

Notices and Dates for your diaries:

Parochial Church Council: the PCC supports the Revd Simon Chambers in the practical running of St Thomas's. It is urgently looking for a secretary who can take the minutes and keep the church records.

Please pray for the family of **John Williamson** of Cann Common who died several days ago. John and his wife Judith who came to Dorset from Lincolnshire entered into village life; he served on the VPA committee and his wife Judith joined the W.I. Judith was tower captain at Lincoln cathedral and naturally assisted local bell-ringing and especially our Melbury ringers. His funeral is at the West Dorset Crematorium at 12:15 on 9 February.

Pilgrim Course: The course on the Eucharist led by John Fuller continues on Wednesday at 7.30pm, meeting at John and Jill Fuller's house – 11 Ratcliffe Gardens (a turning off St James') instead of meeting in St Peter's Hall. You are very welcome to join us – any queries do phone John on 01747 850079.

Future Events: Two future events are the Weldmar Snowdrop Service, Monday, 12 February at Bell Street, 3 p.m. and the Shrove Tuesday Quiz with Pancakes, 13 February, 7.30 p.m. at the Father's House.

The Churches Together Lent Groups are a good opportunity to meet Christians of other denominations to reflect on and talk about our faith and pray together. The list of available groups is displayed at the back of church so why not sign up today? The groups take place at various times on different days and start the week beginning 19th February for five weeks. The cost of the course book, "On the Third Day" by Rev John Pritchard, is £5. Books will be available at or before the first session. Contact Elizabeth Preston if you need more details - 01747 850654 or speak to Alan Kirkham.

Team Office

Please note that the team office will be closed for one day on Monday 29th January.

For Pewsheets Notices please contact Rodney Atwood on 01747 855255 or harrietatwood@hotmail.com

WELCOME to St Thomas's Church, Melbury Abbas

If you are new to the church or visiting, please introduce yourself to one of the team so we might get to know you better.

Team Office is open Mon - Fri 9am - 12pm
Tel: 853060 email: office@ShaftesburyCofE.org.uk
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THE SHAFTESBURY TEAM
St Thomas's, Melbury Abbas



Sunday 28th January – Presentation of Christ in the Temple

11.15am – Matins

Sunday 4th February – Second Sunday before Lent

9.30am – Parish Communion

Sunday 11th February – Next before Lent

11.15am – Parish Communion

Collect

Almighty and ever-living God, clothed in majesty, whose beloved Son was this day presented in the Temple, in substance of our flesh: grant that we may be presented to you with pure and clean hearts, by your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

First Reading Malachi 3.1-5

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

Then I will draw near to you for judgement; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow, and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien, and do not fear me, says the Lord of hosts.

Second Reading Hebrews 2.14-18

Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

Gospel Reading Luke 2.22-40

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord'), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.'

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word;

for my eyes have seen your salvation,

which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel.'

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.