

TEAM NOTICES

Sunday School starting today Sunday, 11th May, for children aged 8-14. This will run every 2nd and 4th Sunday directly after the service for approximately 45 minutes in the St Mary's Rooms. In these sessions we will explore the themes and readings for the week, in a fun way! If you are interested, please bring your children along or speak to Revd Natalie for details- natalie@swanageteam.com / 07516 786944. **Sunday School leaders** - If you are interested in helping to lead our new Sunday School, please also contact Natalie!

'Come & Sing' Choral Evensong this evening, 11th May at 6.30pm in St Mary's Church. Our guest this month is Ian Wicks, Rugby School. *Come and Sing* event is open to all singers. Arrival at St Mary's is for a 4.00pm rehearsal start. Cups of tea are provided between the rehearsal end and the service start at 6.30pm. All Welcome. Music provided. Just come and sing!

Christian Aid Week 11th -17th May. This week is Christian Aid Week and, if you are able, please support Christian Aid in their vital work of fighting for a world where everyone can live a full life, free from poverty. You can donate via the envelopes around church or online. Thank You.

"Sharing Faith in a Secular Culture" is the theme of an *Any Questions* presentation by the Revd Dr Paul Weston at All Saints' Church on **Tuesday May 13th. Refreshments are at 6.30pm, presentation at 7pm.** Paul is former Lecturer in Mission Studies at Ridley Hall, Cambridge, lecturer in the University Divinity School, and Director of Newbiggin Centre for Gospel and Culture, subjects on which he has written and published widely. Study of faith in relation to, and interaction with, cultural generational change has been to the fore of his research.

Confirmation Classes. The Bishop of Sherborne will be coming to our area on Saturday 5th July for a confirmation service. If you or your child have been baptised, would you or they now like to be confirmed? We will be running preparation classes at St Mary's in the summer term. All are welcome to attend the classes to learn more about the Christian faith, even if they do not feel ready for confirmation at this stage. If you or your child is interested but has not yet been baptised, this can also be arranged! Please speak to Revd Natalie or Revd Ian for more details.

As we move on from Lent and continue to explore Easter, you will notice that the display of books in St Mary's Library is changing again. We have some new books, and others are simply changing places. We do want to keep up to date and make sure that we have interesting books for all ages. If you can consider making a donation to the library fund, it would be much appreciated. Please simply use the gift aid envelopes, mark your donation 'Library', and drop it into Karon in the office. If you need more information, do feel free to contact Paul (Pauldbaird@aol.com).

Date for your Diary: Thurs 3rd July at 6.30pm in St Mary's Church, Swanage: The Gesualdo Six 'Radiant Dawn'. Tickets £25; £20 online from Eventbrite.co.uk.

REFLECTION

Acts 9. 36-end; Psalm 23; Revelation 7. 9-end; John 10. 22-30

The image of God as Shepherd features in three of the four readings set for today. It is a powerful image of God. In Psalm 23, reputed to have been written by King David himself, the whole psalm celebrates God as shepherd, present as guide and protector throughout all the good and bad that we go through in life. The psalm writer illustrates God as active in different ways – leading, restoring, guiding, nurturing, anointing and protecting – and gives us a clear picture of loving, caring, and generous God. At the end of the psalm, the writer expresses the clear belief that the God who guided and protected him through life, will bring him home to dwell in God's house forever. Heaven he declares is his destiny.

In today's reading from the book of Revelation, we get a glimpse of Heaven. John describes in his awesome vision the worship of the Lamb by a countless multitude 'from every nation, tribe, people and language.' The Lamb is proclaimed as their perpetual Shepherd.

In our Gospel reading we meet Jesus as the Jewish authorities are demanding a straight answer from him: 'If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.' But he points out that he has already told them. His works witness to who he is. If only they had faith they would recognise this and believe. The fact that they do not recognise his voice, shows they are not his sheep. Jesus had already declared 'I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.' He was declaring who he is and hinted at the cost of what being the good shepherd was to be.

In this season of Easter, may we continue to offer heartfelt thanks for all that the Shepherd has and continues to do for us, for the constancy of his goodness and mercy in our lives and that our eternal destiny is secure in him.

Ian
Rector

Team Contact details

Team Rector

Revd Dr Ian Bird Tel: 01929 422916 (normal day off Friday)

Team Vicar

Revd Jo Levasier Tel 01929 208217 (normal day off Friday)

Parish Administrator

Karon Quirey swanage.team@btconnect.com

Parish Office

Tues & Weds 9am-5pm / Friday 9am – 4pm Tel: 01929 421117