



Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023

*'...Practise hospitality.'*

*(Hebrew 13.12b)*

*'But when you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers, or relatives, or your rich neighbours; if you do they may invite you back and you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind and you will be blessed.'*

*(Luke 14:12-14)*

Dear Friends,

Some things are so obvious they don't need saying. And those things get taken for granted, and then, over time, they can get forgotten. So sometimes it's worth stating the obvious application to welcome visitors, even though I think all 3 churches in the benefice are wonderfully warm and welcoming places. I remember one very cross lady telling me she would never go back to one of our churches because everyone was so infuriatingly friendly and kept coming up to her to say hello! I tried not to look delighted!

However, for the sake of stating the obvious, I'm going to remind us that showing hospitality as a church family means that any visitor on their own on a Sunday morning is a pastoral emergency - worth interrupting almost any conversation for, so that we can go and welcome them properly, and perhaps introduce them to others if we feel we're going to struggle to talk to them on our own. A wise friend of mine once said to me 'small talk is big talk', and he meant that the kind of questions we ask when we first meet someone, listening carefully to the answer, and looking for points of connection, really matter in showing care for them. ('Hello, I'm Fred, can I ask if you've been here before? Do you live nearby? What brings you along this morning/evening? Do you know anyone else? Can I introduce you to Philomena?...').

Sometimes, however, the implications aren't quite so obvious. How about this surprising advice from Mez McConnell, a Church planter in the Scottish schemes? He tells churches that if they want to help people escape poverty, they should stop their mercy ministries like food banks, warm banks and so on. Why? Because he's worried people can so easily be treated as projects - 'People can tell when we are happy to share the church's food with them, but wouldn't share our own.' I don't know if his advice is right or not, but it's certainly a huge challenge to me. He wants us to show hospitality to those in need by sharing our lives with them. Of course, we need to show proper care in safeguarding the vulnerable as we do that, but it's a beautiful chance to reflect the kind of invitation to the Heavenly Banquet that the Lord Jesus gives to spiritually needy people like us.

With love in Him,

Simon

I completely forgot to say on Sunday that this evening (Tuesday) is the monthly Zoom prayer meeting - 7.30pm on the Benefice zoom link.

I'm on a training course next week (with the great Ste Casey, of last year's mission week of talks!), and then in Scotland for my Grandmother's 90th Birthday that weekend, so no weekly update planned for next week.

*Continued...*

## Services:

**Midweek Services:** Wednesday and Friday, 9.30-10.00am on Zoom.

**(Please note - we're taking a break for now from the Monday, Tuesday and Thursday slots)**

Please use the JMJ website to '[Contact us](#)' page to request details.

**Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> July**, *Psalm 40, A New Song*

**9.00am:** BCP Morning Prayer, St James

**9.15am:** Holy Communion, St John's

**10.30am:** Morning Prayer, St James, and on [YouTube](#)

**6.00pm:** Evening Praise, St Martin's

**Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> July**, *Psalm 41, Can we sing about betrayal?*

**9.00am:** BCP Morning Prayer, St James

**9.15am:** Morning Prayer, St John's

**10.30am:** Holy Communion, St James, and on [YouTube](#)

**6.00pm:** Evening Praise, St Martin's

**Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> July**, *How to pray: 'Our Father in Heaven'*

**9.00am:** BCP Holy Communion, St James

**9.15am:** Morning Prayer, St John's

**10.30am:** Morning Prayer, St James, and on [YouTube](#)

**6.00pm:** Evening Praise, St Martin's

**Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> July**, *How to pray: 'Hallowed be Your Name'*

**9.00am:** Morning Prayer, St James

**9.15am:** Morning Prayer, St John's

**10.30am:** Morning Prayer, St James, and on [YouTube](#)

**6.00pm:** Evening Praise, St Martin's

**Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> August**, *How to pray: 'Your Kingdom Come'*

**9.00am:** BCP Holy Communion, St James

**9.15am:** Morning Prayer, St John's

**10.30am:** All Age Worship, St James, and on [YouTube](#)

**6.00pm:** Evening Praise, St Martin's

**Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> August**, *How to pray: 'Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven'*

**9.00am:** BCP Morning Prayer, St James

**9.15am:** Holy Communion, St John's

**10.30am:** Morning Prayer, St James, and on [YouTube](#)

**6.00pm:** Evening Praise, St Martin's

**Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> August**, *How to pray: 'Give us today our daily bread'*

**9.00am:** BCP Holy Communion, St James

**9.15am:** Morning Prayer, St John's

**10.30am:** Holy Communion, St James, and on [YouTube](#)

**6.00pm:** Evening Praise, St Martin's

**Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> August**, *How to pray: 'Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us'*

**9.00am:** BCP Morning Prayer, St James

**9.15am:** Holy Communion, St John's

**10.30am:** Morning Prayer, St James, and on [YouTube](#)

**6.00pm:** Evening Praise, St Martin's

**Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> September**, *How to pray: 'Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil'*

**9.00am:** BCP Morning Prayer, St James

**9.15am:** Holy Communion, St John's

**10.30am:** Morning Prayer, St James, and on [YouTube](#)

**6.00pm:** Evening Praise, St Martin's

**Audio recordings** of previous 10.30am sermons from 24<sup>th</sup> December 2017 onwards can be found on our website [here](#).

**Videos** of previous 10.30am sermons from 18<sup>th</sup> December 2022 onwards can be found on our YouTube Channel [here](#).

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## Mid-week dates for the diary

### Next Central Prayer Meetings:

The last Church Family prayer meeting of the academic year is planned for **7.30pm on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> July on Zoom**. The last C of E/Benefice prayer meeting is planned for 7.30pm in St James Church Hall on Tues 18<sup>th</sup> July. Please get in touch if you'd like to let us know that you wanted to be at a prayer meeting but can't make it please use the website ['Contact us'](#) page if you don't have email addresses.

### Home Groups:

Normally the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> weeks of the month.

Please use the JMJ website to ['Contact us'](#) page to request details.

*Groups normally stop during August*

**Tim and Sheree's** on Zoom (Tuesday at 7.30pm)

**Peter and Judy Thomas's** group on Zoom (Tuesday at 7.30pm)

**Chris Greenhall's** Group on Zoom in (Wednesday at 7.15pm) - (normal church link).

An **in-person group** discussing Sunday's sermon and led by Jon and Shirley Courthold meets on Tuesdays in their house in Newcastle

(Apologies if I've got those details wrong - do check with group leaders!)

### Youth Group:

**Tuesday evenings.** Please use the JMJ website to ['Contact us'](#) page to request details.

### Mothers Union Friday Morning Coffee

9:45am until 11:30am, Pensioners Hall

**Tots:** 9.00am-11am, Thursday Mornings in Term Time, St James Bottom Hall

## St James Churchyard Work Party (2<sup>nd</sup> instalment)

If you'd like to join the next churchyard work party, it's scheduled for Tuesday 11th, 6.00-7.30pm. You can sign up for more information [here on Facebook](#).

## Zoom Changes

We're wondering about trying to live without a Benefice zoom subscription from the 15<sup>th</sup> July to save on costs. The current zoom link should still work, but you'll need to sign back in after 40 minutes. Please can you let Simon Tomkins and Janice Eatough know if you have any feedback on that?

## The second-best book in the world

It's been said that every Christian's favourite book, after the Bible, ought to be the church membership directory! I'm really grateful to Jon, Dorothy and Donna for all the hours they've put into producing an updated version of the Benefice Prayer Diary. If you're in it, you should have a copy available to pick up from church this Sunday, if you haven't already had one. If you think you've been missed off by mistake, or would like to be added to it, or would like extra copies for members of your household, or would like to point out any errors that need correcting, please could you contact Donna in the JMJ office or use the JMJ website ['Contact us'](#) page?

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## St James Gift Day and Giving Review Day

Janice introduced this year's gift day last Sunday, and letters were available at the back of church. Please use the JMJ website '[Contact us](#)' page if you want a copy of that information. The target we need to raise to balance our budget for the year is £6,000, and the first £4,500 of that is ear-marked for our Mission Partners. There's no pressure to give - the idea behind a giving review is a chance to take stock of our giving, and it may be that some people will need to decrease their giving rather than increase it - the big goal is to give whatever we can 'cheerfully' (2 Corinthians 9 verse 7). If you'd like to ask any questions, you can contact the treasurer, Janice. It would be a real help (but definitely not essential) if gifts can be returned this Sunday (2<sup>nd</sup> July).

## Christmas Cards

Mothers Union are writing Christmas cards to prisoners in July - any unused Christmas cards you can donate would be much appreciated.

## Men's Curry Night

Please let Duncan Wilcox know via the church office or please use the website '[Contact us](#)' page), if you'd like to join the Men's curry night at the Royal Balti on the 6<sup>th</sup> July.

## Women's Curry Night

Please let Donna Wilcox or Dorothy Wright via the church office or please use the website '[Contact us](#)' page), if you'd like to join a women's curry night at the Royal Balti on Thursday September 21<sup>st</sup>.

## Opportunities to serve!

Thanks so much to those who've joined the welcome rota - it's been a huge help. For those in the church building at the 10.30am Sunday Service, the tea and coffee team are still feeling particularly stretched and a couple more people able to help once a month or so would be hugely appreciated.

Would anyone be interested in leading a Marriage course, or a Marriage Preparation Course at some point in the coming year?

Would anyone be interested in becoming the **Communion Supremo** at the 10.30am Sunday service? It's not a time-consuming role, but it would be a real help to the welcomers/warden if someone was able to take responsibility for setting up and clearing up the bread and wine once a month. Simon Tomkins or Malcolm Stoves have more information if you're interested.

**THIS REQUEST WAS FIRST SENT OUT IN JULY 2022 AND THE POST REMAINS VACANT**

Would anyone be interested in making sure the right banner is up outside St James at any given point in the year? (Would mean changing the banners perhaps 10 times over the course of the year?)



[jmj.org.uk](http://jmj.org.uk)

St James, St Martin's, St John's Benefice website



[St James Facebook Page](#)