

While no-one saw this happen at our baptism, yet from that moment, God the Holy Spirit came to dwell, in and with us, helping us to live as the people we have now become, because of our Christian baptism, that is, God's much-loved daughter or son, part of God's family, called to live with God and for God, abiding always in God's constant love for us.

Jesus' baptism was followed by a lengthy period in the desert with the wild animals. During this time, Jesus was tempted in various ways to turn away from both the general and the particular calling given him by God.

We are facing a difficult time. The precise contours of our personal difficulties will vary but no-one is untouched by the impact of the virus. We need to remember what it means to be a baptised Christian. What resources are available to us.

Like Jesus in the desert and throughout his life, we too are invited to stay very close to God. We are invited to bring to God the entirety of our lives, always pouring out, and without any editing, all that makes us who we are. Jesus encourages us to call God 'Abba' for which the best translation is 'Daddy'. The image is to encourage us to relate to God as completely and as freely as a very young child relates to the most perfect parent.

Like Jesus, we are encouraged to ask and to expect God to help us walk the life which God wants for us. All too often, I try and live as a Christian without God's help. Silly. It is like trying to do something with one or even two hands tied behind your back. God the Holy Spirit is always with us and within us to help us with all we face in our lives.

Jesus prayed for others during his earthly ministry. Jesus continues to pray for us. We too are called to pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ. Alongside your other personal prayers, I invite you to think of one person, a family or a household from within your entire Christian family. Commit daily to ask God to bless them and give them what they need.

With love in Christ,

Mary

1 Corinthians Conversations Bible Study: If you want to engage with the Bible afresh during 2021, why not attend a Zoom Bible study on 1 Corinthians meeting weekly on Wednesdays at 11am. If you have not previously attended please email Revd Andrew at rector@corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk for an invitation.

Early Birds service on Jesus the Healer: <https://youtu.be/rYbuDZv-S-s>

St Bart's walking group: Due to Lockdown 3 our walking activities are now suspended until the guidelines allow a return. A full report of the New Year's Day walk can be found on the Team website. Unfortunately with less than a mile to go Richard Hovey took a tumble resulting in a visit to RUH where an x-ray revealed a clean fracture of the humerus. Richard is resolute in his recovery and would welcome being remembered in your prayers.



The Greater Corsham and Lacock Team

The Church of England in
Corsham | Gastard | Neston
& **Lacock with Bowden Hill**
corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk

TEAM NEWS 2 - January 10th 2021

10.00 a.m. Morning Worship at Corsham

Please telephone L'nora Olney on 01225 859202 if you wish to attend this service

From our Team Vicar

What do you know about your baptism?

Although Jesus was without sin, he underwent "a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins", to fully identify himself with human beings.

Whenever we were baptised, we too underwent "a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins." We may have been old enough to make the baptismal responses for ourselves. Or others may have made them on our behalf. We, as older children or adults, or parents and godparents on our behalf, said we wanted to turn away from a life lived without God, and towards a life lived with and for God. We, or others on our behalf, said we were sorry for all that we had done and being that was not how God wanted us to be and to do. In our baptism, God forgave our sins, we were re-created, and we were welcomed into God's family.

If we were too young to make the baptismal responses for ourselves, we will have needed to come to a time when we chose to own them for ourselves, perhaps in Confirmation.

Whatever the precise contours of our journey into our full inheritance as a baptised son or daughter of God, we need to live out of this inheritance in our daily lives.

Being a baptised Christian is the most wonderful person to be. We became a new creation, born again, as part of God's family with God as our Father and Mother, God-in-Jesus as our Saviour and brother, and God the Holy Spirit as our constant companion and helper. We gain a multitude of brothers and sisters in Christ through time and space. We enter the way of life which God created us to live, in relationship with God and God's family, now on earth and forever in heaven.

As we live out of the truth of who we are, let us also remember the vitally important additional part to our Christian baptism and Jesus' baptism, that is not present with John's baptism.

When Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son whom I love; with you I am well pleased."
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Collect for the Baptism of Christ

Eternal Father, who at the baptism of Jesus revealed him to be your Son, anointing him with the Holy Spirit: grant to us, who are born again by water and the Spirit, that we may be faithful to our calling as your adopted children; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

or

Heavenly Father, at the Jordan you revealed Jesus as your Son: may we recognize him as our Lord and know ourselves to be your beloved children; through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Old Testament Reading: Genesis 1.1–5 (NRSVA) The Beginning

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, ²the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. ³Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light. ⁴And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

New Testament Reading: Acts 19.1–7 (NRSVA) Paul in Ephesus

While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the inland regions and came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples. ²He said to them, ‘Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?’ They replied, ‘No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.’ ³Then he said, ‘Into what then were you baptized?’ They answered, ‘Into John’s baptism.’ ⁴Paul said, ‘John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus.’ ⁵On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied— ⁷altogether there were about twelve of them.

Gospel Reading: Mark 1.4–11 (NRSVA) The Baptism of Jesus

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, ‘The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.’ ⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven, ‘You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.’

Services currently planned for January and February

Please note these will be subject to review in the light of any changes in government or national CofE guidance, or a significant increase in local infection rates

Sunday 17th January : 10.00 a.m. Zoom service

Sunday 24th January : 10.00 a.m. Holy Communion (*tbc*) at Corsham

Sunday 31st January : 10.00 a.m. Zoom service

Sunday 7th February : 10.00 a.m. Morning Worship at Corsham

Sunday 14th February : 10.00 a.m. Zoom service

Sunday 21st February : 10.00 a.m. Holy Communion (*tbc*) at Corsham

Sunday 28th February : 10.00 a.m. Zoom service

Links to a number of other online services can be found at <https://corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk/links-to-services/>

Contacts for service booking:

Zoom services: please contact Revd Victor at associateminister@corshamandlacockchurches.org.uk

Services at Corsham: please telephone L’nora Olney on 01225 859202

Your contact details will be requested for NHS Test and Trace purposes. Details will be kept securely and shredded after 21 days.

Guidance on attending church services during lockdown

Attending church worship is a “permitted reason” for leaving home during the lockdown. However, the Church of England nationally say:

- **people are advised to avoid travelling outside of their village, town or the part of a city where they live;**
- **We urge everyone to be exceptionally cautious and, in particular, to do everything possible to prevent mingling of households and support bubbles, either indoors or outside.**

Two metres social distancing must be maintained at all times, and face coverings that fit securely around the side of the face are mandatory in church.

If you are vulnerable to the virus, by reason of age and/or underlying health condition, please do consider carefully if it is wise for you to attend church at present