

ALL SAINTS CHURCH BOYNE HILL MAIDENHEAD

PARISH NEWS

www.allsaintsboynehill.org.uk

Issue 36 25 November 2020



Dear Parishioners and Friends of All Saints, Boyne Hill,

I begin my thoughts in this latest newsletter by suggesting that you look at Jeanette's sermon for this weekend which marks the beginning of Advent. The theme in many ways is about waiting and even if you are a patient person (I am not as my mother frequently remind me!) this year has tested most people's patience. What struck me though as I read Jeanette's sermon is that Advent mark's a time of waiting that at the same time journey's towards hope. Yes of course the outstanding work of scientists, that has at this moment brought the promise of three vaccinations that may enable us to enjoy once again the things we have perhaps taken for granted. I have just shared a telephone conversation with a Tiny Saints mother who tells me how much they are missing Friday mornings at the Parish Centre so as to share community. The chance to meet with other parents and enable their young children to learn simple social skills, to enjoy healthy food and a simple service of nursery rhymes. Last evening at our Monday evening prayers we heard from Louise from our congregation share the challenges and joys of family life in Lockdown this year.

The hope that Jeanette points us to though is, of course, the vaccinations and from her medical background she is a qualified person to encourage us in medical scientific breakthroughs, but she also points us to the hope of the incarnation. God with us in the Lord Jesus Christ. Jeanette points us to the hope that Jesus is with us but challenges us also too be alert this Advent and indeed into the New Year by giving time to notice Jesus in our lives, other peoples lives and the world around us.

With this hope and challenge in mind I would like to share with you that not only can we look forward to returning to All Saints for Eucharistic worship at 10.00am on Sunday 6th December but we can perhaps further develop our prayer lives to notice the presence of Jesus in our lives. A style of Christian Spirituality that has helped people for centuries is the Jesuit tradition. I myself have benefitted studying with the Jesuits at Heythrop College, London from 2003-5 and Revd Dr Judith Thomas has shared her passion for this style of prayer with you over the years. This style of prayer has become the focus for ministry to schools through the Diocesan Schools Chaplain Revd Charlie Kerr and he is offering myself, other clergy and teachers training to use the 'Ignatian Contemplative Toolkit'.

The Jesuit style of prayer has at its core;

1. The idea of 'finding God in all things' – the belief that the spiritual life is not just in the church. It's about services, scripture and prayer and charitable work but also about friends, family, work, relationships, suffering, joy, nature, music and even pop culture says James Martin in his book 'The Jesuit Guide to Almost Everything'.
2. Ignatian Spirituality is contemplative in action. Using a type of prayer where we still ourselves to listen to God and be informed in our actions.
3. Ignatian Spirituality is Incarnational. This is the belief that God emptied himself in the form of a servant to become human. He became a vulnerable baby boy who grew to be the man who offered New and Transformed Life.

4. Ignatian Spirituality is Freedom and detachment. It is not allowing ourselves to be tied down by unimportant things. Read Sabastian Faulks brilliant novel called 'A Week In December' which reflects on many modern day problems not least the desire to follow idols. Here god (yes small g) can become money, status, career and we lose the ability to see good in our relationships, our families and our community. This part of Ignatius's thinking was to encourage us to believe that a life in the loving presence of God can help our own self worth and value and to see and appreciate those qualities in others.

Here are the five tools from the 'Ignatian Contemplative Toolkit for Schools.' That may help us to become more aware of Jesus in our lives.

- a. Stilling – We used this simple pray in Morning Prayer on Zoom last Sunday. This is the calming of our thoughts, our emotions so that we might thank God for the things have gone well and invite God to free us from the parts of our life that are burdensome. Finally, we think about what we would like to receive from God for the coming week or extended period of time.
- b. Noticing – This type of prayer can be done through the Examen that we are using at Night prayer on Thursday evenings and Sunday evenings. This is a time when we look back and notice apparently small and insignificant things, but they can instead be 'incredibly powerful signifiers of personal, spiritual and community truth' writes Charlie Kerr. These times of prayer help us to notice consolation when we feel alive and energised and times of desolation when we feel drained and lacking energy and spirit.
- c. Dwelling – Many of you have experienced a form of this prayer through our time-sharing Partnership in Missional Church. Dwelling in the Word comes from the ancient Benedictine practice of Lectio Divina where we listen to the scriptures to allow God to speak to us.
- d. Mending – A time of reconciliation and the Ignatian hope that through the cross human brokenness can be healed. I recall an amazing service led by Bishop Lindsey from Walsingham during a week of mission in Lancing. This was before Lindsey was a Bishop and was at the time leading people in mission. I had joined him in 1992 in Lancing as an ordinand at St Stephen's House. At the end of the service of prayer and reflection we were invited to take a stone (A sign of a burden or worry) and throw this into the sea. It is the only time I can recall finishing a service at the beach! Different types of healing services using Walsingham style laying on of hands and anointing but also symbolic acts like the one described above can be helpful.
- e. Blessing – Having hopefully received blessing from God in the first four practices can we move forward by blessing our families, homes, schools, communities and places of work? One of the great examples of this was given to me by Sue Stannett when she introduced me to the film 'On the Waterfront'. Karl Malden's famous speech as Father Barry is inspired by one of John Corridan's sermons. Corridan was a priest who worked in New York in 1940's and 50's fighting corruption and seeking social justice for the dockers. This priest was a Jesuit and lived contemplative leading to action within his life. Charlie Kerr invites us to drop a pebble into a bowl of water to see a ripple effect. Like the pebble we radiate God's love and light to the world. Does this sound familiar?

Finally, I am noticing that during this period of the Pandemic that our prayer time together is growing. I look forward to sharing the Eucharist and word and sacrament again on Sunday 6 December, but I look forward as well to continuing to share these practices of prayer and spiritual growth in the New Year.

RESOURCES

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

Louise O'Dwyer and Jeanette have created packs of activities for children and families throughout Advent. Louise's Advent thoughts are on p 9 and the activity pack is attached.

PLEASE NOTE

Sunday 13 December 4.00pm Zoom Christingle service

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87450875374?pwd=aWxMN1h1djNLRSt5cmludUpDWWXhUT09>

Meeting ID: 874 5087 5374

Passcode: 458118

Come and join the children and families as we share this wonderful story. During the short service we will make a Christingle and share two songs as well as hear the great message of Christingle. All families with children who want to make the Christingle will need is an orange.

Sunday 20 December

10.00am in Church Eucharist for Advent 4 with Carols

6.00pm Carol Service on Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84344784802?pwd=V2pNZjM1cU1ZnWdzRm5WQmZHbHhpUT09>

Meeting ID: 843 4478 4802

Passcode: 882894

For this you will need the Bethlehem Carol service booklet, a willingness to sing to your hearts content at home (And on MUTE) and a mince pie and a glass of mulled wine or sherry as we chat to each other.

We are hoping too to celebrate the 'Comfort and Joy' of Christmas with a Midnight Mass and 10.00am Christmas Mass in Church.

THIS WEEK:

Thursday 26 November

7.00pm Bible Study

The final part of Bishop Steven's course on Paul's Letter to the Philippians called 'Living is Christ, Dying is Gain'. There was excellent input from participants of the group last week.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83701228145?pwd=M3RhaTQveThWWW5WN0prYmt2L1Jidz09>

Meeting ID: 837 0122 8145

Passcode: 654973

8.00pm Night prayer on Zoom

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/75976544021?pwd=Q1pJVtIpTytOdHg0VXhSRGxWRzIzZz09>

Meeting ID: 759 7654 4021

Password: 5rHziv

Psalm 132, Isaiah 21: 1-12 and Matthew 10: 34 – 11.1 Hymn: Longing for Light, we wait in darkness

Sunday 29 November ADVENT SUNDAY

9.00am Morning Prayer on Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89671088057?pwd=RVpQZ3JtRmpaL1UvbDV6VkFQS3N4dz09>

Meeting ID: 896 7108 8057

Passcode: 335673

This service will be the full Church of England morning prayer for Sunday. It will include the Sunday morning Collect and Readings found on p7 of this newsletter. There will be a talk but if you are looking for the sermon for the day you will find this within this newsletter. Brian's chosen hymn for our service will be ***Longing for Light, we wait in darkness*** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZJq3bhdgQoc>

10.00am-11.00am Church open for Private Prayer

For those people who would like to join the Diocesan Eucharist please see the link. The Diocesan resources can be found without internet on 01865 920930.

The Church of England's new resource 'Daily Hope' which includes comforting hymns, daily prayers and reflections can be found on free telephone 0800 804 8044.

6.00pm Sundays at Six via Zoom led this week by the Revd Joan Hicks of the Church of the Good Shepherd, Cox Green

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82362755135?pwd=bmZYRkdibW1SUjhtaHINMnBDTzF1QT09>

Meeting ID: 823 6275 5135

Passcode: 737489

Monday 30 November 7.30pm Prayer Group via Zoom Theme: St Luke's Christmas Tree Festival

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85011600714?pwd=Y0x2VWpMQ3JFUStsQ0plbEFLOEQrQT09>

Meeting ID: 850 1160 0714

Passcode: 553120

This group, following the example of our successful 'Church on the Move' from a decade ago, focusses on an area of mission that we would like to pray for.

Wednesday 2 December 10.00am – 11.00am Church open for private prayer

Prayer Intentions

Hopefully, you will have seen the request from the Church of England to 'Pray for the Nation' via the link below that we have offered over the last couple of weeks.

https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-11/15348%20PftN%20Booklet_6th%20PROOF.pdf

If you have someone you would like us to pray for at our Monday evening prayer group or indeed any other service, we offer please email or phone me with the name. Equally it might be a cause that you want us to pray for. My email is jeremy-harris@outlook.com

Our prayers are asked for Angela Brewerton, Danielle, Nick and Fr John.

In our Parish Cycle of Prayer this week we pray for the children, staff and governors of Larchfield School. For Melanie, our Parish Administrator, and all who are involved in the work of the Parish Office. For Jeanette, who works so hard to keep up ministry to the Care Homes, helped by the Pastoral Care Team and for all the staff and residents of Larchfield and Normanhurst Care Homes and Boyn Grove Day Centre

May you all be blessed by God's love this week.

Fr Jeremy

Worship for SUNDAY 29 NOVEMBER ADVENT SUNDAY

Sounds of Worship

Brian Graves

The watchword for Advent Sunday is “Keep awake”. Jesus uses this phrase in the Gospel to indicate that not only do we need to be prepared for the unexpected but also we need to be able to recognise the signs of God calling us into fellowship with Jesus. Paul reiterates this message in the Epistle, “It is God who calls us to share in the life of his Son Jesus Christ. God keeps faith.”

The German chorale “Wachet auf ruft uns die stimme” perfectly captures the spirit of being prepared, the opening words, “Wachet auf”, literally mean watch-out! I have included the chorale prelude by J S Bach based this chorale at the end. Before then, the first hymn I have selected is “Hark, a thrilling voice is sounding” AM 38 words based on a 5th or 6th century Latin text “Vox clama ecce intonate” translated by Edward Caswall (1814 – 1878) set to the tune Merton by William Henry Monk (1823 – 1889). Not only is Caswall’s translation very direct with the feel of an original text rather than a translation, but also the potency of the original is apparent. This hymn is a great survivor because the message and language of anticipation hope and excitement have been rarely better expressed throughout the 1,500 years since it was written.

Caswall is best known for his translations from the Roman Breviary and other Latin sources, which are marked by faithfulness to the original. Most of the translations were made at the Oratory of St. Philip Neri at Edgbaston. They were published in *Lyra Catholica*, containing all the breviary and missal hymns (London, 1849). According to hymnologist John Julian, Caswall's translations featured an especial purity of rhythm, which made his hymns easy to set to music and easy for congregations to sing.

Caswall was educated at Chigwell Grammar School, Marlborough Grammar School and Brasenose College, Oxford, where he graduated in 1836. In 1838 he was ordained deacon, and in 1839 priest, in the Church of England. He was curate of the Church of St Lawrence at Stratford-sub-Castle, near Salisbury from 1840 to 1847. He resigned his curacy and, in January 1847, was received into the Roman Catholic Church by Cardinal Acton at Rome. In 1850, Caswall joined the Oratory of St. Philip Neri under future Cardinal Newman, to whose influence his conversion to Roman Catholicism was due. He was ordained a Catholic priest in 1852. Caswall was delegated the responsibility of establishing the Oratory school, which opened in 1859. He often served as Acting Superior in Newman's absence.

By age 18, Monk was organist at St Peter's Church, Eaton Square (Central London). He left after two years and moved to two more organist posts in London (St. George's Church, Albemarle Street, and St. Paul's Church, Portman Square). In 1847, Monk became choirmaster at King's College London and organist there in 1849. In 1857, he was appointed the musical editor of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, a volume first published in 1861, containing 273 hymns. After supplements were added (second edition—1875; later additions or supplements—1889, 1904, and 1916) it became one of the best-selling hymn books ever produced. It was for this publication that Monk supplied his famous "Eventide" tune which is mostly used for the hymn "Abide with Me".

1. Hark, A thrilling voice is sounding;
‘Christ is nigh,’ it seems to say;
‘Cast away the works of darkness,
O ye children of the day.’
2. Wakened by the solemn warning,
Let the earth-bound soul arise;
Christ, her Sun, all ill dispelling,
shines upon the morning skies.
3. Lo, the Lamb, so long expected,
comes with pardon down from heaven;
let us haste, with tears of sorrow,
one and all to be forgiven;

4. That when next he comes with glory,
and the world is wrapped in fear,
with his mercy he may shield us,
and with words of love draw near.

5. Honour, glory, might, and blessing
to the Father and the Son,
with the everlasting Spirit,
while eternal ages run.

Hark a thrilling voice is sounding AM 38

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lzI8Qd4_BEc

The second hymn is "Lo, he comes with clouds descending" AM 41 words by Charles Wesley (1707 – 1788) set to the tune Helmsley which is a melody adapted from John Wesley's "Select Hymns with Tunes Annexed" 1765

In 1750 John Cennick (1718 – 1755), a friend of John and Charles Wesley, wrote an Advent hymn that began, "Lo! he cometh, countless trumpets blow before his bloody sign!" Cennick's hymn was published in his Collection (1752). Charles Wesley completely rewrote the text and published his version in Hymns of Intercession for all Mankind (1758) with the title "Thy Kingdom Come".

Like so many of Wesley's texts, "Lo, he Comes" abounds with biblical imagery. Verses 1, 2, and 4 are based on the rich language of John's apocalyptic visions recorded in Revelation 1:7 and 5:11-13. The third verse reminds us that Christ's wounds and atoning death should lead us to greater faith and ultimately to our worship of Christ in glory (as Christ himself reminded the doubting Thomas). Verse 4 is a majestic doxology to Christ, our Saviour and Lord.

John Wesley attributed the tune HELMSLEY to Thomas Olivers in Wesley's 1765 Sacred Melodies. However, Olivers is said to have heard the tune on the street somewhere. Since the first line resembles a tune by violinist and composer Thomas Augustine Arne composed for Thomas and Sally, or The Sailor's Return in 1761, it is speculated the tune was composed by Arne. Most likely, the tune comes from a 1763 edition Martin Madan's Collection of Psalms and Hymn Tunes Sung at the Chapel of Lock Hospital. Madan was the chaplain at Lock Hospital.

1. Lo! he comes with clouds descending,
once for favoured sinners slain;
thousand, thousand saints attending
swell the triumph of his train:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
God appears on earth to reign.

2. Every eye shall now behold him
robed in dreadful majesty;
those who set at naught and sold him,
pierced, and nailed him to the Tree,
deeply wailing, deeply wailing, deeply wailing
shall the true Messiah see.

3. These dear tokens of his passion
Still his dazzling body bears,
cause of endless exultation
To his ransomed worshipers:
with what rapture, with what rapture, with what rapture
gaze we on those glorious scars!

4. Yea, Amen, let all adore thee,
high on thine eternal throne;
Saviour, take the power and glory,

claim the kingdom for thine own:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
Thou shalt reign, and thou alone.

Lo he comes with clouds descending AM 41 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iPQ3iDPam3A>

To close, I have chosen the organ chorale prelude on Wachtet auf, ruft uns die Stimme BWV 645 by J S Bach. This well-known chorale prelude is derived from the central movement of his church Cantata of the same name. It consists of a flowing accompaniment and the choral melody breaks-in during the course of the piece as a solo line. Bach's chorale preludes are often full of symbolic meaning in their construction and this piece is no exception. The first entrance of choral melody occurs after the accompaniment has come to the end of its natural phrasing. This section is repeated after which the basic accompaniment melody continues and draws to its natural end as expected but this time Bach introduces the choral melody 3 beats earlier than before. This is a very definite reminder to the player to be alert and not expect things to be neatly consistent throughout this piece!

Wachtet auf <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NZvQEOPonw>

COLLECT

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and to put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility; that on the last day when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

EPISTLE 1 Corinthians 1: 3 - 9

My brothers and sisters: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind – just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you – so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

GOSPEL Mark 13: 24 - 37

Jesus said to his disciples: 'In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see "the Son of Man coming in clouds" with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake – for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.'

SERMON Jeanette Lock

We seem to have spent most of this year waiting. Waiting for the lockdown and other restrictions to be eased so that we can finally meet up with our families. Waiting for the virus number and the R rate to go down so that we can feel safe to go out a bit more. Waiting for church buildings to open or reopen for worship so that we can receive the sacrament of communion again. Watching and waiting has become so much part of our daily lives. It's just as well that as a nation of queuers, we are good at waiting!

Now we reach Advent Sunday which marks the start of another time of waiting. But it's not a time of waiting around and doing nothing, neither is it a time to press the fast forward button. Advent is a time of waiting with anticipation, with expectation, and with joy as we await the coming of Jesus to lighten our darkness as he bursts into the world. The waiting of Advent is about being in the here and now, being in the moment, alert and awake, *"for we do not know when the time will come"* (Mark 13: 33). Advent is about being ready, a time of preparation for what is to come in the incarnation, with the understanding that God is with us through the hope brought about by the birth of Jesus, the coming of the Messiah, the coming of the Lord.

Advent Sunday also marks the start of the church's liturgical New Year but you may have noticed that our Gospel reading today starts with some words which have a mundane tone to them, sounding more like the end of the world, the end of time. *"In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken"* (Mark 13.24-25). But perhaps every beginning starts with an ending. Today's Gospel confronts us with a necessary ending that makes space for a new beginning. It reveals a darkness from which new light will shine. It shakes us awake to watch for the one who is coming. Jesus didn't say these things to frighten us but to convince us that we need to be vigilant, to be prepared. Christ's coming among us at Christmas is a time of joy, hope and light; His presence can heal and comfort us in the dark and messy times of our lives.

This year we all know about *"those days"*, about a time of darkness that we've spent trying to navigate our way through the challenges of the pandemic with our heads and hearts full of concerns. For many people in this country and in this world, the COVID-19 virus has represented a dark time of their life where perhaps there has been little light, where the whole world seems to have changed, where things are no longer as they used to be and where there's been a huge shift in our lives. I guess most of us can relate to those feelings this year, perhaps more than ever before. Indeed, the Church of England's new Advent and Christmas theme of *Comfort and Joy* reflects the hope that Christmas will bring joy and celebration after a uniquely difficult year.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/preparing-advent-christmas-2020-comfort-and-joy>

But hang on a minute, because if we read further into the passage from Mark, we hear about hope coming out from a time of darkness. When our world falls apart and things become difficult, Jesus reminds us to be alert, read the signs, remember the fig tree-when its branch becomes tender it puts forth leaves as a sign that summer is near. In effect, Jesus is saying that although the end of the world might be being described in calamitous terms, his disciples (which includes us) are to respond with faith, hope and anticipation. Heaven and earth, the sun, moon and stars may disappear, but God's truth and love will prevail for ever.

Which is why it is so reassuring to know that God is in this with us, we just need to be alert and awake to notice his presence in unexpected places and surprising ways. We need to keep our gaze steady and avoid being distracted. So how do we remain attentive with all that is going on around us? How do we avoid missing *"any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ"*? (1 Corinthians 1: 7).

Advent invites us into a spirit of anticipation by making space for God in our lives, a time when we can keep watch and stay hopeful for new ways in which God's spirit might be breaking through into our lives, here and now. And we are not waiting blindly-we know what we are waiting for. We need to long for and look for Jesus-make room for him in our hearts. To be still for long enough to allow the mood of worry and concern to quieten and settle a little, and then become aware of the invitation to find that stiller, quieter space within us where we can acknowledge the peace and comfort of God's loving presence. We can use that silence and stillness to prepare us to hear and recognise the voice that deserves our total attention-the voice of Jesus.

At this difficult and challenging time, let's look for the light shining through and be fruitful in our waiting. As we look towards Christmas awaiting the celebration of Jesus' birth, we stand on the threshold of hope, waiting for the fulfilment of that hope, waiting in joyful expectation for the coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. So this Advent, let us be alert, keep awake, listening, waiting and watching with eager anticipation for the love which God shows to each of us through the birth of His Son Jesus, Emmanuel, God with us.

Windsor & Maidenhead Christian Forum Ladies Group Monday 30 November 7.30pm

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82189921822?pwd=aVhaRUpwMONtcW9YekNsMXo2c0Y0Zz09>

Meeting ID: 821 8992 1822 Passcode: 536720

How our faith has shaped our response to the current pandemic

Bring your own coffee!! Further details from: sally514@btinternet.com www.wamcf.org

TUESDAY CLUB 7.30pm 1 DECEMBER on Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81231226627?pwd=TnhDL3UxOVJhT0pKRmtmTWhtTEVYUT09>

Meeting ID: 812 3122 6627

Passcode: 678239

We are looking forward to welcoming Andrew Stafford, who many of you will know, who is going to entertain us with a musical virtual tour of the British Isles. Non-members will be very welcome too. No need to bring a broolly!

Jan Moss

CHILDREN'S SOCIETY NEWS

The Children's Society Box Collection 2020 has raised the magnificent sum of £467.36!

A huge thank you to all box holders for this impressive sum during these difficult times. Also following the sad departure of Marie Wright at the end of 2019, her funeral collection raised £225 for the society at her request. Marie had been a box holder for many years supporting the Children's Society. Anyone who would like to take a box to collect money in their home please contact Fr Jeremy who will pass your details to me.

Anne Clark

ALL SAINTS CHRISTMAS CARDS

With the arrival of Advent don't forget to get your Christmas cards from All Saints now that we will be reopening for services from the 6th December. They are available at the rear of the church prepacked in packets of five for £5.00. No change is available so bring the right denomination or a cheque (made payable to All Saints Church Fund). There is a lead time between ordering and taking delivery of new stock so it would help if you let me know how many you intend to buy by email at nordbergjs@aol.com All profits go to the Floor Project.

Jeremy Nordberg

FAMILIES IN 2020

The last year has brought challenges and triumphs to families. We have missed the hugs and support of our extended family and friends, but gained quiet, quality time together. We have become teachers and learned many new things - like the ecological impact of sea otter extinction, long division and how to look excited at yet another online PE session! But we had also watched as our children missed out on friendships, holidays and birthday parties. We worked hard to make lockdown fun and then harder still to get back into the routine of school. It is harder now to explain to a 5 year old why he can't play with his classmates in the park or why we can't visit his grandparents. Everything in our house is blamed on the naughty corona virus!

It is hard to put a brave face on everything when there are worries about jobs, money, the health of loved ones; and spending so much time together without the support and distraction of others or other environments leads to inevitable tension. In all of this it is easy to forget God. To simply switch on the TV for a few minutes peace. We have tried to make space for God through celebration, through Easter and harvest and soon Advent. We do activities to share the message of Jesus. We talk about important things like compassion, hope and gratitude and help the children find ways they can embody this.

One of the things I look forward to is the church reopening and the moment when we are called forward for the Eucharist. My kids take my hands and we all go forward together and they kneel for a blessing. It always makes me so proud of my two beautiful boys and so thankful to God for them and the community we feel a part of. This is what I pray for, that moment when we can 'all' be a family again.

Louise O'Dywer Barnard

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SHOEBOX APPEAL UPDATE

To date we have donated more than 35 boxes. See the attachment to previous newsletters for how to donate. The collection point at Braywick Nursery will be open from Saturday 5 - Monday 14 December.

If you have any questions, please contact me at jwilks@jwa-consultancy.co.uk.

REFLECTION by Greg Hurst

I am weary of these restrictions. My world has shrunk. Many of my pleasures are banished. All of us have sacrificed so much. And yet a return to something approaching normality remains months away. Progress in developing vaccines that may protect us from this coronavirus is remarkable and inspiring. The prospect of limited family get-togethers over Christmas is heartening. The lifting of this second month-long lockdown from next week is welcome, although very many activities will still be suspended.

Even such good news feels not enough to puncture the gloom, to prise loose the smothering grip in which this virus has held us for most of this terrible year. Working from home has much to commend it: flexibility, proximity to family, saving on commuter fares. But after nine months, for me it has become stifling with so few occasions to leave the house.

Three of my great loves are choral singing, watching community rugby and the theatre. All, it turns out, are among the highest risk activities for spreading this virus and may be among the last allowed to resume.

When such bouts of melancholy descend, I remind myself of the patience of Job and how he kept his faith in the face of much greater hardship. He lost his children and wealth - seven sons, his servants, oxen, asses, sheep and camels – and yet he endured. “Naked came I out of my mother’s womb and naked shall I return there. The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.”

Advent with All Saints Boyne Hill

It's been a long time since we could all be together.
At times this year has been so hard.
We have missed friends and family, handshakes and hugs.

But it has also been a year full of hope, peace, love and joy as we came together to take care of each other and to say thank you to those who take care of us.

Advent and Christmas will be different this year. While we will miss gathering together, dressing up as shepherds and blessing the Christmas tree, there are lots of ways that we can live the spirit of advent, spread a little hope, peace, love and joy and have plenty of Christmas fun! We hope you try some of the activities and we look forward to seeing you in the new year!



Advent is more than just a chance to have chocolate everyday (although we are very keen on that bit too). Advent is a special time in church marked by the four Sundays that take place before Christmas. Each Sunday has a different theme and we celebrate this in church by lighting one of four special candles.

Make your own Advent candle wreath

You will need:

A small tray or plate

4 clean and empty jam jars (because we love a bit of recycling)

Purple and pink ribbons or glass paints if you have them

4 battery operated tea lights (you can use proper tea lights but a grown up must, must, must be in charge of them at all times because no-one wants your lovely advent wreath to go up in smoke!)

Some greenery from the garden - again ask a grown up to help - you could use small evergreen branches, green leaves or even off cuts of a christmas tree,

What to do:

- Take each of your four jam jars and either paint or wrap the outside with ribbon as follows:3 purple and 1 pink.
- Arrange your jam jars on the plate or small tray so that they are in a nice group. The tray or plate should be flat enough that they don't wobble
- Pop a tea light into each jam jar
- Thread your evergreen branches around and in-between your jam jars.

Ta dah! You now have your very own advent wreath. Get that handy grown up to help you switch on or light one of your tea lights each week.

Another way you or a family member can bring some light to advent is to light a virtual candle on the Church of England Website at <https://www.churchofengland.org/our-faith/light-candle>



The first candle symbolises The Patriarchs. It is purple.

What is a Patriarch? I here you ask... A patriarch is a person who founds or fathers something. There are lots of patriarchs in the Bible. The patriarch candle at advent is a symbol of the patriarchs Abraham and David. The candle also symbolises hope.

Abraham and his wife Sarah waited for a long, long time for God to give them the child that He had promised. Abraham never lost faith despite being very, very old and God kept his promise. Like the candle, Abraham had hope.

Interesting fact: Bethlehem where Jesus was born was known as the city of David named after King David. Purple is the colour of royalty.

Prayer


Dear God,
Abraham and Sarah had hope that God would bless them with a baby and that hope came true as Isaac was born. We pray for hope in our world today that we may be kept safe. We give thanks for our NHS staff who care and support us and to Our Lord Jesus who brings us the hope of New Life. AMEN

Stargazing


God told Abraham to count the stars in the sky and that would be the number of his descendents. Wait for a clear night, wrap up warm and stand in your back garden (if you have one). Even without binoculars or a telescope you should be able to make out lots of stars and the occasional planet. The two easiest constellations to spot are Orion's Belt and The Plough. You can also keep an eye out for the Geminids meteor shower that takes place in December. For lots more information on winter stargazing visit www.nationaltrust.org.



Hope - let's bring a little ho ho hope to everyone!



Make a rainbow tree ornament. Maybe not a traditional Christmas symbol but definitely the symbol of this year and a reminder of the hope sent by God to Noah after the flood. Hang a rainbow on your tree to say a big thank you to NHS staff and as a reminder that even on the cloudiest days light shines through!



Crumple up some kitchen foil until you have a nice rainbow shape. Tie a piece of string around your rainbow so that you can hang it up. Use tissue paper and pva glue mixed with a little water to cover your rainbow, leaving the string free. When dry, use paint or pens to colour your rainbow. You could even add a little sparkle with some glitter!

The second candle is for the Prophets. It is purple.

This candle remembers the prophets who came before Jesus. A prophet is a messenger; someone who is able to connect with God. They might foretell things that would happen or prepare the way. They shared God's message of love and peace and laid the foundation for Jesus. The theme of this week is peace, because that is what the message of Jesus brings!



STOP PRESS!

In Christianity we talk a lot about 'Good News'. The 'Good News' is about Jesus and his love for us.

It may not feel like there has been much good news this year but remember no matter what God is with you.

Sharing some Good News

Can you come up with your own good news story? Think about something that brought you joy or brought joy to the world. Can't think of anything? Make some good news happen for someone maybe by sharing a small act of kindness or reminding someone that they are loved. Design your own newspaper with headlines, stories and pictures to share your good news. You could make it into a special gift for a loved one.

A Message of Peace

One of many much loved traditions on Christmas day is the Queen's speech. Since 1932 at around 3pm, with tummies full of Christmas dinner and usually wearing a very silly hat, families have gathered around the TV to watch the Queen share her special message, reflecting on the year that has passed and sharing her hopes for the future.

Imagine you are the Queen (or King) what would your message be? What could you say or do to share a message of peace? Create a message to share with your loved ones on Christmas Day. You could ask a grown up to video you and then have a special screening. They could also send your message to loved ones that you can't be with this Christmas.

Prayer

Dear God,

Thank you for the prophets Jeremiah, Isaiah, and Ezekiel who wanted people to live at peace with one another. These people pointed to a Saviour who brought peace to the World and his name was Jesus. May we pray for peace in our homes, our schools, our churches, our country and the world. AMEN



The third candle is for John the Baptist. It is purple.

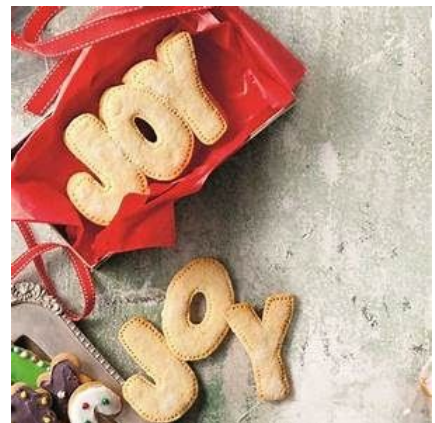
John the Baptist was a prophet who lived during the time of Jesus. He told people to prepare for the coming of Jesus and would baptise them to bring them into the family of God. He baptised Jesus in the River Jordan. Advent is not just a time to get ready for Jesus' birth but to remember his life and teachings too. Baptism is probably the most important moment in Christian life. It marks the time you become a follower of Jesus and become part of the Christian family. Baptism is a time of huge joy and this candle helps us to remember this and how all of us are connected as a family, all the way back to Jesus' own baptism.

Joy to the World

What better way to share a bit of joy than through biscuits.

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp golden syrup
- 60g/2¼oz caster sugar
- 50g/1¾oz butter
- 3 tbsp double cream
- ½ tsp ground ginger
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- 175g/6oz plain flour, plus extra for dusting
- ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda



You will need a grown-up to help you!

1. Heat the golden syrup, sugar and butter in a saucepan until the sugar completely dissolves. Remove from the heat and add the cream and spices.
2. Add the flour and bicarbonate of soda, stirring as you add it until you have a loose mixture. Place a sheet of baking paper on a tray and tip the mixture on top. Cover with another piece of baking paper and flatten the dough slightly. Leave to cool in the fridge for 2–3 hours. After this you should have a thick dough.
3. Preheat the oven to 180C/160C Fan/Gas 4.
4. Remove the dough from the fridge and roll between the sheets of paper with a rolling pin until 1cm/½in thick.

5. Dust a work surface and rolling pin with flour and roll the dough out until it about half a cm thick.
6. Cut out J O and Y shaped biscuits and place onto the lined baking tray. Bake the biscuits for 8–10 minutes, or until they are rich brown at the sides and slightly paler in the centre.
7. Once cool, you can decorate them with icing if you would like.

Prayer

Dear God

We thank you for John the Baptist, who baptised Jesus in the River Jordan. John asked people to follow the example of Jesus by being baptised to become members of Jesus' Family. We pray that we may share the joy of knowing Jesus as our friend. May we show that joy too by sharing simple acts of kindness by maybe sharing one of our biscuits with people we know. AMEN

The fourth candle is for Mary. It is pink.

The fourth Sunday in Advent is also called Gaudete which means 'rejoice'. If you were in church you might notice that the priest is wearing pink.

Mary is perhaps the second most important character in the Christmas story. Imagine how she must have felt when an angel came to her and said she would give birth to the son of God?

The Birth of Jesus Foretold Luke 26 -38

26 In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, 27 to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. 28 The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

29 Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. 30 But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. 31 You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will

give him the throne of his father David, 33 and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

34 "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called[a] the Son of God. 36 Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. 37 For no word from God will ever fail."


38 "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

On this Sunday we remember Mary's love for her child and her love for God. It is a reminder of how God loves all of us as his children.


Show some love!

Show some love to the people who take care of us everyday by leaving a Christmas card for the postman, the people who collect your bins and anyone else you can think of who helps you out!


You could even send a card to our local emergency services and NHS staff who have been working really hard this year to keep everyone healthy and safe.



Maidenhead Fire
Station
Bridge Road
Maidenhead
SL6 8PG



Maidenhead Police
Station
Bridge Road
Maidenhead
SL6 8LP



Wexham Park
Hospital
Wexham Park
Slough,
SL2 4HL

Prayer

Dear God,

Mary showed her love for her son Jesus by caring for him when he was young, by supporting him when he was a young man and by following his example of how to live a good life after he had died and risen to New Life. We pray that we may follow the example of Mary by living good lives sharing our love with those in need and those who have taken care of us this year. AMEN

The fifth candle - hang on! There is a fifth candle?

One of the highlights of the year at All Saints is the crib service that takes place in the afternoon on Christmas Eve. We welcome lots of our community in (it is a big squeeze) and we share songs, readings and a short nativity. We also light the fifth candle of Advent, a white candle representing Jesus and we put the figure of baby Jesus into the nativity scene. Sadly we can't open our doors for the crib service this year but we do hope that you will take a few moments on Christmas Eve to say the following prayer.

Prayer

We thank you Lord Jesus that you came at Christmas to share God's hope, peace, joy and love for the world. We pray that Jesus' light may shine in our hearts. AMEN

We hope that you have enjoyed the ideas shared here and that you are able to try some of the activities - especially if you would like to make us biscuits! Whatever your Christmas celebrations look like this year we hope you have a wonderful time, and remember in all of the wrapping paper, lights and sparkle, the greatest gift ever given came from our Lord when he gave us his son Jesus Christ.

Merry Christmas from All Saints Boyne Hill