

12<sup>th</sup> January 2025



When you think about it, **John the Baptist** was quite a remarkable man. He was the one chosen by God to prepare the way for the coming of Jesus. He was quite unique and something of a loner. As he grew up he lived in the desert, living on locusts and wild honey, and he was dressed in clothes made of camel hair, with a leather belt around his waist. You might well think: "a strange man indeed and, from his appearance, perhaps a frightening man?" He was a messenger sent from God, but his message was not a particularly attractive one: "Preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins" he did not hold back in what he had to say. To the people who came to him he addressed them as: "You brood of vipers!" He told them to put things right - the "haves" should share with the "have-nots"; the tax collectors should not defraud the people; the soldiers were condemned for their unethical practices. In all, you might think he was an unattractive man and one to be avoided. Yet we are told that crowds went out to him from Jerusalem, and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. Really quite astonishing! We might well ask why this should be, but the answer is there "The Lord's hand was with him", he was doing what God had called him to do: "Preparing the way for the Lord", so the people came confessing their sins and seeking repentance. God was preparing them for the coming of a Saviour.

Just as John the Baptist was called by God to prepare the people for the coming of Jesus into the world, so we are called to prepare people for the second coming of Jesus, when we all must come before the judgement throne of God. To tell people that we have all sinned and fall short of God's standards may be unpopular, and to tell people we have to repent of our sins and seek forgiveness, through the death of Jesus on the cross, may not be easy, but may we have that same courage as John the Baptist. Let us remember that this is God's work to which we are called, and His saving power is able to soften hard hearts and prepare them to enter His Kingdom.

*David*



## Please pray for...



Iris Thomas, John Panter, Andy Morton (Debra Deeley's son-in-law), Colin Smith. We also pray for those recently bereaved: the families and friends of Alan James and Hazel Rosier.

Some of you will have known Hazel very well. Her husband, Bert, was Churchwarden at St Mary's some time ago. Her funeral will be at St Mary's on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> January at 1.00pm.

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

## Churches Together Special Meeting

There will be a special meeting of Market Drayton Churches Together on **Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January at 7.00pm in St Mary's Church**. There will be some important discussions about the future of our Churches Together group and also about the future of Christians Against Poverty in Market Drayton. Please do make every effort to attend.

## Sidespeople & Welcomers

There is another opportunity to serve in church as a welcoming face before our services. We need a new sidesperson for the 10.30am service each first Sunday and it would also be helpful to have a couple of reserves. Please let Helen in the office know if you would like to help in this way. Thank you to everyone who undertakes this valuable work and especially to Alan Venables who is stepping down after many years.



We are very much in need of new people to help in various roles that make our church and services run smoothly. These include

welcoming, intercession, the audio/ visual desk, bookshop, refreshments etc. Please pray about how you can serve St Mary's then let Helen in the church office know if you are able to help and in what role. Many Thanks

## Services

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

### 9.00am BCP Holy Communion

### 10.30am CW Morning Worship

Readings: Acts 8.14-17 Luke 3.15-17, 21-22

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>



## IONA Communion

Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> January 6.30pm

## Confirmation Service

Our Deanery is holding a Confirmation Service on **Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> February at 4.00pm**. If you are interested in being confirmed and want to find out more about what's involved, please speak to Catherine soon.

## Soul Food Prayer Course

This course explores different ways of praying. There are 6 sessions online, starting on 14<sup>th</sup> January and 3 Saturdays in Eccleshall, full details [here](#), or go straight to [application form](#), with dates and online form. There is a charge for the course, but help may be available with this.

## The Bells!

On Sunday morning as you walk into Church you will hear the Bells of St Mary's ringing out to the Community, have you ever wondered how the bells are rung? Would you like to visit the tower and see the Bellringers in action? Would you like to try your hand at ringing a church bell?

A New Year, a new opportunity. If you would like to see the Bellringers of St Mary's in action or try your hand on a bell rope, please contact David Beckwith (Tower Captain) by email [beckwithda@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:beckwithda@yahoo.co.uk) to arrange a mutually convenient time to visit the tower.

## Foodbank Items Needed



Stock Items urgently required.

Toilet Rolls; Tinned Fruit; Tinned Spaghetti; Cartons of Long-Life Fruit Juice; Biscuits; Laundry washing pods. Full Fat (blue) UHT Milk; **SMALL** Jars of Coffee.

**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.



## Mother's Union

Our next meeting is Monday 13<sup>th</sup> January at 2.30pm in the Parish Rooms. Our speaker is Hope House Children's Hospice and visitors are most welcome to join us. Members – please bring your membership forms and subscriptions for 2025 and any outstanding 'smartie' tunes.



## Phoenix Group (for those bereaved)

Meeting at 10.30am on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> January in Festival Drayton for coffee, cake and chat.

## Swap Shop

Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> February, from 10.30 am in the Parish Rooms. Donations will be gratefully received (men's clothing particularly welcome), as well as helpers please.



## 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

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**Facebook:** @StMarysMarketDrayton

**Parish Rooms FB:** @TheParishRoomsMD

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