

February 2025 Edition 108

And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. ***Colossians 3:17***

Candlemas

Candlemas, celebrated since the fourth century on 2 February, forty days after Christmas, is also known as the Feast of the Presentation of our Lord Jesus in the Temple.

It marks the day when Joseph and Mary brought the infant Jesus to the Temple, and, as was the custom, sacrificed two young pigeons.

An old man called Simeon, who had been assured by the spirit that he would not die until he had seen the Messiah, took the child in his arms and gave thanks to God in the words we know now as the *Nunc Dimittis*, beginning with the words 'Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.' He warned Mary that sorrow like a sharp sword would break her heart.

Jesus' presence was also acknowledged by Anna, an elderly woman living in the Temple who spent her life worshipping, fasting and praying. Anna spoke about the child to all who were waiting for God to set Jerusalem free.

Although in Britain we remove our Christmas decorations on Twelfth Night, some other Christian countries remove them on Candlemas. In other countries Christians take their candles to church at Candlemas to be blessed and then used for the rest of the year. The blessed candles serve as a symbol of Christ, the Light of the World.



A New Way to Regularly Give to St Mary's

St Mary's depends heavily on your generosity to ensure that we can continue to share the light of God's love in Cuddington. Many of you are part of our planned giving scheme and each month or week give a regular donation to the church, often through standing orders, and we are very grateful for this.

The Church of England has, for several years, operated a Parish Giving Scheme that is currently used by over 3,300 parishes. The scheme is funded by the Church of England and there is no separate charge to the parish for joining and using it. Our Stewardship Committee carefully looked at the scheme and, with the approval of the PCC, has registered St. Mary's, so that we can offer another route for people to give to the church.

This is an online alternative to giving through our standalone scheme, allowing donors to manage in real time their giving account. Those who decide to use the scheme can securely log onto the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) website, set up an account by registering and initiating a direct debit. This can be amended or cancelled at any time. If you prefer you can also register with a phone call.

To reduce the administration burden, we reclaim allowable gift aid tax relief on a quarterly basis through our in-house scheme. PGS reclaims and remits to churches gift aid reclaims monthly. This has cash flow benefits for us. To achieve this the PGS direct debits are taken on the 1st of each month, with the relevant tax reclaim submitted to HMRC soon thereafter, so that they can be passed back to the church in the same month.



Another benefit of PGS is that it provides an option for donors to increase their giving automatically in line with inflation if they wish to. Many of us are happy to do this but often don't because we haven't thought of it or are not prompted to do so.

The scheme, like our internal one, is confidential. Only an authorised officer registered with PGS has access to the data. Donors only have access to their own account within the system.

We do not intend to close our in-house planned giving scheme, but it is felt that PGS will appeal to anyone who prefers to directly manage their giving and are comfortable doing this online. Interestingly, without publicising PGS until now, one person has signed up and has switched from our in-house scheme. I can only think that they searched online and came across our page in PGS.

If you would like to explore PGS further, please follow the link below <https://www.parishgiving.org.uk>

If you would like to visit our page in PGS the link is:

<https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/cuddington-st-mary-the-virgin-cuddington/>

David Eames - Treasurer

It costs around £330 per day to enable St. Mary's to continue its work.

This article is reprinted from the February 2022 issue



February & Future Services and Events

Sunday 2	08.00	Holy Communion
	09.30	Sung Communion and Children's Groups
Monday 3	19.30	<i>Knit & Natter in the Leverton Room</i>
Sunday 9	09.30	Sung Communion
Saturday 15	10.00	Women's Group in the Cuddington Hall
Sunday 16	09.30	Sung Communion and Children's Groups
Wednesday 19	20.00	PCC in the Cuddington Hall
Thursday 20	14.30	Afternoon Club in the Cuddington Hall
Sunday 23	09.30	Sung Communion
Sat 1 March	09.00	Men's Breakfast at Horton Golf Park
Sun 2 March	08.00	Holy Communion
	09.30	Sung Communion and Children's Groups
Mon 3 March	-	Candidates' tour & meeting with PCC
Tues 4 March	-	Formal Interviews
Weds 5 March	10.00	Ash Wednesday Holy Communion
	20.00	Ash Wednesday Sung Communion
Sun 9 March	09.30	Sung Communion
	18.30	Deanery Confirmation at Cuddington

Morning Prayer is said in church every weekday morning at 9am.

All are very welcome.