

8th December 2024



## Don't be afraid!

Luke introduces us to Zechariah and Elizabeth, who were an upright couple, advanced in age and have been unable to conceive a child. This passage serves as the introduction to the birth of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus, and it highlights themes of faith, doubt, and divine intervention.

Zechariah, a priest, is selected by lot to burn incense in the temple, and while performing his duties, the angel, Gabriel, appears to him. Gabriel announces that Zechariah and Elizabeth will have a son, who will be named John. This child, the angel explains, will have a significant role in preparing the people for the coming of the Lord. However, Zechariah, overcome by doubt due to his and Elizabeth's advanced age, questions how this can be possible. Gabriel responds by explaining that, because of Zechariah's disbelief, he will be rendered without speech until John is born.

This passage illustrates several important points. **First**, it emphasizes God's timing. Despite Zechariah and Elizabeth's long wait, God's plan was not delayed, it was unfolding according to His purpose. **Secondly**, the contact between Zechariah and Gabriel shows the tension between human doubt and divine promise. Zechariah's question stems from a lack of faith, yet God's response is not one of anger but rather a consequence for his doubt, a silent reminder of God's power.

**Lastly**, this story foreshadows the greater narrative of salvation. Just as John will prepare the way for Jesus, this moment marks the beginning of God's active intervention in history, preparing His people for the arrival of the Messiah. The passage calls us to trust in God's promises, even when circumstances seem impossible, for nothing is impossible with God, so DON'T BE AFRAID.

*Peter*

## Mothers Union



Christmas Lunch: 12.30 pm on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December in the Parish Rooms. Cost £4 Please remember your Smartie tubes!



## Please pray for...

John Panter, Andy Morton (Debra Deeley's son-in-law)  
Catherine Smith would like to thank everyone for their continued prayers for Colin. Nita would like to thank everyone who has been praying for her son-in-law Gordon. He got wonderful news from the hospital; that he is now in remission and doing well, Prayers answered, Praise the Lord.

*Please let the Church Office know if you would like your name to be added or removed from this list.*

## Cynthia Costelloe's Funeral

Cynthia's funeral will be at St Mary de Haura, Shoreham-by-Sea at 11.30 on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December. Directions, if you're planning to go are available from our Church Office; however the service will be live streamed at <https://visual-memorials.co.uk/cynthia-costelloe>. The video can also be watched later in the day as explained on the web page. Donations in memory of Cynthia will go to St Mary's Shoreham Mothers' Union, and the British Heart Foundation and can be made via the donations tab at the following link <http://www.hdtribe.co.uk/>. Please continue to keep David and the family in your prayers.

## Carol Singing

Do join us at any of our carol singing events this year:



Woodcroft 11.00am Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December  
Joules Place 11.00am Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December  
Mercian Court 7.00pm Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December  
Tunstall Hall 2.00pm Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December  
All welcome – Christmas jumpers essential!

## AV Desk - Thank You Mike

Mike Rushworth has been managing the AV desk rota and operating both sound and visuals desks for years. He is stepping down at the end of this month to support Laurina. We thank him for his dedicated service, especially for frequently covering the desk at short notice. We now need more volunteers to help on the desk. Full training will be given. Please contact Elaine Cook for more information or, better still, to volunteer.

## Services

Services are in St Mary's Church unless otherwise indicated.

### 9.00am BCP Holy Communion

### 10.30am CW Morning Worship Gift Service

Readings: Philippians 4. 4-9; Luke. 1.5-25

The 10.30 service will also be on Zoom.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85337124930?pwd=NFdMTzRmR2JXbXRoSctVRS9PSkZXdz09>

Meeting ID: 853 3712 4930 Password: 867888

### Wednesday Morning Prayer 9.00am ZOOM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89943278704?pwd=RytPQ3RmOG5yYlBpUWpoWWkxWGFEZz09>

Meeting ID: 899 4327 8704 Password: 730701

### Thursday 10.00am BCP Holy Communion

## Sunday Sermons

These are available on our website:

<https://www.stmarysmarketdrayton.org.uk/media>

## Christmas Services

We are in need of volunteers for some of our services over the Christmas period. These services often attract those who don't normally attend church, so it would be great to make it a welcoming and positive experience for them. Please consider helping if you can and let Helen in the office know as soon as possible if you can help. Many thanks to those who have already signed up.

### Carol Service 22<sup>nd</sup> December 7pm

3 Welcomers needed

### Christingle 24<sup>th</sup> December 5pm

3 Welcomers needed

### Midnight HC 24<sup>th</sup> December 11.15pm

2 Welcomers needed

### Christmas Day 25<sup>th</sup> December 10.00am

1 Welcomer needed

## Carol Service Refreshments

We are hoping to have refreshments of mulled wine and mince pies following the Carol Service on the 22<sup>nd</sup> December. If you are able to bake some mince pies please include your name on the sign up sheet at the back of church. For further information please speak to Pat Fox. Many Thanks.

## Good News Stories

We'd love to share some stories of what God has been doing in our lives. If you have an encouraging story you'd be willing to share on a Sunday morning, please let Catherine know.

## Foodbank Items Needed

Stock Items urgently required.



Cartons of Long-Life Fruit Juice; Small Jars of Coffee; £5 Shepley's Butcher's Vouchers; Sponge Pudding / Slab Cakes; Cleaning products and Anti-bac wipes. **We have plenty of**—Cereals; Pasta; Rice; Tea; Baked Beans. If you need to contact the Foodbank, please call **01630 654007** (not the one in the church directory). The trolley at the back of church is now in use and donations are gratefully received.

## Carol Service Choir - All Voices!



Practices for all voices continue Thursday evenings at 7.30pm

## Prayer Link

Requests for prayer can be made to our dedicated 'Prayer Link' team. Please contact Elaine Mason 07846715620 [nickjgmason@gmail.com](mailto:nickjgmason@gmail.com) or Carol Corney 01630 653137 or 07932 642246 [candjcorney@gmail.com](mailto:candjcorney@gmail.com) - or speak to them in person. If you love to pray for others, why not think about joining the team

## Phoenix Group (for those bereaved).

Meeting at the Red Lion Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December at 12pm for Christmas Lunch.



## Church Directory 2025

The church directory has been updated. Before publication we would like people to confirm that their directory entry is correct. A draft copy will be on the table at the back of church over the next couple of Sundays. Please check your details and let Helen in the office know of any changes that need to be made.

## Staying in Touch

Please either leave a message or send an email and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

**Church Administrator:** Helen Hughes

**Phone:** 01630 653505

**E-mail:** [stmarysmarketdrayton@gmail.com](mailto:stmarysmarketdrayton@gmail.com)

**Website:** [www.stmarysmarketdrayton.org.uk](http://www.stmarysmarketdrayton.org.uk)

**Facebook:** @StMarysMarketDrayton

**Parish Rooms FB:** @TheParishRoomsMD

**Operations Manager:** Elaine Cook

**E-mail:** [opsmanagerofstmarys@gmail.com](mailto:opsmanagerofstmarys@gmail.com)

**Vicar:** Revd Catherine McBride

**E-mail:** [vicarofstmarys@gmail.com](mailto:vicarofstmarys@gmail.com)

**If you do not wish to continue to receive these newsletters, please let us know.**