

and with so much happening within that time, it certainly was a wrench to say goodbye: or should it be “auf wiedersehen” for I’m sure I’ll see you again?

Thank you to everyone for all for your kind words, prayers, and gifts - of a trowel and fork (for my new garden) and a generous cheque - probably for a stone garden seat to keep forever to remind me of my wonderful, encouraging and loving Church Family. What would I have done without you? And thank you, too, for the fizz and the delicious and beautifully decorated cake – and despite having made more farewell cakes than I care to remember for others, I hadn’t expected one for myself!

And then I must say thank you to so many of you who came to my Licensing Service on 12 February at Buckland Brewer – it was amazing to see so many of you there, once again showing your love. You certainly did me proud, and it was a service I’ll never forget for many different reasons, not least because of my St Mary’s Church Family. So thank you to one and all for everything. With much love, Maddy

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This Month's Diary

Thurs 1 March, 9.00 am MORNING PRAYER  **for ARCHDEACON HALF DAY** in St Mary's Church

Friday 2 March, 10.30 for 11 am WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER at Baptist Church

Sat 3 March, 8.30 am MEN'S BREAKFAST
10.30-3.30 pm **STEPPING STONES DAY CONFERENCE** at St Mary's Church
12.45-5.00 pm **STREAMS** at Littleham V Hall
7.30 pm **BIDEFORD TOWN BAND CONCERT**

Mon 5 March 7.30 pm. BOOKWORMS, at Maggie's

Tues 6 March 7.30 pm PARISH PRAYER, St Mary's Hse

Tues 20 March 2.30 pm REFLECTIONS for the bereaved

Wed 21 March 2 pm TEA WITH FRIENDS, Life & Times of Richard Grenville by Brian Hopkins

Friday 23 March 2 pm JULIAN GROUP, Quaker Meeting Hse

DEADLINE for the next edition: the last Sunday of the month - contact John Henderson, email: winspens1213@gmail.com

St Mary's Church, St Mary's House, 9 Church Walk, Bideford. EX39 2BP Tel: 01237 474078
Email: admin@stmaryschurchbideford.org Website: stmaryschurchbideford.org



ST MARY'S
PARISH
CHURCH
BIDEFORD

ST MARY'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2018

Issue No 85

PASTORAL LETTER FROM REV'D MARISA COCKFIELD

Dear Friends,

Change is in the air for us all. By the time you read this both Maddy and myself will have been installed in our new roles. She and I shared some of our training together, and I know she will bring a wise and steadfast ministry to her new benefice. We should continue to hold her in our prayers.

Many of you will remember Tom Benson from his curacy here. He is now a training incumbent, and I served my curacy with him at Buckfastleigh. He always spoke very highly of everyone here, and it was with his encouragement that I applied back in the summer of 2017. I was delighted to be offered this post, and look forward to serving all our communities with joy over the next few years.

Bernard, my husband, and the Reverend Mouse (our rough-coated Jack Russell, which Tom appointed as Honorary Curate to Landscope School) have both successfully 'translated' up to North Devon, and are loving it, as am I. We all enjoy rural life and have been exploring the many wonderful local walks. I was also touched to receive a lovely card from Gwen and Pete, praying "that you and Bernard will be as happy and fulfilled as we were during our time there".

I'm aware of how much hard work has gone into preparing for the licensing service and I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone involved. I must also thank everyone who has helped us settle in: the Diocesan surveyor and our splendid local team of builders, painters, etc, for whom nothing was too much trouble, and the wonderful churchwardens who kept us supplied with the Crosslet so we could get to know how vibrant village social life is! Over the next few weeks I will be spending

time in the villages and in Bideford itself as I work out how this dual role will look. It is a real blessing to part of such a special ministry team, led by our Rector, Claire, and I hope I can make a meaningful contribution across the whole benefice. Many thanks are due also for all the hard work and commitment from Gwen, the team, churchwardens, PCCs and parishes during the vacancy.

This post is something new for all of us, as we work out how to offer ministry in a combined role with town and country. I will be meeting as many of you as I can, listening, learning and praying together to see how this shapes us and our parishes in the months to come. We are all adjusting to new ways, and will do it together as we discern what God wants for us. We have a job to do later in the year, working collaboratively to develop our new mission action plan, and this is a wonderful opportunity to review where we have come from and where we wish to travel; to identify what is important for us now, and what might bring us fresh challenges and joy as we serve our communities.

Lent gives us breathing space to think about our faith – what it means to us, where God is working in our lives, whether we are conscious of his calling to some particular ministry. Lent gives us space to consider our walk with God, and where it is leading us. Like the Emmaus road, do we see God's influence in our daily lives? Lent often involves giving something up, only to take it up again at Easter. Perhaps a better way is to challenge ourselves to do more to deepen our faith and practice – through reading our Bible, prayer, attending Lenten services or courses or volunteering for the pastoral care team. Doing something positive for God is life-enhancing, even in difficult times.



I pray that the Lord will bless us, our communities and all in need; that as we grow together we may know his will for us and be beacons of light in the world to the glory of His name, Amen.

Revd Marisa

TEA WITH FRIENDS has moved to the **3rd Wednesday** of each month from 2-4pm to hopefully attract more people to attend as numbers each month had become very small and we fear we may have to close. Everyone is very welcome to attend any of the meetings

The programme for the rest of 2018 is available at the back of church.

Any enquiries please to *Maggie Murray 01237 477568*

Holy Week and Easter at St. Mary's 2018

Palm Sunday 25 March

8am Holy Communion

9.30am Procession from Charles Kingsley Statue to St. Mary's for 10am Parish Communion

6pm 5 Parish Palm Sunday service *in Littleham Church*



Holy Monday

7pm Celtic Communion in *Landcross Church*

Holy Tuesday

10.30am Holy Communion

7pm 5 Parish Passover Meal in St. Mary's Church

Phone 474078 to book



Holy Wednesday

7pm 5 Parish Stations of the Cross

Maundy Thursday

7pm Holy Communion with Foot Washing; Stripping of the Altars followed by Prayer Vigil until 10pm

Good Friday

9.30am Walk of Witness organised by Christians Together in Bideford and District starts at *Pollyfield Centre ETW* with hot cross buns and coffee ending up at St. Mary's for:

11.45am United Christians Together Service

2-3.00pm Meditations on the Cross



Easter Day 1 April

6am Easter Sunrise Communion, *Pollyfields ETW*

8am Holy Communion, 10am Parish Communion



FROM MADDY BRAY:

It was with a heavy heart that I presided over the 8 and 10 am services on Sunday 28 January, this being my last Sunday with you all. Having been in St Mary's for over 25 years,