

ST ANDREW'S ST BARTHOLOMEW'S

Vicar's Blog

This week, as we continue our series 'Church of Tomorrow', we're looking at a characteristic of the Church which is being 'dependent upon the Holy Spirit'. The Holy Spirit is a person, the third person of the Trinity. He comes into our lives when we turn to Jesus as Lord and Saviour, and we are 'born again'. Regeneration is the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit, granting spiritual life when we would otherwise be dead in our sins. He then continues his work of sanctification in us, making us more like Jesus and helping us to live out the 'Spirit of adoption' as his children. As Romans 8:16 puts it, 'The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.' The Holy Spirit is our advocate, counsellor, encourager, and guide. He 'helps us in our weakness' (Rom 8:26).

On the day of Pentecost, we see the birth of the Spirit-filled church (Acts 2), and we learn throughout the book of Acts that the Holy Spirit equips the Saints for service in God's church – proclaiming the Gospel in the power of the Spirit, making disciples in the power of the Spirit, and showing Christ's love to others ... all in the power of the Spirit. A.W. Tozer said that 'The Church was never intended to be a natural and intellectual organisation, but a supernatural instrumentality wholly dependent upon the power of God'. Here's a question: if someone who wasn't a Christian were to do an audit of our church, for instance - our services, our ministries, our Connect groups, our collective witness to the world - would they be left in no doubt that this is more than the effort of a bunch of caring humans? Or how about a thought experiment: if the Holy Spirit were to take a sabbatical from our church for 3 months, who would notice? Would our programmes, events, gatherings, and ministries carry on as normal, or would they utterly collapse? I'm hoping that *everyone* would notice, but I always have a niggling doubt that our sinful human tendency is to want to do things in our own strength, rather than His.

There's always the temptation for pride and human endeavour to take over in our well-resourced, amazing church ... for our plans and programmes to get more efficiently managed and delivered ... for a spirit of *independence* rather than dependence to take over. Please can you keep reminding each other (and me) never to try and do anything without relying on the Holy Spirit to go ahead of us, to empower us, to equip us and to guide us. Holy Spirit you are welcome here!

Sunday 28th January

Church of Tomorrow – Eph 1

9am Communion service at St A's

10.30am Informal Worship with Children's and Youth Groups

3:30pm Holy Communion at St B's

Sunday 4th Feb

Healthy Habits - Prayer

9am Communion service at St A's

10.30am All age worship with Communion at St A's

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

Monday 29th Jan

7pm STA Youth

7:30pm Leadership Book Club

Wednesday 31st Jan

11:30am BLT (Babies, Lunch and Toddlers)

Thursday 1st Feb

10am Thursday Knitters

10am Holy Communion at St A's

7:30pm Zoom Prayer Meeting

7:15pm Alpha

Friday 2nd Feb

9:30am Friday Minis

12noon Friday's Kitchen

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/>.

Churchsuite Helpdesk

For any assistance with ChurchSuite, Adam will be hosting a helpdesk every 2 months at the end of the 10:30am and 9am services in the large hall. The next session is scheduled for next Sunday, 4th Feb. Join us and ensure you're making the most of your ChurchSuite experience. See you there!

Notices

Men's Breakfast: Join us for a Men's Breakfast on the 27th of January, where we will delve into the theme of prayer. This gathering promises not only a hearty meal but also an opportunity for us to come together, share our thoughts, and deepen our understanding of the power of prayer in our lives. Sign up here <https://stastb.churchsuite.com/events/w6o7va27>

Open the Book: The Open the Book Team visit Churchdown Village Junior School every Wednesday morning during term time. We have the opportunity to tell children about our amazing God through acting out stories from the Bible and getting the students involved as well. We're looking for more volunteers to join our team, whether this is every week or more occasionally. If you'd like to get involved or find out more about Open the Book, Kate would love to chat to you. You can email her at children@stastb.church

New Gateway Theology School starting soon! Join our upcoming sessions:

1. Israel-Palestine: Past & Present Zoom sessions: 3 Wednesdays, 7-8:45 PM, starting Feb 7.
2. Creation, Climate, and Christianity Zoom sessions: 5 Mondays, 7-8:45 PM, starting Feb 19.
3. Interpreting Ephesians In-depth exploration for St. Andrew's members or friends. Date and time TBD, possibly Saturday mornings from mid-Feb.

For more details or to express interest, visit gtstheology.org or contact Dan Button at info@gtstheology.org.

Alan Rowan, a faithful member of our church for many years, has passed away. His funeral will be held on Tuesday 30th Jan 11am, at St Bartholomew's with refreshments at St Andrew's afterwards.

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.

Eco Tip

ENERGY and WATER: Take shorter showers, and fewer baths to both save water and energy and therefore your money.

Events

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

- 27th Jan – Men's Breakfast
- 9th Feb – Youth Social – Ninja Warrior
- 14th Feb – Ash Wednesday Service
- 17th March – Envisioning Evening
- 24th March – Newcomers' Tea

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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Children's and Families: Kate Smith, children@stastb.church

Churchwarden: Andrew Smith, andrew.smith@stastb.church

Churchwarden: Celia Anderson, celia.anderson@stastb.church

Communications Coordinator: Adam Greenland, comms@stastb.church

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Pastoral/Bereavement Support: Nigel Roe, 07780 994827 or Rosi White,
07426357967

Treasurer: treasurer@stastb.church

Vicar: John Monaghan, vicar@stastb.church, 07936601497

Worship: Rhi Reeves, rhiannon.reeves@stastb.church

Youth: Jamie Flores, jamie@stastb.church

Forward any notices to Adam.



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