



Generosity

We're taking a few weeks to revisit our church values, which we rolled out last summer. This time round we're reflecting on people in scripture who model a particular value for us. This week, as we think about our value of being a generous church, we're looking at an unknown and seemingly insignificant woman, a widow, whose generosity caught Jesus' eye. But first a quick recap of what we learned last year about what it means to be a generous church.

In his second letter to the early Christian church in Corinth in Greece, Paul described the generosity of the poorer churches further north in Macedonia. Their generosity, says Paul, was all about *grace/charis* (the Greek for 'gift'). They had come to truly appreciate God's grace towards them—the gift of Jesus and the forgiveness and new life he brings. They had received this gift and so their joy overflowed and their generosity welled up as a response. Firstly towards God, in giving themselves to him and then towards others.

It should be a natural progression. We respond to God's generosity, his grace towards us, by giving ourselves to him and then he shows how we can use the resources he has entrusted to us to serve others. Being generous towards others is part of that response to the grace we have already received. Our generosity models that grace for others and points them towards the God who wants to bless them too.

Perhaps that's why Paul considered generosity itself to be a gift—a spiritual *charis*—because it demonstrates we've truly grasped God's grace for ourselves. It is an outward sign, a manifestation that we've understood the enormity of what God has already done for us.

Paul wanted the Corinthian Christians to *excel* in the grace—the gift—of giving, by giving sacrificially and joyfully. And, in an already generous church, we challenged ourselves to think what it would be like if everyone at St Mary's made it our aim, at all times, to *excel* in the gift of giving, whether it be the giving of our money, our time, our hospitality or our talents.

In writing to the Corinthians Paul was hoping to encourage their generosity ultimately towards others. In our gospel reading this Sunday, as we hear about the example of the poor widow, who gave her last two coins, the challenge is very much about our generosity towards God. We are challenged to ask ourselves how much our faith and worship of God actually cost us in the grand scheme of things. Do we give to him out of our surplus, out of what we have left over after everything else? Or do we give him our very all?

Catherine

Midweek Communion Services

We are planning to reintroduce our midweek Holy Communion services at 10.00am on Thursdays, starting on 1st July. To begin with these might need to be held in the main body of the church, rather than in the Resurrection Chapel, depending on what social distancing restrictions remain in place at that time. However it will be lovely to gather again for this traditional, yet relaxed and welcoming service. Do spread the word and let others know, who might be interested in coming.

Opening Church During the Week

In July we want to begin opening our church again for visitors during the week. Initially we will be opening on **Wednesdays from 10.00am to 2.00pm** and on **Saturdays from 11.00am to 1.00pm**. Many thanks to those who have already volunteered their services and we'll be in touch to check your availability. As some of our pre-pandemic volunteers have now stepped down we could still do with some more help; so, whether you were a previous volunteer who is willing to resume, or are thinking of joining this important ministry to our town, we'd love to hear from you. Please contact Avril Innocent (07794 260029).

Regular Services

To join any of our regular Zoom services, click on the links below. If you need a copy of the liturgy for any of the services, please contact the Church Office.

Sunday 9.00am Communion Service in church

Sunday 10.30am ZOOM (Morning Worship)

Zoom link: [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85337124930?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85337124930?pwd=NFdMTzRMR2JXbXRoSctVRS9PSkZXdz09)

[pwd=NFdMTzRMR2JXbXRoSctVRS9PSkZXdz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85337124930?pwd=NFdMTzRMR2JXbXRoSctVRS9PSkZXdz09)

Meeting ID: 853 3712 4930 Password: 867888

Readings: 1 Kings 17.8-16; Mark 12.41-end

Wednesday Morning Prayer 9.00am ZOOM

Zoom link: [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89943278704?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89943278704?pwd=RytPQ3RmOG5yYlBpUWpoWWkxWGFEZz09)

[pwd=RytPQ3RmOG5yYlBpUWpoWWkxWGFEZz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89943278704?pwd=RytPQ3RmOG5yYlBpUWpoWWkxWGFEZz09)

Meeting ID: 899 4327 8704 Password: 730701

Thursday Evening Compline 7.00pm ZOOM

Zoom link: [https://us04web.zoom.us/j/78321229825?](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/78321229825?pwd=R2lUZUJjMDRnTGhINIFPejRLTW5Xdz09)

[pwd=R2lUZUJjMDRnTGhINIFPejRLTW5Xdz09](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/78321229825?pwd=R2lUZUJjMDRnTGhINIFPejRLTW5Xdz09)

Meeting ID: 783 2122 9825 Password: 3164610

You can join any of the above meetings by phone using any of the following numbers and the meeting IDs and passwords above: 0203 481 5237 / 0203 481 5240
0131 460 1196 / 0203 051 2874

Sunday Mornings

As mentioned in last week's newsletter, don't forget to let Catherine know if you have any thoughts or ideas about our Sunday services in church as we move out of the pandemic restrictions, particularly in relation to the timings of the services. Contact details are at the end of this newsletter.

St Mary's Brass Band

I bet you didn't know we had one!! Our Brass Band isn't the musical variety, it's the faithful band of volunteers who help to clean the brass items and fixtures in our church. The group could really do with a few more willing pairs of hands. The 'hours' are flexible to suit you. If you would like to know more, or are interested in helping, then please contact Nita Heath on 01630 655559.

Prayer



Please pray for all those whose are grieving at this time: for the families of Frances Cutler and John Bevan and particularly for Guy Skipwith and all his family, on the very sudden death of our dear friend and church family member, Pamela.

Please pray for Nita Heath's son Antony and grandson Ben. Please pray for the Towpath Mission taking place in Milton Keynes this weekend and for all the Christian Boaters taking part.

Foodbank Items Needed

Stock Items urgently required



Eggs—No Stock

Long-Life Cartons of Fruit Juice—No Stock

Sponge Puddings / Slab Cake—No Stock

Cooking/Pasta Sauces (Pasta not needed)- Low Stock

UHT Milk—Low Stock

Packets Pasta in sauce/flavoured Rice - Low Stock

Toilet Rolls

Cleaning Products

Shampoo / Conditioner

Shower Gel

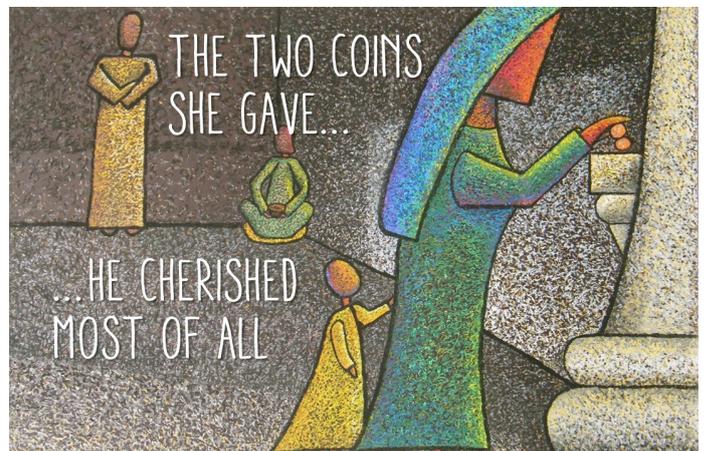
Washing Up Liquid

Laundry Powder / Liquid Tabs

Donations can be dropped off at the Parish Rooms on Tuesdays and Fridays 9-11am. If you are unable to bring donations to the Parish Rooms or to the drop-off points in our local supermarkets, please contact Catherine McBride or Carol Corney, who can arrange to have someone come and pick up your donations.

CAP Fresh Start

CAP Bradford have announced the closure of the Fresh Start service UK wide. In Market Drayton, Jill Alexander has led this service since 2016 as a Volunteer Fresh Start Manager. We would like to express our sincere thanks and gratitude to Jill and her Volunteers for everything they have done for the Fresh Start Clients over the years. We also pray that Jill will flourish in her new role supporting vulnerable Clients at Connexus Housing.



Staying in Touch

Our Church Office is not staffed at the moment, but e-mails and phone messages are being picked up regularly:

Phone: 01630 653505 **E-mail:** stmarysmd@btinternet.com

We will continue to post information to our website and Facebook page:

Website: www.stmarysmarketdrayton.org.uk

Facebook: @StMarysMarketDrayton

Vicar: Catherine McBride

E-mail: vicarofstmarys@gmail.com

Phone: 01630 656943

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