

Tuesday 21st March 2023

'By faith Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw that he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king's edict.'

(Hebrews 11.23)

Dear Friends,

If someone becomes a parent, it exposes all kinds of things about what they think is important in life. What we long for our children (and, the flip side, what we dread happening to them) show what we really think is true and important in life. I'm temperamentally a 'worrier', and that comes out in the way I parent, and what we read about Moses' parents last Sunday was a real encouragement to me in the pattern they set.

They trusted God to protect their child in a life they couldn't control. It must have been overwhelming to hide a baby for 3 months, knowing that if an informant heard his cries, he would be killed, and so would they. I imagine them burying nappies in the garden at night in case they were spotted in the bins, and dreading those night-time cries even more than parents normally do. But they did it, trusting God, knowing that He was more powerful than Pharaoh and his forces. There's no excuse for negligence there, but what an encouragement to us to trust our children to him in a world we can't control!

They trusted God to protect their child through a death they couldn't control. Putting Moses in the basket (literally 'ark') must have felt more like putting him in a coffin, and it seems Moses' mother couldn't bear to hear him crying as he sat in a crocodile-infested river. They must have prayed for a miracle - and in this case a miracle came. But for many Israelite parents, there wasn't a miracle, and I say this with great hesitation, because I can't imagine how I would respond in that situation, but Jochebed, and Hannah and Mary, and the other godly parents in the Bible tenderly encourage us to trust our children to the Lord even in the face of death.

They trusted God to have a plan that is even bigger than their child. How could Moses' parents have known that God had a plan to save His people and destroy Pharaoh through the child who was thrown into the Nile on Pharaoh's orders, and was rescued by someone in his own household, and educated at his own expense? How could they have known that child would point to another Saviour, also born to parents under occupation and under the rule of a tyrannical king who would try to kill him, whose mother would receive a prophecy that a sword would pierce her own soul as a spear pierced His? Our children are never pawns being moved around some cosmic chess board - they are known to God and precious to Him. They are a real part of His plan. But they (and we) are not the centre of that plan. The centre is His own Son - born, crucified, and raised to New Life.

May we be growing in our ability to trust Him with our children/neices/nephews/grandchildren/godchildren too! One very practical way to do that is to pray for them, and in case it's helpful, I'm attaching a list of Bible verses turned into prayers for children/godchildren that I was given by a friend years ago and have been very grateful for.

With love in Him,

ST

PS - don't miss the notes below about the prayer meeting tonight about the crisis in the C of E; the zoom call with Wallace Benn on Sunday night; or the [new link for the Sunday service rota](#) (you'll need to be a registered member of the website and logged in to see this).

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Services:

Midweek Services: Usually Monday-Friday, 9.30-10.00am on Zoom. Please use the JMJ website to '[Contact us](#)' page to request details.

Sunday 26th March, *Exodus 12.43-13.16: A Night to Remember*

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

Thursday 30th March,

1.30pm, St Martin's Palm Sunday Afternoon Service

Sunday 2nd April, *Palm Sunday*

9.00am: BCP Holy Communion, St James

9.15am: Morning Prayer, St John's

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

6.00pm: Evening Praise, St Martin's

Thursday 6th April *Maundy Thursday*

7.00pm: A 'Bring and Share' supper at 7.00pm followed by Communion in St James Church Hall

Friday 7th April, *Good Friday*

10.30am: Outdoor service led with Audley Methodists in Tesco Car Park (No walking involved this year!)

7.00pm: Good Friday Meditations, St Martin's

Sunday 9th April, *Easter Sunday*

9.00am: BCP Holy Communion, St James

9.15am: Holy Communion, St John's

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

[NO Evening Praise at St Martin's]

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

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

Church of England News

The CWT and PCCs are considering their responses to the Bishops' proposals to bless same sex marriage, and we're meeting to pray about it tonight, 7.30-8.45pm in St James church hall. Everyone's very welcome for as much or little of that time as they can make.

The Living Out website has a [challenging and encouraging article](#) on holding out both grace and truth.

I've attached a list of FAQs and answers put together by CEEC that I found helpful and which feel very relevant to our situation.

Wallace Benn, the former Bishop of Lewes (and vicar of Audley) has kindly agreed to zoom on this Sunday evening, at 8.00pm on the normal Benefice Zoom link (please use the [Contact us](#) page to request the Zoom link if you don't have it) to talk about the situation in the C of E. All welcome - I'm hoping there'll be plenty of time for questions on the evening, but if you want to make sure your question gets asked, feel free to send it to me in advance.

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APCMs

The church's Annual Parochial Church Meetings (a sort of AGM for churches) are coming up: **St John's** on the **27th March** at 7.00pm; **St James** on the **23rd April** after the 10.30am service and **St Martin's** on the **23rd April** after the 6.00pm service.

Mid-week dates for the diary

Next Central Prayer Meeting':

The first prayer meeting responding to the C of E crises is planned for tonight, the **21st March**. The next regular prayer meeting is planned for **Tuesday 4th April**. 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 2nd and 4th 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** led by Jon and Shirley Courthold meets on Tuesdays in Newcastle looking at Sunday's sermon.

(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

Sunday Services Rota - NEW LINK

The Sunday Services rota is in a new format, and has moved. If you've bookmarked it, please re-save [this link](#). (you'll need to be a registered member of the website and logged in to see this).

Easter Flowers for St James

If you would like to make a gift towards the Easter flowers please put it in the offering in an envelope marked "Flowers". Alternatively contactless gifts can be made through the tablet at the back of church or through the [website](#).

St James Tots

Tots plans to restart on the 20th April. Message the team through the [website](#) or [Facebook](#) page if you'd be interested in joining or helping out.



Easter at St James



**Audley Celebrates
Easter
2023**

Maundy Thursday 6th April - 7.00pm
Bring & Share Meal & Communion
at St James Church Hall

Good Friday 7th April - 7.00pm
Reflections at St Martin's, Talke

Easter Sunday 9th April - 10.30am
Family Communion at St James, Audley

All Welcome

www.jmj.org.uk



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The Bereavement Journey

If you, or anyone you know, would be interested in joining a group seeking to offer support to those who are grieving, please contact Simon using the [Contact us](#) page or Anne Stoves or Jon and Shirley Courthold.



thebereavementjourney.org

Are you grieving the death of a loved one or struggling with the long-term effects of loss? A six-session course will soon be running in your area.

Your local course:
Starting after Easter 2023
At St James Church Hall
Audley, ST7 8DE

For further details please contact:
Simon Tomkins

Topics include: Attachment, separation and loss, Difficult feelings, Rites of passage, The impact and pain of bereavement, Coping with others, Coping with change, Moving forward, an optional session on Questions of Faith

Streaming

The equipment is now in place for us to stream services from St James at a much higher quality than before. If you'd like to join the 10.30am service online, it should be available [here](#), and previous sermons are available in the same place. If you want to avoid appearing on camera, the two side aisles are out of shot.

St Martin's Afternoon Service

St Martin's Palm Sunday service followed by refreshments is planned for 1.30pm on Thursday 30th March. Everyone's warmly invited, especially those who, for any reason, struggle to make a Sunday service.

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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 10.30am, **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 10.30 service? 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 before and after the Sunday service. Simon Tomkins or Malcolm Stoves have more information if you're interested.

Holiday Club 2023

The CWT (Christian Workers Trust) are trying to work out whether we have enough volunteers to run a holiday club in October half term 2023. The set-up day would be Monday 30th October, then the club would run on Tuesday 31st October, Wednesday 1st November and Thursday 2nd November. No need for a definite commitment at this stage, but if you're interested in helping, please use the website ['Contact us'](#) page).

Summer holidays

The summer may feel a long time away, but if you're starting to make plans, here's a trailer for next year's [Keswick Convention](#).

Psalm Singing

Tim Vasby-Burny, Vicar of St George's Shrewsbury has asked me to pass on details of a day in April full of opportunities to sing the Psalms (sounds really encouraging!)



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Singing psalms is commanded by God. It is part of a life filled with the Holy Spirit. We join our voices with Christ, our heavenly Worship Leader. If doctrine strengthens our minds, psalm-singing fortifies our hearts. Do not imagine the gentle singing of a choir in a cathedral. Picture a rugby team about to go onto the pitch, or an army preparing for battle. Jesus is the Lion of Judah and this will be a day to roar the psalms.

Saturday 22nd April 2023
10am - 4pm

You do not need to be musical. We will learn to sing a variety of psalms, often with four-part singing. Harmonies reflect the nature of the Church: different voices united with Christ by the Spirit. We seek to revive the practice of psalm-singing that used to be common in the Church.

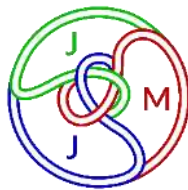
Friday Evening Extra, from 6pm on 21st April

If you are local, or travelling to Shrewsbury on Friday, join us for food, conversation and a talk about the theology of psalm-singing from Bible scholar and theologian **Alastair Roberts**. Alastair is well known for his work with the *Davenant Institute* and *Theopolis Institute*, helping people engage with the riches of the Bible. www.alastairadversaria.com



For more information and practicalities, and to book yourself a place, visit
www.stgeorgesshrewsbury.church/psalms

Be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs,
singing and making music from your heart to the Lord. (Ephesians 5:18-19)



jmj.org.uk

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



[St James Facebook Page](#)