.

### **Men’s Breakfast**

The next Men’s breakfast will be announced shortly. Please contact Alan Baker if you would like a reminder [alan.baker1963@outlook.com](mailto:alan.baker1963@outlook.com)

### **Try Praying... this spring from 17 March 2024**

TryPraying is a great resource for people with little or no church connection, but who are open to finding out about God. [The TryPraying booklet or smartphone app](#) is a 7-day prayer guide that can be shared with family and friends, or visitors and guests in your church. The guide encourages each person to try praying and to see what happens in their life as a result.

### **Parish of Central Exeter Prayer Around the Cross – dates for 2024**

During 2024, Prayer around the Cross will be held in St. Pancras Church, Guildhall Shopping Centre, at 7.00 pm, on the following Fridays: 29th March (Good Friday), 17th May, 19th July, 13th September and 15th November. Prayer around the Cross comes from an Eastern European tradition and forms a regular part of the worship of the ecumenical Taizé Community in France. In the adapted form we use at St Pancras, it consists of readings, prayers, meditations and silence, interspersed with songs and chants from Taizé and elsewhere. All are welcome

### **Green ideas from the Exeter Diocese Creation Care Team**

Make a Hedgehog Cafe - [Make a Hedgehog cafe \(rspb.org.uk\)](https://www.rspb.org.uk)

Nestbox Guide - [Our ultimate guide to nest boxes \(rspb.org.uk\)](https://www.rspb.org.uk)

Here are some events in March you might like to participate in:

The Tree Council's Tree Care Campaign

The Spring Equinox Tues 19th March

The Great British Spring Clean 15th to 31st March

World Water Day - Friday 22nd March

Earth Hour - March 23rd at 8 p.m.

**Your Prayers are asked for...**

#### **those who are suffering including:**

Margaret Roberts, Caroline Speed-Andrews; Maggs Bedford, Nan Biles, Delia Bloom, Lois Draper, Andrew Francis, Phoebe Goldsworth, Hazel Gowland, Eileen Jarman, Roger Luscombe, Anne Smith; Pam Smith, Grace Tointon, Tony Whitear, Sarah Wood; Clive and Jeanie; Beth; Danbi, Charlotte, Paul and Grace; Will, Jasmine.

#### **those who have died recently including:**

Marjorie Latham (recently moved from London; funeral St David's, 11 am, 25 March, congregants welcome)

#### **In our Parish Cycle of Prayer please pray for:**

Choirs, instrumental groups and all church musicians

#### **Please also pray for:**

Our parish as we seek a positive vision for the future, and this week especially for the PCC and s11 meeting on Thursday 21 March

Our country and all those affected by the recent storms

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

## Sunday, 17 March 2024, 5th Sunday of Lent

### Collect

Most merciful God,  
who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ  
delivered and saved the world:  
grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross  
we may triumph in the power of his victory;  
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 - Jeremiah 31.31-34

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, 'Know the Lord', for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

### 2nd reading - Hebrews 5.5-10

So also Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him,  
'You are my Son,  
today I have begotten you';  
as he says also in another place,  
'You are a priest for ever,  
according to the order of Melchizedek.'

In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

### **Gospel Reading - John 12.20-33**

Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, 'Sir, we wish to see Jesus.' Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, 'The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour. 'Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—"Father, save me from this hour"? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.' Then a voice came from heaven, 'I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.' The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, 'An angel has spoken to him.' Jesus answered, 'This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgement of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.' He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

### **Sermon by Bill Pattinson, 17 March 2024**

You have to admire, if not marvel, at the recent actions of Esther Ghey. Esther is the mother of Brianna Ghey, who in February last year was brutally murdered, being stabbed many times in a park in Warrington. Her attackers, Scarlett Jenkinson and Eddie Ratcliffe, were both sentenced to life imprisonment last month. Since then, Esther has met with Emma Sutton, the mother of Scarlett who murdered her daughter, to discuss parenting responsibilities and how they might work together to influence children's access to adult content on social media via their mobile phones. In a television interview she acknowledged the emotion of the meeting, recognising they were both mothers grieving for their daughters, as well as praising Emma for her courage in meeting with her. Not only forgiveness, but reconciliation and a plan to take their lives forward. Esther also said she held no hate for members of Scarlett's family.

Esther's empathetic meeting with the mother of the young person who murdered her daughter, Brianna, is Christ-like. They say the three things best not talked about are religion, politics and sex. But what about death? We acknowledge death when it happens, but we're not very good at talking about

it, not in any real depth or substance. We more likely deny, ignore and certainly avoid conversations about death. Death of loved ones is too painful and our own deaths are too scary. It's a downer in a culture that mostly wants to be happy, earn a lot of money, enjoy super holidays - just to feel good and avoid any difficulties.

This morning's Gospel Reading begins with some Greeks approaching Philip with the request, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." It is the last week of Jesus' earthly life. We are in Jerusalem. The festival of the Passover is about to be celebrated, the most Jewish of all festivals. What are Greeks doing there and why do they want to see Jesus?

Jesus' mission was to the Jews. The presence of Greeks is most likely representative of the Gentiles. If we look again at the text, it becomes obvious that in some way the Greeks desire to see Jesus was, for Jesus, a sign, a signal that his public ministry on earth was finished. Jesus had done all that a life in human form could do and now his hour had come. Like a grain of wheat, he must be willing to die and be buried, in order to bring forth a multitude of living, empowered followers who willingly give our lives to serve God and to spread God's message of love and justice among all people. So Jesus, instead of saying, "Wonderful, bring them here and I'll talk with them," begins to talk about death - his death, our death. He goes off into meditative comments about seeds and plants, servants and masters.

And the comments aren't addressed to the Greeks, but to his disciples. These Greeks were obviously interested in the Jewish religion and its God. Why else would they be at the Jewish celebration of the Passover? They had, no doubt, seen Jesus' triumphant arrival into Jerusalem; they had perhaps heard he had recently raised his friend, Lazarus, from the dead; they had been told of his other miracles and his wondrous preaching. No wonder they approach Philip with those precious words, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." Who wouldn't want to see Jesus? Don't we all want to see Jesus?

Jesus' first response on hearing some Greeks wish to see him is with the words, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified." "Glorified" is a term John uses in his Gospel to mean the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of Jesus. Jesus knew his hour had come. And as with us all, Jesus was fearful of his death. "Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say? Father, save me from this hour."

His second response is, "Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit." There are three meanings to this statement. You can take it simply on the surface, understanding the necessity to plant seeds so that they grow and give produce. But Jesus is also talking of his own death, his own glory which is getting ever nearer and which will be the final moment of his love and liberation of the world, a moment of rich harvest of souls. On a third level, if we really want to see Jesus, get to know him and understand what he's all about, we must be ready to plant Jesus in our hearts, to risk all in his service, to die, as it were, with Christ. We must be prepared to be planted anew so that the harvest of our lives will be rich and rewarding in Jesus' service. Our dreams and hopes can only be truly realised if we are ready to die to self and live our lives to Jesus. When Jesus says, "Those who love their lives lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life," he is asking us to die to selfishness in order to love others for his sake. What an exciting challenge!

This is the new Covenant of which the Lord told Jeremiah in our first reading this morning. "I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. For they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest." And how shall they know him? Through the life, death and resurrection of his son, Jesus Christ. A revolutionary new beginning between God and his people, founded on Jesus Christ, God's heartfelt gift of love to the world - the rich seed of hope. "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." And where is the best place to see Jesus? Ironically, at his death, on the cross. Jesus says, "It is for this reason that I have come to this hour. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." Look to the cross. Then, not just the Greeks, but all people will come to gain the truest and deepest access to Jesus that God intended. We won't just see him, we will come to him, drawn up by the powerful love of God. Through his death we are drawn into fellowship and new life. We can see and be.

We wish to see Jesus. Everywhere we go and in whoever we meet ... potentially we can see Jesus. Jesus, for me, is seen in the actions of Esther Ghey, in the familiar faces that I see before me this morning, your faces as I preach. As we spend our lives, we gain them. As we lose our lives for one another, we gain life in Christ. Where do you see Jesus?

### **Post-Communion Prayer**

Lord Jesus Christ,



you have taught us  
that what we do for the least of our brothers and sisters  
we do also for you:  
give us the will to be the servant of others  
as you were the servant of all,  
and gave up your life and died for us,  
but are alive and reign, now and for ever.  
**Amen**

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