

ST ANDREW'S ST BARTHOLOMEW'S

Vicar's Blog

This week we're continuing our 'Church of Tomorrow' series. We've looked at the fascinating image of the Choluteca bridge in Honduras in 1988 which, six months after being built, was hit by Hurricane Mitch. The good news was that the indestructible bridge stood firm. The bad news was that the course of the river had moved to the right of the bridge, rendering it totally useless! We reflected on the reality of church decline in the institutional church, like the Church of England, as it has failed to adapt missionally and into a post-Christian landscape. What once were helpful structures or scaffolds for discipleship, worship, and mission – e.g. "Come to church and get it all" – are now no longer the solution. We need a new, creative and missional courage to take the gospel to our culture.

We then reflected on the reality that in the church, it is so important to seek to make Jesus 'Lord' of every area of our lives, and not just 'Saviour'. We have to live out the paradox that on the one hand 'Jesus is *Lord*' and so we strive to make him that in our lives, but on the other hand 'Jesus is Lord' and so we don't strive because it starts with grace, and he is Lord and not us! In week three, we explored the theme of a church that is 'dependent on the Holy Spirit'. We need to not believe the lie that we somehow have an 'inferior Holy Spirit' to the apostles in Acts, or to the person beside you in church! The very same power that raised Christ from the dead is at work in us, but we need to ask him for that power, and exercise the gifts of the Spirit that he has made available to us.

This week we are going to be thinking about a church that has 'confidence in the gospel.' A legacy of our post-Christendom culture, where it was just a 'cultural thing', is that we've lost confidence in the gospel itself, and Jesus' ability to radically save and transform people's lives. For many of us, it's not just about capability or opportunity, it's about a mindset. Is it really real? Do I really believe it? Does every human on the planet need to know that Jesus is not just *my* Lord, but *the* Lord, and find salvation in him? Lord, give us confidence not in our own ability, but confidence in the gospel, the power for salvation for those who believe (Romans 1:16).

Sunday 11th Feb

Church of Tomorrow – Eph 2

9am Communion service at St A's

10.30am Informal Worship with Children's and Youth Groups

Note the 3:30pm Evensong at St B's has been cancelled.

Sunday 18th Feb

Church of Tomorrow – Eph 4

9am Communion service at St A's

10.30am Informal Worship with Children's Groups – Youth in service

6pm Encounter – Evening of worship & prayer at St A's

Monday 12th Feb

No STA Youth

Tuesday 13th Feb

1:30pm Bereavement Café

Wednesday 14th Feb

No BLT (Babies, Lunch and Toddlers)

7pm Ash Wednesday Service

Thursday 8th Feb

10am Thursday Knitters

10am Holy Communion at St A's

10:30am Ladies Connect Group

7:30pm Zoom Prayer Meeting

Friday 9th Feb

No Friday Minis

Please visit www.stastb.church/calendar for the most up to date information.

Churchsuite

ChurchSuite serves as our secure platform for staying connected and accessing the latest information about events at St. Andrew's, including our weekly newsletter. You can conveniently sign up for special events, activities, and teams through the website or app, available for download at <https://churchsuite.com/apps/>.

Pastoral Care

As part of our Christian community, we provide mutual support for one another. Much of this happens informally with friends within the church and through the connect groups. However, sometimes people will have need for more personal support and encouragement either as a 'one-off chat' or on a more ongoing basis. We have a pastoral care team who can provide this type of care. Please contact Nigel Roe (Team Leader) on 07780 994827 or Rosi White on 07426 357967.

Notices

Prayers of love and faith conversation Sunday 25th Feb 6-7.15pm. The Church of England has introduced prayers for same-sex couples. Please come and hear the leadership's response moving forwards.

Envisioning Evening Our annual envisioning evening is taking place on Sunday 17th March at 6pm. Do join us as we hear from all the different ministries the church engages in!

Ash Wednesday Service As we shortly begin this season of Lent, we would love to invite you to the Ash Wednesday service on the 14th Feb (7pm) at St Andrew's.

Marriage Course We will be launching an online marriage course starting 11th April. Whether you've been married for six months or 40 years, whether you're in a good place or struggling, The Marriage Course offers practical support over seven sessions to strengthen your relationship. To sign up or for more information, go to <https://stastb.churchsuite.com/events/6cfjhhoa>

Men's Curry Night You are invited to join a men's curry night at the Bombay and Co, 5 Portland St, Cheltenham GL52 2NZ on Tuesday 20th February at 7:30pm. Because we are expecting quite a few to attend, there will be a set menu with a selection of starters and 4 different curries. It will cost £26.99, payable on the night.

Christian Unions in Chosen Hill & Churchdown School Academy Launching this year are CUs in our two secondary schools. All who are looking for Christian friendship during the week over lunchtime are welcome. For more information on specific times and locations, please reach out to St. Andrew's Youth Pastor Jamie at jamie@stastb.church or the school reception.

World Day of Prayer Crafted by Christian women from the Palestine committee two years ago, the World Day of Prayer service emphasises the connection to Jesus' birthplace despite the ongoing conflict. This year's theme, "bear with one another in love", aligns with the women's commitment to witness Christ's love. Supported by Churches Together, the local service is on Friday, March 1st, at St John's Church Churchdown, starting at 7.30 pm (refreshments from 7 pm). All are welcome.

Eco Tip

Nature: considering growing flowers this year? Try and make them pollinator friendly by planting large open flowers. Grow a variety of types for different types of pollinators.

Events

Our website calendar is a good place to find out what's happening throughout the year. Visit <https://www.stastb.church/calendar>

14th Feb – Ash Wednesday Service 7pm

25th Feb – Prayers of Love and faith (PLF) presentation 6pm

1st March – World Day of Prayer

17th March – Envisioning Evening 6pm

24th March – Newcomers' Tea 12noon

St Andrew's Church Centre, Station Road, Churchdown, Gloucester
GL3 2JT

www.stastb.church 01452 712154

Office hours: Monday to Friday, 9.30am - 12.30pm

Closed Tuesday 9.30am - 11.30am

Contact information

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Forward any notices to Adam.



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