

NOTICES

The vicar and wardens receive a request annually to nominate two people from the parish to receive a gift from The Jane Nicholas Charity. If you know of someone in the parish who would benefit from a one-off payment, please let Val on chiesa@btinternet.com or Mark on wineslodge@gmail.com know **by 31st January**.

Lent Discussion Groups: Following our reading and discussions last year (and John Bannister's sermon - now on the website), we would like to focus on the spiritual writings of Henri Nouwen. He is a writer who aims to stimulate our self-understanding and sense of purpose. An anthology of his writings, engaging with life's big questions, including commentaries and meditations by Anglican writers, falls neatly into the five weeks of our Lent preparation, and we are looking at a mini-Parish Retreat at St Mary's on 1st April to conclude and prepare for Holy Week. The book is **On Retreat with Henri Nouwen** and costs around **£12.99** and is available from the publisher (<https://canterburypress.hymnsam.co.uk/books/9781786223760/on-retreat-with-henri-nouwen>) and other well-known sources. Please buy a copy soon as delivery times vary.

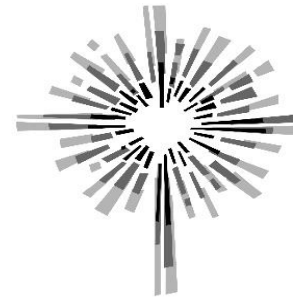
To find out more, John has reminded us of <https://henrinouwen.org/>, the website of the Henri Nouwen Society which also offers a daily meditation to your email, which might be a focus for Lenten preparation. Groups will meet by Zoom on Tuesday evenings at 8pm (facilitated by Mark) beginning on 28th February and on the following Wednesdays at lunchtime in the Parish Centre. As usual, there will be an opportunity to discuss our reading after the Wednesday communion and a team of people will be providing a light lunch.

Sunday, 5th February is Candlemas - a festival of light to mark the close of the greater Christmas season - with **Christingle-making** taking place during the All-Age Communion at 9.30 a.m. Donations made at this service will be sent to **Youth Talk** (Registered Charity Number 1063572) which is a counselling and signposting service for young people in St Albans.

There will be a concert of popular classical music at Dagnall Street Baptist Church on **Saturday, 18th February at 7.30 pm** with a retiring collection for Christian Aid. Please try and support concerts and events like this as street collections raise less revenue than previously.

Sales of Japonica and Crab Apple Jelly: Ginny Allkins has told us that she has received a lovely letter from **WaterHarvest** in response to the sum of £70 which we raised through Ginny's jam sale last autumn; the total raised by us now stands at a significant £1,788. The charity, **WaterHarvest**, which is now 35 years old and expanding beyond India to sub-Saharan Africa, passes on their warmest thanks to everyone who donates and has enjoyed eating the Japonica and Crab Apple jelly.

For your diary: There are places available on garden tours of Gorhambury House on 11th April, 23rd May and 20th June. If you are interested, please email Olivia Berry, Estate Office Manager at Gorhambury: office@grimstontrust.co.uk



St Michael with St Mary

Services this week

Sunday, 29th January 2023:

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

- 8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (St Michael's)
- 9.30 a.m. Parish Communion (St Michael's)
President: Rev'd Canon Iain Lane
- 6.00 p.m. Evensong (St Mary's)

Wednesday

- 9.00 a.m. School Service
- 10.30 a.m. Holy Communion (St Michael's)

Sunday, 5th February 2023:

Candlemas

- 8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (St Michael's)
- 9.30 a.m. Parish Communion with Christingle-making (St Michael's)
President: Rev'd John Bannister
- 6.00 p.m. Holy Communion (St Mary's)

PLEASE NOTE: The Parish Office is CLOSED on Wednesdays

Contacts

Key information is available on www.stmichaels-parishchurch.org.uk or via the Parish Office: 01727 835037 (9.00 a.m.–12.00 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday)

Children's Church for those in school years Reception to Year 6 meets alongside the 9.30am service during term time. Please ask a Steward for more information and directions.

The **children's corner** in the North Aisle contains themed-worksheets, books and toys. Parents: please remain responsible for your children in this space. If your child needs time-out or privacy (e.g. nappy change) the Tower Room is available and has sound relay of the service.

Toilets are available in the Parish Centre at the east end of the churchyard; please see a steward for access.

Please stay for **refreshments** after the service in the Parish Centre.

Old Testament Reading: I Kings 17: 8-16 (OT p.302 in the Pew Bibles)

Between the readings the choir will sing from Psalm 36

Thy mercy, O Lord, reacheth unto the heavens
and thy faithfulness unto the clouds.

Thy righteousness standeth like the strong mountains
thy judgements are like the great deep.

Thou, Lord, shalt save both man and beast; How excellent is thy mercy, O God
and the children of men shall put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

They shall be satisfied with the plenteousness of thy house
and thou shalt give them drink of thy pleasures, as out of the river.

For with thee is the well of life
and in thy light shall we see light.

O continue forth thy loving-kindness unto them that know thee
and thy righteousness unto them that are true of heart.

New Testament Reading: I Corinthians 1: 18-31 (NT p.153 in the Pew Bibles)

For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.' Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling-block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world

to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God. He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, in order that, as it is written, 'Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.'

Gospel Reading: John 2:1-11 (NT p.86 in the Pew Bibles)

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' And Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.' His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' Now standing there were six stone water-jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, 'Fill the jars with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, 'Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.' So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, 'Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.' Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

During Communion the choir will sing

Blest are the pure in heart,
for they shall see our God;
the secret of the Lord is theirs,
their soul is Christ's abode.

Still to the lowly soul
he doth himself impart
and for his dwelling and his throne
chooseth the pure in heart.

Please remember in your prayers

- those who mourn the death of Sheila (Kay) Doyle
- those who are **ill**, including: Nicola Cann, Jacqui Follett, Jo Frost, Debbie Greenwood, Edna Hames, Helen Huson, Rachael Hymas, Ingrid Kluckova, JoAnne Laws; Alice Reardon, Pat Stroud, Cora Marie Varshney, Paul Wiggett