



## Our Mission Statement

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind...and your neighbour as yourself. Matthew 22:37-38

**Sunday Podcasts** of each Sunday Morning Service are available after the service on YouTube.

## A time to speak

Parish Podcast on the YouTube channel. The address for both is at the bottom of the page.



We send best wishes to Dennis Shaw who will be marking this milestone birthday on Thursday (21<sup>st</sup>).

Dennis is keeping as cheerful as possible and using this time to research his family tree.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ

in the current crisis, when we haven't been meeting as a church, it is tempting to think that nothing is happening. But I want to assure you that this is far from the case.

Sandra and Margaret have been very active, especially leading up to Christmas, helping out with SASS and its work with asylum seekers and refugees, supplying toys, clothes etc .

Copies of the Parish Newsletter are delivered every week either by hand, email or post. And the Prayer Chain continues to support those in need through prayer requests that are handed into them. We have also had some new people joining too.

Last year a brief church survey showed that nearly everyone on our Electoral Roll is in regular contact with someone. I know a few members who regularly ring others weekly.

A worship service has been provided every Sunday without fail, and a series of podcasts on different topics have been produced by myself, as well as Jonathan Blackham (currently at home in London), Professor Tom Connor, and Stuart Bell.

Over the last several months before Christmas we had several congregational zoom meetings (although the last was cancelled because of poor numbers) and up until Christmas we had regular Zoom Bible studies on the Book of Acts for those interested.

Lilli and Chung hold several bible studies every week with people from China, UAE, Italy, Mexico, Singapore etc., some of whom have passed through St. James' Church. Some of these have become Christians as a consequence.

People like Margaret and Sian have been looking after people like Bill and Freda. And the Standing Committee has been regularly meeting on Zoom to make decisions about trees, the maintenance of the Church and Churchyard, and various problems that have arisen over the past year. This in addition to the ongoing challenges of the Parish Share which, thanks to your generosity, we have so far been able to meet.

Over the past year we have continued to be in contact with people outside of the Church as I continue to take funerals. These are great occasions to preach the Good News to people who don't attend church.

In addition we now have a YouTube Channel, a regularly updated website and a Facebook page. Personally I continue to interact with various people via phone, email and Zoom (and the occasional letter). And continue to 'attend' other meetings - Deanery, Archdeaconry and Diocesan—all via Zoom which has been a real godsend.

And so although, on the surface of things, not a lot appears to be happening, please be assured that the work of the parish is carrying on. We continue to try and maintain our Church buildings and Community and, where it is safe and sensible to do so, to reach out to the wider world with the message of the Gospel. And so my thanks go to all those who contribute to this ongoing work, including my warden Leighton who has worked so hard over the last ten months.

God bless,

Mark



**THIS NEWSLETTER IS AVAILABLE ON THE PARISH WEBSITE:  
[www.stjameswanssea.org.uk](http://www.stjameswanssea.org.uk)**

**St. James Sunday Services on YouTube are available here:  
[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCoNVea6r8mEr\\_KnOkSv6qQA/](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCoNVea6r8mEr_KnOkSv6qQA/)  
The Vicar's New blog can be found here: [sonofzebedee.blogspot.com](http://sonofzebedee.blogspot.com)**

## Five Questions

- 1 What is your name? - Michael Coles. As a Catholic, I took the additional name David at my confirmation, but I do not use it any longer.
- 2 Where were you born? - At 22 Kings Road, Oystermouth.
- 3 What is your earliest memory of Church? - My memory is not very good, but I do remember becoming an altar boy at Our Lady Star of the Sea in Oystermouth after my first communion (about age 7). The senior altar boy from that time is still living and regularly attends the same church.
- 4&5 What is your favourite Bible verse and why? - 1 Thessalonians 5: 17-18: "...pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."  
I can never remember Bible texts, but I came across this one recently and it sums up my current thinking, to thank God in all circumstances for everything no matter how small.



### St. Kentigern 15<sup>th</sup> January

Friday 15<sup>th</sup> is set aside in the Anglican Calendar to remember the Scottish saint, Kentigern. He was born near Edinburgh in the sixth century. His mother, St Enoch, was daughter of the King of Lothian. Her pregnancy was illegitimate, the result of rape by one of her suitors, whose identity she refused to reveal. Her father was so incensed, he had Enoch and her child cast adrift in an open boat on the Firth of Forth, expecting them to perish. But the currents carried them across to the other side of the Firth, bringing them to land near the present town of Culross where they were offered shelter at the monastery of St Serf.

Serf took the boy under his special care, educating him and training him in the monastic life. When he reached manhood Kentigern left the monastery and journeyed across to the west of Scotland, finally establishing his own religious foundation on the site of the cathedral in Glasgow. Here he set about converting the area to Christianity. At a later stage he journeyed south into England and many parishes along his route still bear his name. Legend has it that he finally reached North Wales. Whilst there, he set up a monastery which he did because he believed the scattered Welsh monks needed a place to gather for education and to support each other. When he went back to Scotland, he left it under the care of Asaph. The monastery, and the town that grew up around the monastery, are called "Llanelwy" in Welsh, meaning church by the river Elwy, but are better known by their English name of St Asaph.

Kentigern eventually returned again to Scotland, where he died c. 603. Glasgow cathedral was built in his honour and he is venerated as their patron saint.

There is a saying: "standing on the shoulders of giants" which is a metaphor which means "Using the understanding gained by major thinkers who have gone before in order to make intellectual progress". But I think that this can equally apply to the Christian legacy passed on to us. We are here because people like Kentigern and others shared their faith, thus inspiring and teaching others to follow Christ.

We do not live in a spiritual vacuum but St. James stands today because giants or people of faith like Kentigern were faithful in their day. May future generations say the same about us.

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### Contact information

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Home phone number: (01792) 470532  
The Parish Website can be found at: [www.stjamesswansea.org.uk](http://www.stjamesswansea.org.uk)

## Epiphany 2

### Collect

Almighty and everlasting God, ruler of all things in heaven and on earth: in mercy hear the prayers of your people and grant us your peace throughout our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### Readings

1 Samuel 3: 1 - 10; Psalm 139  
Revelation 5: 1 - 10;  
John 1:43- end

### Quick quotes

"God creates out of nothing. Wonderful you say. Yes, to be sure, but he does what is still more wonderful: he makes saints out of sinners."

Soren Kierkegaard, *The Journals of Kierkegaard*

"Sanctify yourself and you will sanctify society."

Francis Of Assisi

"There is no saint without a past, no sinner without a future."

St. Augustine



**Our Bishop**, the Rt Rev John Davies has announced that he will be retiring on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. As well as a parish priest in his home Diocese of Monmouth, he has been the Dean of Brecon Cathedral 2000-2008, the bishop of the Diocese 2008- 2017 and from that year also the Archbishop of Wales, succeeding Barry Morgan. We wish the (arch) bishop and his wife Jo a long, healthy and happy retirement.

**The preacher** told his congregation, "Next Sunday my sermon will be on the sin of lying. To prepare yourselves, please read the whole of Mark 17".

The following Sunday arrived and he asked: "How many of you have read Mark 17?"

Most of the congregation raised their hands. "Good", he replied. "There are only 16 chapters in Mark. Now for the sermon on the sin of lying."