

23rd November 2025



This Sunday's Gospel reading describes Jesus' final hours on the cross; hanging there, between two criminals, as one of them hurls insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!". But the other man understands Jesus has done nothing wrong, while they are getting what they deserve. He asks, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." And Jesus replies, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

The scene is full of contradictions. If Jesus is a king, then instead of a throne, he is reigning from a cross, wearing a crown of thorns. Instead of being flanked by royal attendants, he is sandwiched between two criminals. Instead of shouts of praise, he is taunted and abused. But maybe the greatest contradictions are that, in this place of despair and death, Jesus promises life and precisely here, in this place of defeat, his true kingship is revealed.

This paradoxical but ultimately hope-filled vision of kingship stands at the heart of the Feast of Christ the King, which we celebrate this Sunday.

Those who mocked Jesus with the challenge, "Save yourself" imagined a king displaying power through self-preservation and domination. But Jesus reveals a different kind of power—the power of self-giving love. His kingship is not about escaping suffering but transforming it; not about preserving his life but offering it for the life of the world – for us. In this moment, the cross does become his throne, and his reign is demonstrated by forgiveness and mercy. The "good thief" sees what others cannot. In Jesus' brokenness and vulnerability, he recognizes his true identity and authority. Jesus is the king who reigns not from a distance, in glorious isolation, but from right beside us, even in our places of suffering and failure. His plea, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom," is both a statement and an act of faith in this king. Jesus' response, "Today you will be with me in paradise"—is the Gospel in a nutshell: immediate welcome, unearned forgiveness and overflowing mercy.

Catherine



Please pray for...



Rachel (a member of our Thursday congregation); Sue Norman; Hazel Haskayne; Brian McClellan; John Panther; Joe McPhee; Ben Robinson; Jack Cade; Finley Parton; John and Ray Reynolds; Tony Morris; Hilary Talbot's friend Kelly.

We also pray for those who have recently lost loved ones, including the families and friends of Jean Whiston, Anthony Talbot, Brenda Pugh and Guy Skipwith. Guy's funeral will be on Monday 24th November at 1.00pm here at St Mary's.

Please let the Church Office know if you would like your name added or removed from this list. The list will be routinely reviewed every few months.

Message from Guy Skipwith's Family

If you would like to do something in memory of Guy, rather than flowers, it would be very much appreciated if you would make a donation to our local Foodbank, of which Guy was a great supporter. Donations can be made during the funeral service, or alternatively the JustGiving link is

<https://www.justgiving.com/page/memory-Guy-Skipwith>

Next Organ Social - 29th November

Our next organ fund raising event will be a social along similar lines to the very successful one held in May. There will be a buffet style meal interspersed with entertainment. **Tickets are available from Elaine Cook at a cost of £15.**

Donations can be made by scanning the QR codes:



General fund



Organ fund



Security fund

Services

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

Sunday 23rd November

9.00am BCP Holy Communion

10.30am CW Morning Worship + Baptism

Readings Colossians 1.3-4, 11-20 Luke 23.33-43

IONA Communion



Sunday 23rd November at 6.30pm

Reading: Psalm 72

The 10.30 service will also be on Zoom.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85337124930?pwd=NFdMTzRMR2JXbXR0SctVRS9PSkZXdz09>

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 Holy Communion 10.00am

Sunday Sermons

These are available on our website:

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

Christmas and New Year Services

Sunday 21st December

9.00am BCP Holy Communion

No 10.30am Service

7.00pm Carol Service

Christmas Eve Sunday 24th December

5.00pm Christingle Service

11.15pm Holy Communion

Christmas Day

No 9.00am Service

10.00am Family Communion Service

Sunday 28th December

No 9.00am Service

10.30am Songs of Praise Service

Please let Catherine know if you have a favourite hymn or worship song you'd like us to sing.

Games Cafe

The next Games café is on **Tuesday**

25th November at 2.00pm in the

Parish Rooms. Come along and join an afternoon of fun with board games, coffee and good company! Feel free to

bring your own games or just turn up to join in the fun.

Bring your friends and find warmth and a welcome this

Winter! Entrance fee of £1



Foodbank Items Needed



Stock Items urgently required:

Rice Pudding; Cartons of Long-Life Fruit Juice;

Disposable Razors and Shaving Products.

We have plenty of:

Cereal; pasta; rice; tea; baked beans.

The trolley at the back of church is now in use and donations are gratefully received.

Christmas Choir & Carol Singing

Singers and friends needed to join carol singing in December:

Tuesday 9th 10.30am at Joules Place

Monday 15th 11am at Woodcroft

Wednesday 17th 4pm at Tunstall Hall

Monday 22nd 7pm at Mercian Court

'Christmas Choir' practices for St Mary's Carol service on 21st December continue at 7.30pm on Thursdays for harmony singers with tune singers joining from **27th November.**

Everyone is welcome to all these events.



Congratulations

...to James and Iris on their marriage and thank you to everyone who contributed to a wonderful service and Bring and Share meal.



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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