

# ALL SAINTS CHURCH BOYNE HILL MAIDENHEAD

## PARISH NEWS

[www.allsaintsboynehill.org.uk](http://www.allsaintsboynehill.org.uk)

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### Dear Parishioners and Friends of All Saints, Boyne Hill,

In the early 1970's my father worked for the South Wales Echo. The daily tabloid newspaper published in Cardiff and distributed to the surrounding areas. They used to be based in Thompson House which from memory was near to The Cardiff Arms Park which in my youth was the old national stadium of Welsh rugby. I recall one occasion where I was not at school (Can't recall why but perhaps it was an illness in the morning that quickly cleared by the afternoon) but my father took me out with him to distribute the papers. It would probably not be allowed these days, perhaps it wasn't then but anyway I have the memory of going through the South Wales valleys delivering bundles of the papers to people waiting to sell them. I recall the people shouting 'Echo, Echo, read all about it'.

It was quite exciting for me (I lived a quiet life) and I remember having a bottle of coke with the sound of 'I'd like to buy the world a Coke' 'It's the real thing' in my mind. Have a listen on You Tube it's had 4.1 million views. One of the important things about Newspapers (should have checked with Greg Hurst to confirm) is the headlines. What are the key issues in the news? The danger with my opening articles has been that I sometimes write too much, and the key headlines are missed!

One headline from today's South Wales Echo is that 'Dusty's Pizza restaurant in Cardiff repeatedly broken into by burglar who has caused thousands of pounds of damage, but only ever steals hot chocolate.' As if the hospitality business is not struggling enough please, please can someone get this bloke a crate of hot chocolate!

**Anyway, here are our headlines at All Saints and please, please 'READ ALL ABOUT IT'**

**Advent and Christmas Services: See Resources for full details.**

**24<sup>th</sup> December 11.30pm MIDNIGHT MASS** – we would love to see you at the service for the Nativity of The Lord.

**If you would like to come PLEASE BOOK a place or a number of places for a family bubble via [jeremy-harris@outlook.com](mailto:jeremy-harris@outlook.com) or [allsaintsboynehill@gmail.com](mailto:allsaintsboynehill@gmail.com) Or telephone 01628 621933 or 01628 626921 (Fr Jeremy) Groups of people from the same family can sit together on one pew.**

**25<sup>th</sup> December 10.00am Christmas Day Eucharist** – a quartet of singers will offer Christmas Carols and I will offer a family Worship for All Talk. Again, we would like to know numbers so **please use the booking system mentioned above**. People have asked about capacity, but it is difficult to offer an exact number. If people come in groups and sit together then the number increases. We would estimate a figure of 50.

**Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December – PLEASE NOTE that there will not be a service this morning.** The Bishop of Oxford has suggested that all clergy take this as a day off to spend with family as it is part of the five-day bubble. The church will though be open for prayers from 10am to 11am with Christmas music playing.

PLEASE NOTE – That there will be no services during the period of the 27<sup>th</sup> December through to the 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2021. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January we will be back in All Saints to celebrate 'The Epiphany'. There will be a Sundays@6 Night prayer with St Luke's on Zoom.

The week beginning the 4<sup>th</sup> January we will return to our Zoom Monday evening prayers at 7.30pm and Thursday evening night prayer at 8pm. On Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January we will have 10.00am Eucharist.

## RESOURCES

### THIS WEEK:

#### Thursday 17 December 8.00pm Night Prayer on Zoom

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

Meeting ID: 759 7654 4021

Password: 5rHziv

Psalm 44, Matthew 17:22 – end, Taizé chant: 'Wait for The Lord'

#### Sunday 20 December

##### 10.00am Eucharist for the Fourth Sunday of Advent

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.

##### 11.00am – 12 noon Church open for private prayer

##### 6.00pm Carol Service on Zoom

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

Meeting ID: 843 4478 4802

Passcode: 882894

Jeanette is kindly providing us with carols sung by the choir of St Martin in the Fields, London. We can sing along at home (On mute of course) and listen to nine people from various areas of ministry and community reading from scripture the story of comfort and joy.

For this you will need the Bethlehem Carol service booklet, If you would like one please pick one up from church on a Wednesday or Sunday morning or let Jeanette or myself know if you would like one delivered. You will also need a willingness to sing to your hearts content at home ( on mute) and maybe a mince pie and a glass of mulled wine or sherry as we chat to each other.

##### Monday 21 December 7.30pm Prayer Group on Zoom

<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. If you have anyone you would like us to pray for please let Fr Jeremy know.

**Wednesday 23 December 10.00am Eucharist** with organ music from Dr Relf Clark.

## Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> December Christmas Eve – 2.00pm – 5.00pm

No Crib service this year but thanks to Alan Ketley and Pauline Hole the Crib will be set up and there will be the opportunity for families to visit the church and say a prayer at the crib. Recorded Christmas carols will be playing and we have the wonderful Open the Book zoom recordings of the Christmas story and the Visit of the Wise Men. I will be present for the three hours and I am happy to pray with families individually as you visit. It was wonderful to see a good number of families on the Zoom Christingle last Sunday which was, I think, a joyful service.

### Sad News

I have just heard of the death of Angela Brewerton after a long illness. Please keep her sister, Rosemary Tyson and all the family in your prayers.

### PRAYER INTENTIONS

We continue to pray for Mandy Rogers, Danielle, Nick, Fr John, Sister Mary Philip, Roger Baldery, Doreen Hill and Mark.

We remember those who have recently died: Sister Margaret, Keith Green, Peggy Gardener, Angela Brewerton and Frank Daily.

In our Parish Cycle of Prayer this week we remember our Flower Arrangers and our Sidespeople who work exceptionally hard at this time of year to make the church both beautiful and welcoming to regulars and visitors alike. We pray for our Oak Project supporting the training of Ordinands in Kenya since 2004.

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

Monika, Jeanette, and our Churchwardens, Ken & Ann, join me in wishing you all a Christmas where you find comfort, hope and joy, and may you all be blessed by God's love this week.

*Fr Jeremy*

## Worship for SUNDAY 20 December FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

### Sounds of Worship

Brian Graves

In normal times, today is when we would have had our Service of Nine Lessons and Carols but, as has become usual this year, we have had to adapt. In the evening there will be a Zoom Nine Lessons, which will be based on the conventional set of nine lessons but in the morning we will compress the nine lessons structure into 5 hymns. We will start in Advent with "O come, O come, Emmanuel" AM 45 words translated from Latin Advent Antiphons by John Mason Neale (1818 – 1866) to the tune Veni Emmanuel which was adapted from a French Missal by Thomas Helmore (1811 – 1890).

Then, because the Gospel Reading is about the Annunciation, where the Angel visits Mary and foretells the birth of Jesus, we move to the carol "The Angel Gabriel" which is a paraphrase and translation of a Basque Carol by Sabine Baring-Gould (1834 - 1924) set to music arranged from a Basque traditional carol by Charles Edgar Pettman (1866 – 1943). The next step takes us into the Christmas season with "Long ago, Prophets Knew" words by Fred Pratt Green (1903 – 2000) set to a melody from Pie Cantiones, 1582. This hymn starts with the foretelling of the coming of Jesus in the Old Testament prophets e.g. Isaiah, then describes successively the incarnation, the faith and obedience of Mary after the annunciation and finally the nativity in Bethlehem.

We next focus on the nativity itself with Christina Rossetti's (1836 – 1894) famous carol "In the bleak mid-winter" AM 68 which in this case is set to Gustav Holst's (1874 – 1934) equally famous tune Cranham. Finally, we turn to the traditional final carol of the Nine Lessons Service "Hark the herald angels sing" AM 66 words by Charles Wesley (1707 1788) to the tune Mendelssohn which is taken from a chorus by Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (1809 – 1847).

I could have written extensively about each of these hymns, their authors and composers but space limitations and, I suspect your patience, cause me to resist that temptation. Also, the words themselves are probably sufficiently well-known or audible enough in the recordings to allow me to omit printing them here. You will find the relevant recording links at the end of this instalment of Sounds of Worship.

However, I will include some background to the origins of the Nine Lessons and Carol service itself. This service continues to serve the purpose for which it was originally intended which was to bring the message of the incarnation to as wide a listenership as possible. It is a format that has proved to be so enduring that Christmas does not seem to be right without it and I'm sure that its message will transcend the limitations of Zoom and prepare us for the joyful season ahead.

#### The Origins of "Nine Lessons and Carols"

Up to the late 19th century in Britain, at least, the singing of Christmas carols was normally performed by singers visiting people's houses, and as a consequence, carols were generally considered to be secular in content. Thus, they had been excluded from Christian worship. In the Victorian era, the rising popularity of hymnody encouraged church musicians to introduce carols into worship. An 1875 book of carols, *Carols for Use in Church During Christmas and Epiphany* by Richard Chope and Sabine Baring-Gould, was an influential publication. At around this time, the composer and organist John Stainer was compiling a collection, *Christmas Carols New and Old*, and during Christmas 1878 he introduced carols into the service of Choral Evensong at St Paul's Cathedral in London. Other cathedrals also began to adopt carols at Christmastide including Truro Cathedral which would sing a service of carols at 10:00 pm on Christmas Eve.

Two years later, the Right Rev. Edward White Benson, at that time Bishop of Truro, conducted the first formal service of "Nine Lessons and Carols" on Christmas Eve 1880. Benson was concerned at the excessive consumption of alcohol in Cornish pubs during the festive season and he sought a means of attracting revellers out of the pubs and into church by offering a religious celebration of Christmas. The idea for a service consisting of Christmas music interspersed with Bible readings was proposed by the succentor of the cathedral, the Rev. George Walpole. The cathedral was still under construction at the time and services were being held in a temporary wooden structure. The first Nine Lessons and Carols service took place there at 10:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve and was attended by over 400 people. Bishop Benson was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury in 1883, and the Nine Lessons service began to gain in popularity across the Church of England and the wider Anglican Communion.

#### Service at King's College, Cambridge

The first Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols at King's College, Cambridge, was held on Christmas Eve in 1918. During World War I the Dean, Eric Milner-White, had served as army chaplain in the 7th Infantry Division and he was concerned that the distress of the "Great War" had hardened attitudes against religion. Taking advantage of the established choral tradition of the Choir of King's College, Cambridge, he introduced Benson's carol service to King's as a means of attracting people back to Christian worship. The first Nine Lessons service in King's College Chapel was held on Christmas Eve, 1918, directed by Arthur Henry Mann who was the organist from 1876 to 1929.

The King's College service was immensely successful, and the following year Milner-White made some changes to Benson's original format, notably introducing the tradition of opening the service with a solo treble singing "Once in Royal David's City". This was then followed by a bidding prayer penned by Milner-White himself and re-ordering the lessons.

The wider popularity of the service was established when the service began to be broadcast by the BBC in 1928, and, except for 1930, has been broadcast every year since. Even throughout the Second World War, despite the stained glass having been removed from the Chapel and the lack of heating, the broadcasts continued. For security reasons, the name "King's" was not mentioned during wartime broadcasts. Nine Lessons and Carols from King's College was first televised by the BBC in 1954, conducted by the director of music, Boris Ord.

O come, O come Emmanuel AM 45

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h03SJnUx8mg>

The angel Gabriel AM 85

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pliqObTHxUQ>

Long ago Prophets knew AM 75

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I6wccPvN5YE>

In the bleak mid-winter AM 68

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U0aL9rKJPr4>

Hark the herald AM66

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A\\_iLXNSlaYc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A_iLXNSlaYc)

## COLLECT

God our redeemer, who prepared the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of your Son: grant that, as she looked for his coming as our saviour, so we may be ready to greet him when he comes again as our judge; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God now and for ever. **Amen**

## EPISTLE Romans 16: 25 - end

To God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith – to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory for ever! Amen.

## GOSPEL Luke 1: 26 – 38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.' Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

## SERMON Fr Jeremy

In our reading today we discover the Annunciation of the birth of Jesus which we have heard sung for us by the choir with the carol 'The Angel Gabriel'. This is the story of an ordinary young woman who is involved in something extraordinary. Tom Wright writes 'Mary is....' 'the supreme example of what happens when God is at work by grace through human beings. God's power from outside, and the indwelling spirit within, together result in things being done which would have been unthinkable any other way.'

This is the most remarkable story of an ordinary person being asked to respond to God in a remarkable way. Mary was of course supported by the older relative Elizabeth. The one woman would give birth to the man who pointed to the way and Mary pointed to the one who was the way. Mary was later in the story to be supported by the beloved disciple and indeed the early community of faith that we read about in the Acts.

When I think about being asked to move outside my comfort zone I think of my early life. I am not of course trying to make comparisons with Mary's life as it's impossible to make that comparison work for anyone but rather the idea that we are called to a vocation to share the light of Christ with those around us. Sometimes we need mentors in life, people who have journeyed a little further down the path of faith. Those like Elizabeth that have experienced life's struggles and joys. In Michaelstone y Fedw at the Cefn Mably pub one Monday night 30 years ago a priest by the name of Fr Paul Martin and a deputy head teacher called Ian Hambleton challenged me to think about a vocation working with people rather than in accounts and finance. In a sense they were challenging me to walk outside my comfort zone. I guess these people alongside another priest Fr Jeremy Winston kindled a light within me that had

started with my mother taking me to our local church. The vocation I have been fortunate to find or be called to has given me joys but also left me feeling outside my comfort zone on many occasions.

I guess the question I am posing is who is your Elizabeth? Who in your life has been a mentor and a person who has influenced? Pope Francis (A person who has influenced many people) challenges us to a relationship with God that moves us to put God at the centre which leads us to offer God's gift of love to others. The angel tells Mary 'Not to be afraid' and neither are any of us to be afraid walking with God and each other as the pilgrim people. We are called to face the challenges of life and see beyond our own needs to help others.

This year has been hugely challenging for all of us. The year of the pandemic has left many of us feeling outside our comfort zone. We have had to learn new things and find new ways to walk together in community. There have been times when I have been afraid and felt that I wanted to stay safe with the things that I know. God though wants us to be creative and faithful as pilgrims. The Pope wants people to change to adapt to the situations in which we share the gospel. Wow, this year we have certainly had to adapt! We have found ways of sharing assemblies, Open the Book stories with schools on zoom, we have made recordings, written endless newsletters, set up pastoral care teams which have kept in contact with our community. Some have spent hours finding ways to make contact with nursing homes to be able to share God's love. We have had to find ways of praying on line that I think has helped us to grow more closely alongside Christ and each other. On Sunday we shared with families Christingle on Zoom. We had the light of Christ on our oranges reflecting to us and out into the world. We could not have imagined seeing the joy of children's faces celebrating Christingle this way last year.

The reason God shakes us up sometimes is that if we seek an easy life we can become as Pope Francis says, 'A statue in the museum.' We can become dried up and withered instead of alive with New Life.

When I first went back to church at All Saints following the first Lockdown the church smelled horrible. It was dank. If we as people are closed in on ourselves as individuals and in community our faith can become stale like the All Saints I walked back into. The first thing I did was open all the doors wherever I could. Moving forward into 2021 we will need to open the doors of All Saints to welcome people, but also to go with Christ in our hearts to encounter others. I cannot wait for mission activities like Street Angels, Maidenhead Care, Tiny Saints and other activities that a good number of you are part of to flourish again.

Sue Stannett gave me a gift of the film 'On the Waterfront' for my birthday last week. The film based on the worker priest John Corridan. His role in the film is played by Karl Malden. There was one line early in the film that struck me. The sister of the docker killed for standing up against a corrupt union (played by Eva Marie Saint) shouts at the priest Fr Barry (played by Malden) 'You going back to your church? You don't find Saints hiding in the church.' That challenge propels Fr Barry from his relative comfort to change the situation for the working class dockers. He says Christ is in the suffering and struggle with them.

Mary was given the strength of her friend Elizabeth, the support of the community to cherish Jesus, to nurture him and to walk alongside him even to his death knowing that his light would scatter the darkness. This year of the Pandemic has been filled with darkness but now we have the hope of the vaccines and also the light breaking through and comfort and joy breaking into our world. The Lord kindled a light not only in the womb of Mary but kindles it within us through his spirit.

In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen

## ALL SAINTS POST BOX



As it is not possible this year to have the letter rack at the back of Church for us to exchange cards with each other why not use the Parish News virtual postbox this Christmas? Just email me ([jan.moss@btinternet.com](mailto:jan.moss@btinternet.com)) with your name and maybe a short seasonal greeting and we'll print them all together in our next edition.

If you'd like to make a donation to a good cause in lieu of card costs I'm sure the good causes would be very grateful. Our own Floor Project for instance (All Saints Church Fund marked Floor Appeal)

Jan Moss

## REFLECTION by Greg Hurst

Should we meet with our immediate family or closest friends over Christmas? In other circumstances this would be a bizarre question. But in recent days health experts challenged the government's decision to suspend restrictions on socialising in private homes between December 23-27. Their reasons are understandable. Despite the month-long autumn lockdown, cases of coronavirus infections are again increasing rapidly.

We know the virus spreads more easily in colder conditions. We know hospitals face greatest seasonal pressure from emergency admissions in January. And yet this debate has an element of unreality. What the government's decision boils down to is whether to lift – temporarily – the threat of criminal proceedings against people who entertain two other households inside their homes for Christmas.

Whatever rules politicians decide it's clear a large proportion of the population will ignore them: witness the crowds thronging at popular shopping centres in recent days and crowded conditions on some trains. But we must remind ourselves that many citizens, albeit perhaps a minority, have done their best to follow the rules. They put their lives on hold. Many have self-isolated. Yes, they may have acted to protect themselves but they followed the restrictions for the sake of others, too. That is the principle of public health.

Many, many such people have been able to endure these sacrifices by holding on to thoughts of happier times ahead, most notably celebrating Christmas with those they love. Some families will decide the risks are too great. But others, cautiously, will go ahead with plans to gather over Christmas. Good luck to them.