

# The Parish of Christchurch



*The Priory Church of the Holy Trinity, Christchurch  
St George, Jumpers • St John at Purewell*

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Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

*“We have a gospel to proclaim, good news for men in all the earth; the gospel of a Saviour’s name: we sing his glory, tell his worth.”*

Dear Friends

On Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> September, the Church keeps the feast day for St Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist. From early days within the Church, St Matthew was regarded as the author of the gospel narrative that bears his name. This is not universally accepted by the majority of current day theologians. It is generally accepted that the first gospel to be written was Mark’s. We also think that the author of both Matthew and Luke had sight of Mark’s words when the gospels attributed to them were written, but the authors of Matthew and Luke had different additional sources to refer to and this in turn helps us to explain why the first three gospels, the synoptic gospels, do not agree on all details written within them.

Both Mark and Luke refer to Matthew as Levi. He was a tax collector of Jewish race who worked for the Romans before he accepted Jesus’ call to follow him. Following Jesus’ Ascension, we believe that like some of the other Apostles, Matthew became involved in missionary work in both Persia and Ethiopia and eventually he was martyred for his Christian faith.

The gospel that holds his name is generally accepted to have been written, initially at least, for the Jewish Christians. Matthew’s gospel has a distinctive approach to the life and death of Jesus, highlighting the belief that Jesus was the Jewish Messiah and son of David who had come to inaugurate the Kingdom of Heaven as foretold in the Old Testament and the Jewish tradition.

Well if any of that has left you more confused about St Matthew and the gospel narrative of Matthew than before you read my opening words, let me add this: We might not know all of the answers to the who, when, where and how, but we do know the answer to the why. Why Matthew’s gospel was written. The Collect for Bible Sunday, this year to be kept on 24<sup>th</sup> October, the last Sunday after Trinity reminds us of these words. *“Blessed Lord, who caused all Holy Scripture to be written for our learning: help us so to hear them, to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them, that through patience, and the comfort of your holy word, we may embrace and for ever hold fast the hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ.”*

The bible is our life’s companion as we journey together in our Christian faith. It contains all the words that we need to sustain us, to strengthen us and to equip us as we like Matthew seek to proclaim the good news about Jesus Christ to others.

Why not use the coming month leading up to Bible Sunday by reading afresh the gospel of Matthew. It has been described as the easiest of the four gospels to read and to understand, but please do not get stuck on the first 17 verses of chapter one, have a look and perhaps you will see what I mean!

## **Music within the Parish of Christchurch.**

It has been truly wonderful to both see and hear the choirs at St George's and The Priory back in their rightful places and leading the singing of God's praises in our acts of Worship, and in so doing, proclaiming the good news. We have some new and very young choristers in the Priory choir and we pray that each one of them will be happy singing in the choir for many years to come. Please do pray for them and for their families and also for those who have recently left the choir as they have started their courses at college or university. I am also told that some fifty of you have joined the new "Priory Consort Choir" and we look forward to your first appearance at Evensong later in October.

### **Organ Recitals.**

The new season of organ recitals begins this coming Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup> September at 12.30pm and will be given by Samuel Bristow from Salisbury Cathedral. The season runs through to 25<sup>th</sup> November. Each recital lasts for about 45 minutes and there is of course the opportunity to have refreshments in the Cloister's café before and after each recital.

### **The Gesualdo Six.**

We are very privileged to have the Gesualdo Six with us for the weekend 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> of September at the Priory. Together with the adult voices of the Priory Choir, they will be singing Sung Compline at 8pm on Friday 24<sup>th</sup>, to which of course we are all invited. On Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> they will be in concert at the Priory at 7.30pm (tickets available via the Priory box office.) On Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> the Gesualdo Six will be our visiting choir at the 10.00am Sung Eucharist at the Priory.

### **Wednesday Eucharist with hymns.**

I know that some of you are still not comfortable about returning to Sunday Services. You would be most welcome to join us in the Priory for our Wednesday morning Eucharist at 11.00am when we sing three hymns and after the Service, many stay on for a cup of coffee together.

### **Harvest Festival.**

We are holding our Harvest Thanksgiving Services at both St George's and at The Priory on **Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> October** this year. The St George's Service is at 9.30am and at The Priory at 10.00am. A warm welcome will await you all. Food items for the Christchurch Foodbank will be very gratefully received at these Services.

"Now we rejoice to name him King: Jesus is Lord of all the earth. This gospel message we proclaim: we sing his glory, tell his worth." (Edward J. Burns.)

With my love and my prayers.

Richard.