

Notices and Dates for your diaries:

PCC Membership. The PCC supports the Revd. Simon Chambers in the practical running of St Thomas's. It is urgently looking for an Hon. Secretary who can take the minutes and keep the church records and also for other members to help its work.

Women's World Day of Prayer services are on Friday, 2 March at 11 a.m. at the United Church, Bell Street and at 7.30 p.m. at the Friends Meeting House. The theme is the Christians of Suriname (in S. America). Details from Jean Kirkham. Men are also welcome to attend.

Lent Lunches take place in the Town Hall each Friday during Lent starting at 12 noon to 1.30 pm. It is a good opportunity to meet friends from outside our parish. Shaftesbury Parishes and Christian organisations take it in turns to organise the lunches. We [and the Quakers] are responsible for the lunch on Friday 9th March. Please come if you can and particularly on that day. Donations are welcome from those unable to attend.

Thank-You to our Churchwarden who cleared the church gutters and Nigel Kay who trimmed back the cherry tree which threatened to overgrow the lychgate. These works were carried out two Saturdays ago.

Low Sunday 8th April: there will be a 10.00am Team Service at St Mary's Motcombe due to the limited availability of clergy after Easter. A planned BCP Communion at St Thomas's will have to be re-scheduled.

Reports of various church activities for the APCM on 20 April will be incorporated into the annual report which will be circulated. These reports (sidesmen, bells, flowers, sacristans, electoral roll, team council and so forth – may be only a couple of essential sentences) should be sent to Alan Kirkham for incorporation into the 2017 annual report.

Safeguarding: anyone whose role involves contact with children or the vulnerable may need safeguarding training and should speak to Alan Kirkham.

Pewsheets Notices: If you have anything for the pew sheet please let Rodney Atwood [harrietatwood@hotmail.com] know by lunch time the previous Wednesday.

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 25th February – Second Sunday of Lent

11.15am – Matins

Sunday 4th March – Third Sunday of Lent

9.30am – Parish Communion

Sunday 11th March – Mothering Sunday

11.15am – Parish Communion

Collect

Almighty God, you show to those who are in error the light of your truth, that they may return to the way of righteousness: grant to all those who are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's religion, that they may reject those things that are contrary to their profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same; through our Lord Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

First Reading Genesis 17.1-7, 15, 16

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said to him, 'I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous.' Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, 'As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

God said to Abraham, 'As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.

Second Reading Romans 4.13-25

For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, as it is written, 'I have made you the father of many nations')—in the presence of the God in whom he

believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become 'the father of many nations', according to what was said, 'So numerous shall your descendants be.' He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. Therefore his faith 'was reckoned to him as righteousness.' Now the words, 'it was reckoned to him', were written not for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

Gospel Reading Mark 8.31-38

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, 'Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.'

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.'