

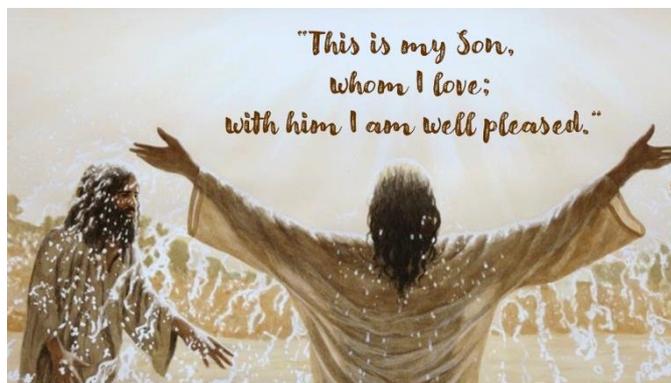
11th January 2026



Surprise! Surprise!

The short passage from Matthew's Gospel set for today (Matt. 3: 13 - 17) is full of surprises. John the Baptist is doing what his title tells us and which is summarised in Mark's Gospel: *"John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him"*. He was quite a character, his clothes were made of camel's hair and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts (yuck!) and wild honey. He was the first prophet since the days of Malachi, some 400 years beforehand, and it was said he was the one spoken about by Isaiah: *'A voice of one calling in the wilderness, "Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him"'*. He was saying that he was preparing the ground for someone far greater than himself, so much so, that he was not even worthy of even untying his sandals. John was, if you like, conducting a mini revival. The crowds flocked to hear him and you can imagine their expectations as to whom this person would be. Then, one day John saw Jesus coming towards him and announced: *"Look the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world"*. What? Who is this that John is referring to? Why it's a nobody, it's a carpenter's son, Jesus, from that backwater place, Nazareth, in the north. Surely John can't be referring to him? And now, lo and behold, John is saying to this nobody that he is not worthy to baptise him and the baptism should be the other way round. Anyway, if this Jesus is so special why on earth does he need to be baptised anyway? But here, now comes an even bigger surprise. As Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens opened and the Spirit of God descended upon him like a dove and a voice from heaven declared: *"This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased"*. That's enough surprises for one day!

David



Please pray for...



Sue Norman; Brian McClellan; John Panter; Joe McPhee; Pam Clarke; Ben Robinson; John and Ray Reynolds; Tony Morris. We also pray for those who have recently lost loved ones, including the

families and friends of Sam Butter.

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.

Barry's grandson, Finlay, thanks you for all your prayers. He is recovering well and progress is ongoing.

Helen Hughes' brother-in-law, Jack Cade, is recovering well and having rehabilitation to learn to walk again. He is most grateful for all your prayers and thanks everyone at St Mary's.

Games Café

The next Games café is on **Tuesday 13th January at 2.00pm** in the Parish Rooms. Come along and join an afternoon of fun with board games, coffee and good company! Bring your friends and find warmth and a welcome this Winter!



Mothers' Union



Visitors are welcome to our meeting on Monday, 12th January, at 2.30pm in the Parish Rooms. Our speakers will be John and Jan Halford,

"Christians on the Cut", - talking about their ministry on canal network.

* * * Members please remember your Membership Forms and subscriptions, which are due to be collected at this meeting. * * *

UCB

Copies of the UCB Word for Today covering February/March/April are now available on the table at the entrance to the Church. UCB thank all at St. Mary's for our support and partnership during 2025.

Services

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

Sunday 11th January

9.00am BCP Holy Communion

10.30am CW Holy Communion

Readings: Isaiah 42.1-9 Matthew 3.13-end

The 10.30 service will also be on Zoom.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85337124930?pwd=NFdMTzRMR2JXbXRoSctVRS9PSkZXdz09>

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>

Carol Service Collection

The Christmas Carol Service raised £451 for the Severn Hospice. Additional Gift Aid envelopes will be opened by Severn Hospice. If we get an update from them, we will post the overall figure in a future newsletter.



Worship@6

returns on Sunday 11th January at the Methodist Church, with speaker Rev David Willis, District

Mission Enabler in the Methodist Church.

Swap Shop

Saturday 7th February at 10.30 in the Parish Rooms. Helpers would be most appreciated. **Please note: due to storage constraints, donations can only be accepted on the day itself. Please do not bring donations before this.**



Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

A service to mark the end of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity will be held at 3.30pm Sunday 25th January at MDMC, where the speaker will be Catherine McBride. Everyone is very welcome.

Foodbank Items Needed

Stock Items urgently required:

Washing up liquid; sponge puddings/cakes; long-life fruit juice; pasta/cooking sauce; small jars of coffee; biscuits; laundry tabs/pods; toilet roll; female deodorant; toothpaste; sanitary towels; shampoo; anti-bacterial wipes/spray.

We have plenty of:

Cereal; rice; baked beans; pasta.

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



Phoenix Group (for those bereaved)

Meeting Friday 16th January at 12.00pm at the Red Lion

Alpha

A new course is running at MDMC on Tuesdays from 27th January to 31st March, following a special launch event and meal on Tuesday 20th January 7.00pm with JB Gill. Tickets for the launch event are £5.



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

Phone: 01630 653505

E-mail: stmarysmarketdrayton@gmail.com

Website: www.stmarysmarketdrayton.org.uk

Facebook: @StMarysMarketDrayton

Parish Rooms FB: @TheParishRoomsMD

Children and Families Worker: Carol Preston

Phone: 07878 926853

E-mail: Families@stmarysmarketdrayton.org.uk

Operations Manager: Elaine Cook

Phone: 07454 441943

E-mail: OperationsManager@stmarysmarketdrayton.org.uk

Vicar: Revd Catherine McBride

Phone: 01630 656943

E-mail: vicarofstmarys@gmail.com

Donations can be made by scanning the QR codes:



General fund



Organ fund



Security fund