

**ALL SAINTS CHURCH BOYNE HILL
MAIDENHEAD
PARISH NEWS
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Dear Parishioners and Friends of All Saints, Boyne Hill,

We are looking forward to celebrating with joy the birth of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour and I hope that you will be able to join us at the Nine Lessons and Carols this weekend, or perhaps bring your family to the celebratory Crib Service at 4.00pm on Christmas Eve. Of course, at the heart of our worship is the Eucharist and we will, following tradition at All Saints, celebrate the first Eucharist of the Nativity at 11.30pm on 24 December followed by the Family Eucharist on Christmas morning at 10.00am. It would be wonderful to share the birth of Christ with you all at one or perhaps a few of these great celebrations.

Having started this piece by looking forward I would like to celebrate the good news we have shared already this Advent. Last weekend on Advent Sunday we shared our third Christ Child market and despite the wet weather many people visited the beautiful church of All Saints to hear choirs singing and the Salvation Army playing to help look forward to Christmas. It was wonderful to see so many people enjoying food, buying perhaps a Christmas present or two and sharing in the opportunity that this community event brings to meet with family and friends. I have had several parents comment that we are visited by the best, most friendly Father Christmas around! Thank you to all the planning team of Stella Harding, Jo McMullen, Dianne Farmiloe, John Gay, Sibio Veira, Darren Pimm and Tanya Fullarton who put so much hard work in preparing for this event. Thank you too for all the stall holders and all of you that supported the market which helped make it a great success.

Yesterday some of us enjoyed another celebratory day. In the morning on the Second Sunday of Advent we had approximately 100 people share the Eucharist and our Christingle liturgy. The atmosphere at the service was I think quite beautiful, helped by seeing so many families. Two highlights for me were Fr John's talk with the children exploring the meaning of the Christingle and the circle of light created by us all within the darkness as we held our lighted Christingles. During the talk Fr John explored with the young people what might the light bring to our lives, and I was moved by Maxim's response that the tinfoil reminds us that as humans we are crumpled too. The tin foil marks where the world (Orange) and the candle (Christ) come together. The foil reflects the light which of course we are to share within our lives. As humans though we are not perfect, we are indeed a little crumpled, but however imperfectly, we are called to follow John the Baptist and point to the hope of Christ.

That second moment of joy for me was the perfect silence in a dark church with the circle of Christingles as we sang the song of peace 'Shalom, my friend, shalom.' We pray for that peace that will reign in the future kingdom, but may it come quickly to the places of Gaza, Israel and Ukraine and other places impacted by conflict.

While Fr John celebrated the baptism of a new child at the church, John and Ken, our wardens, were sharing sandwiches, crisps, and cake with our friends from Iran in preparation for our journey to the Reading Minster church for the confirmation service with Bishop Olivia.

We took the train journey into Reading before walking to the Minster. The Revd Sonya Wratten provided the most incredible welcome to us. Firstly, she had invited us to share the rehearsal on the Sunday afternoon rather than the previous evening (As had been planned) so that we would not have to make two journeys to Reading. Having been given a concise preparation to the service by Revd Sonya enabling us all to feel relaxed we were invited to shared gorgeous pizza provided by a local restaurant. Following the pizza, we enjoyed mince pies and cake before taking our places for the Confirmation service itself with Bishop Olivia.

The first hymn which we had sung at All Saints in the morning 'All are Welcome' by Marty Haugen could not have been more appropriate as we gathered alongside seven other parishes from across Berkshire. 31 people were confirmed by Bishop Olivia including from our community Arash, Elham, Abbas, Azita, Mahdi, Mina, Marzeih, Sama, Fatemeh, Arash, Afsaneh, and Abbas. We processed out of the Minster singing heartily 'For all the Saints' with our candles held high.

I arrived home tired but happy to receive a text from Aiko to let us know that she had heard on Radio Berkshire Mahdi speaking about his experiences as an Asylum Seeker in this country and thanking the All-Saints community for all they had done to make them feel welcomed in Maidenhead.

Thank you, the community of All Saints, Boyne Hill for providing a community of welcome. Here are the words of Marty Haugen:

*Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safely live,
A place where saints and children tell how hearts learn to forgive.
Built of hopes and dreams and visions, rock of faith and vault of grace;
Here the love of Christ shall end divisions: all are welcome, all are welcome,
All are welcome in this place.*

May we all share God's love this week,

Fr Jeremy

RESOURCES FOR THE WEEK

Thursday 14 December

7.00pm Altwood School Carol Service

8.00pm Choir Practice

Friday 15

10.00am Tiny Saints in the Parish Centre *The Shepherd's Story*

Last meeting this term

Saturday 16

6:30pm in Church *Christmas Joy*

A Christmas Concert by Renaissance Voices (see p5)

Sunday 17

10.00am Parish Eucharist for the Third Sunday of Advent

Celebrant: Fr John Preacher: Fr Jeremy

Young Saints meet in the Birinus Room for the last time this year.

6.00pm Nine Lessons & Carols

Followed by mulled wine and mince pies served in the Parish Centre

Monday 18 December

9.30am Morning Prayer in Church

Tuesday 19

9.30am Morning Prayer in Church

10.30am Ginger-Jolly pre-school visit to church

Wednesday 20

10.00am Eucharist Celebrant: Fr Jeremy

11.00am Tai Chi in the Parish Centre

11.30am Service at Clara Court: Fr John & Jeanette Lock (see p5)

2.00pm Service at Larchfield Care Home: Fr Jeremy & Jeanette Lock (see p5)

PRAYER INTENTIONS

We pray for our Christmas services: For the Nine Lessons and Carols this weekend, for the Crib service and the opportunity to share the story of Jesus' birth with young children and parents, and for Midnight Mass and Christmas morning Eucharist. We pray that all of us will be drawn into the story of the word made flesh, of Jesus coming among us as a baby boy who grew to be the man that gave his life to offer us transformed life.

We continue to give thanks this week for the opportunity to share the Christmas story with our local schools. We pray for All Saints School, for Newlands Girls school and for Altwood Academy.

We continue to pray for people living in darkness and all kinds of suffering at this time. We pray for those places of war and oppression remembering Gaza, Israel, and Ukraine. We pray too for those suffering at this time of year to find shelter, food, and medical care. We continue to pray for Asylum seekers and refugees and for all those trying to offer a place of welcome in this country to these people.

We give thanks for last week's confirmation service at Reading Minster Church and for the welcome we received from the people of that church. We celebrate the confirmation by Bishop Olivia of Arash Rezaei, Elham Nekunam, Abbas Heidari, Azita Rezaei, Mahdi Yaghoubi, Mina Yaghoubi, Marzieh Hemed, Sama Rana-Hasseini, Fatemeh Khaksar, Arash Moradi, Afsaneh Rahimi, and Abbas Fouladi. We give thanks for the life and vibrancy that these people alongside other asylum seekers that have worshipped with us at All Saints have brought.

We pray at this time for all those in any kind of need. We remember Michael, Kirsten, and Maddy; for Suzette, Daneille, Paul Latham, Doris Winn, Birmta Zadinane, Edite Zadinane, Heidi Webb, Tadeusz, Christopher, Sylvia Denison, Cheryl Brookes, Gordon Kerrison, Sylvia Telford, Eddie Sheppard, and Carol Sheppard, Barbara Bannister, Janet Emerson, Liz Holloway, Hugh Boulter, Simon Cowdery, Joseph White, Morieza Serja, Scopas Lado, Mageret Ego, Jim Goff, Gill Deane-Williams, Simon Fullarton, Vera Shaw, Abbas Heidari, and Sally Morgan.

May they all know the loving presence and healing touch of Christ. We pray also for those caring for loved ones at this time and for staff and residents of care homes in our parish.

We pray for the recently departed, amongst them Gerald Groffman, Gillian Richmond and David Davies and for all who mourn the loss of a loved one at this time. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 17 DECEMBER THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

COLLECT

O Lord Jesus Christ, who at your first coming sent your messenger to prepare your way before you: grant that the ministers and stewards of your mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready your way by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at your second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in your sight; for you are alive and reign with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

EPISTLE 1 Thessalonians 5: 16 - 24

My brothers and sisters, Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil. May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

GOSPEL John 1: 6 – 8 & 19 – 28

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, 'I am not the Messiah.' And they asked him, 'What then? Are you Elijah?' He said, 'I am not.' 'Are you the prophet?' He answered, 'No.' Then they said to him, 'Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?' He said, 'I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord,"' as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, 'Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?' John answered them, 'I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.' This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

MUSIC

Prelude: Voluntary on 'Winchester New' *C S Lang*
Opening hymn: 46 On Jordan's bank
Advent Candle: 26 (v3) Advent candles tell their story
Gradual hymn: 52 The people that long in darkness sat
Offertory hymn: 327 Awake, awake, fling off the night
Communion hymn: 53 Wait for the Lord, whose day is near
Closing hymn: 30 Come, thou long-expected Jesus
Postlude: Cross of Jesus *S Vann*

6.00pm NINE LESSONS & CAROLS

Carol : 81 Once in royal David's city
Choir Carol: Adam lay ybounden *P Warlock*
Choir Carol: The Holly and the Ivy *R Jacques*
Carol : 70 It Came Upon the Midnight Clear
Choir Carol: Gaudete! *A Bullard*
Carol: 79 O little town of Bethlehem
Choir Carol: Resonemus Laudibus *D Willcocks*
Choir Carol: A Virgin Most Pure *C Wood*
Choir Carol: Christmas Lullaby *J Rutter*
Carol: 64 God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen

Choir Carol: In the Bleak Mid-Winter *G Holst arr A Bullard*
Carol : 78 O Come, All Ye Faithful
Carol : 66 Hark, the herald-angels sing

Saturday 16 December 6:30pm in Church *Christmas Joy*

A Christmas Concert by Renaissance Voices conducted by Paul Leddington Wright. Renaissance Voices are regular visitors to All Saints and their Christmas Concert will be a welcome return. Consisting of well-known carols for audience participation, interspersed with carols sung by the choir ranging from the Renaissance to the present-day including arrangements by Paul Leddington Wright and seasonal readings this will be a musical treat. Tickets bought in advance £14.00 from renaissancevoices.co.uk or £15.00 on the door. Under 18s are free. The ticket price includes a light supper in the church after the concert.

CAROLS AT CARE HOMES WEDNESDAY 20 DECEMBER

If anyone would like to join Fr Jeremy, Fr John and Jeanette singing Carols you will be very welcome! At either Clara Court at 11.30am or Larchfield Care Home at 2.00pm. Or why not do both! Christmas jumpers are optional!



CHURCH KEYS

We are short of keys for the church and parish centre doors. If you are holding on to keys which you no longer need would you kindly return them to the parish office or me as it is expensive and time-consuming to have to have more cut.

Ken Smith

DO THE SMALL THINGS WELL IN ADVENT

Recycle your Christmas tree for free after Christmas via RBWM - no need for a 'green bin' as they will post details of when to put it out. We folks with allotments really benefit as they give us the wood chips they then make for free to help with making compost.

If you really do prefer an artificial tree (not everyone has a car to take a real tree home in!) then consider buying one made of recycled plastic from ONCOR www.oncoruk.com. -they really are very realistic looking. Happy decorating!

SEASON'S GREETINGS

The Eco-team is putting large Christmas cards for Fr Jeremy & Fr John at the back of the Church. We are inviting people to sign this card and put a small donation into the Ripple Effect collection rather than sending them individual cards. The purpose of this is three-fold: to give them both a lovely memento that they can keep (as it's impossible to keep every card they get each year!), to support our fellow humans who are really struggling right now and to reduce tree felling to make paper that is quickly thrown away. It would be really heartwarming to our priests if as many of us as possible joined in.



Ssshhhh don't tell the Sustainability group but if you would like to send Christmas greetings to friends in the congregation the Christmas card rack is in place at the back of the Church

CARE4CALAIS TOILETRY APPEAL

Asylum seekers face many challenges even after arriving in the UK. They are not allowed to work so do not have money, even to spend on what we would see as basic essentials.

One practical action we can take to help is to donate toiletries.

If you are able to support, please bring your donations and leave them in the box at the back of church.

Thank you!

Claire Foley claire.foley@fit2live.me.uk



PARISH NEWS NEWS

The Wednesday 20 December edition will be a double one. The next one will be Wednesday 3 January.