

1st February 2026



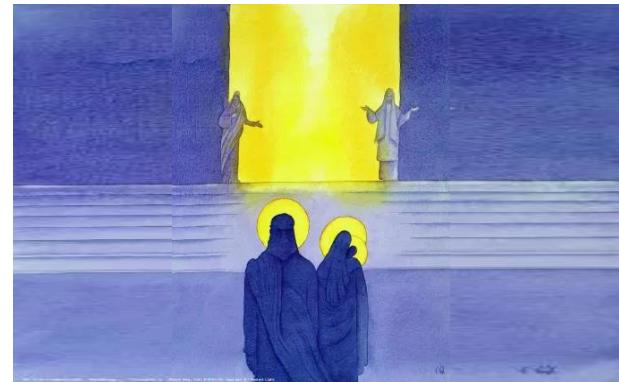
Rites of Passage

Rites of passage, ceremonial events, occur in all societies. They mark the movement from one social or religious status to another: an ending and a beginning. Rites of passage are often linked to the cycle of our lives – birth, maturity, reproduction and death – and help us to fit happily into the community to which we belong. Often, they are fun – birthday parties, weddings, even wakes and funerals – as well as being deeply serious. It is hardly surprising that the Church year, which follows Jesus from birth to death, resurrection to ascension is marked by a succession of rites of passage.

This Sunday our season of joyful celebration that began at Christmas ends with the Feast of the Presentation (Candlemas). Luke describes two rites of passage for Jesus – naming and circumcision, followed by His presentation at the Temple, both requirements of Jewish law. Jesus, the man, is a Jew who follows the rites established long before his birth. Simeon and Anna recognise that He is a very special child indeed: 'a light to lighten the Gentiles' and 'the glory of God's people Israel'. The redemption He brings, however, will only be won through suffering that will pierce His mother's soul. How touching it is that Anna is there to comfort Mary after Simeon's stark warning.

It is natural for us to fear death – to see it as a rite of passage with only an ending. Such fear can paralyse us and make us forget our purpose and mission. The reading from Hebrews helps to put our minds at rest. We might not be able to understand that there could be a better way to understand death, but God can. His solution was to enter our world as Jesus, our older brother, the first-born of God's human family. His sacrifice took away our sin and His resurrection removes our fear of death. Out of pure love, Jesus entered completely the reality of suffering and death present in God's creation. By resurrection He overcame both and opened a path for us to follow, free from fear, into His father's kingdom – a beginning for us all to savour.

Lindsay



Please pray for...



Joan Williams; Malcolm Grey-Smart; Sue Norman; Brian McClellan; John Panter; Joe McPhee; Pam Clarke; Ben Robinson; John and Ray Reynolds. We also pray for the families and friends of Sam Butter, Danny Emmott, Anthony Morris and Thomas Muir.

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.

Games Café

The next Games café is on **Tuesday 10th February 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! Games Café continues to the end of March.



Music Hall Sing-a-long 28th February

Coming to The Parish Rooms: on **Saturday 28th February, 2.00 – 4.30pm**, for your delectation and delight, a deliciously delightful Music Hall Variety style entertainment event.

Carol Service update

The total amount raised for the Severn Hospice at our Carol Service was £1,066 (including gift aid) and the local fundraising committee has thanked us for choosing them this year.

UCB Word For Today

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 1st February

9.00am BCP Holy Communion

10.30am CW Holy Communion

Readings: Hebrews 2.14-18 and Luke 2. 22-40

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=RytPQ3RmOG5yYIBpUWpoWWkxWGFEZz09>

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>

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.

Bring and Share Lunches

These lunches start again on 15th February and we hope you will consider offering to host one of these during the year - either in your own home or in the Parish Rooms. If this seems a bit daunting you can co-host with others, so please indicate this on the sheet in the Welcome area.

Support for 'Open the Book' in Schools

Carol Preston, our Children and Families Worker, is asking for support in taking 'Open the Book' into the local schools. 'Open the Book' is about putting the Bible in a fun drama form and taking it into the schools. There are two ways of helping. (1) Being part of the 'Open the Book' Team to go into the local schools and (2) Help make resources for outfits for the characters/stage props. This is a very important ministry as it is sharing Gods Word to the next generation. If you can offer any help/support in any way, please contact Carol . Thank you.

Foodbank Items Needed



Stock Items urgently required:

UHT milk; instant mash; sponge puddings/cakes; long-life fruit juice; pasta/cooking sauce; small jars of coffee; biscuits; anti-bacterial wipes/spray & bleach; toilet roll; male/female deodorant; shower gel; toothpaste; sanitary towels; shampoo.

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.

Gifts to the Women's Refuge (GLOW)

We've had a lovely personal letter thanking us for the donations to the Women's refuge and help with fundraising. Letter on noticeboard.

Mothers Union AGM

The Mothers' Union AGM and light lunch will be on Monday 9th February in the Parish Rooms, at 12.30pm

Film Club

Christ Church Little Drayton on **Thursday 19th February 1.00pm** showing Sister Act 2. Light lunch and raffle. ALL FREE and everyone welcome.

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