

# ALL SAINTS CHURCH BOYNE HILL MAIDENHEAD

## PARISH NEWS

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

Issue 37      2 December 2020



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

This week we are entering the season of Advent. This is the time of year that we begin the new Christian year. This season of Advent leading into Christmas is as the Archbishops of Canterbury and York are encouraging us to think of is a time of 'Comfort and Joy'. Justin and Stephen encourage us to look back on a year when much has changed. To remember those who have died, to be thankful for all those who have been at the frontline supporting the sick and vulnerable and to support those who have lost jobs.

In the sermon I have tried to reflect on the idea of wilderness and the journey we make as pilgrims through this life together. We journey though with comfort and joy knowing that God came among us as a vulnerable baby boy (Emmanuel) and shares our lives with us. It is the challenge to live graceful lives by sharing compassion with others, living Christ-Like lives contemplatively and with courage. Justin Welby writes 'A light amidst the difficulties of this year has been the way people have cared for each other with generosity and courage. Cynicism about community has often been overwhelmed by love for neighbour. It has been stressful and anxious, but we have not shut ourselves off from each other. There have been countless wonderful acts of kindness and care, often sacrificial ones.'

Justin goes onto write that we can all share these small acts and lead to the ripple effect. The key hope this Advent and every time we celebrate this season is that we look forward to celebrating God's love with us and in us. Let us share this comfort and joy with others. Archbishop Justin asks us to reflect on whether we can offer a gift (Not necessarily bought) but something that will make a difference to another this Advent and Christmas.

### Advent and Christmas services

'We are not out of the woods, but we may have found the right path' – These are the words of Fergus Walsh the BBC's medical correspondent whose wisdom I use within the sermon. This understanding of our position at this time considering the hope of the vaccinations but with a reality check that we are still in the midst of this crisis reflects the style of services we are offering at All Saints this Advent and Christmas. I am filled with regret that we cannot offer the Christingle, the Carol or the Crib service in church this year. Equally I am saddened that we cannot welcome the schools whose teachers, children and parents pack the building each year. But we need to follow Walsh's advice and therefore we are offering the following:

From Advent 2 Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> December we will have the 10.00am Eucharist on Sundays and Wednesdays throughout the season.

On the 13<sup>th</sup> December at 4.00pm we will celebrate Christingle and the light of Christ shining in our midst even if it will this year be via zoom. Please see the link in this newsletter.

Our Christingle service will once again focus on the ministry of 'THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY' who support vulnerable young people. This year more than ever they are in need of our help.

Here are the ways you can give;

- a. Directly through [Christingle.org/donate](https://Christingle.org/donate) – do not forget whether you are paying on behalf of All Saints or yourself. You will receive an email confirmation thanking you for your donation.
- b. Send a cheque – Made payable to ‘The Children’s Society’ at Whitecross Studios, 50 Banner Street, London, EC1Y 8ST
- c. BACS payment- please ensure that you include your name and the supporter ID number for All Saints Church which is ID 1311117

Thank you to Anne Clark for her ministry to the Children’s Society and to all of you who support this important charity year on year.

## Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December

**10.00am Eucharist for the fourth Sunday in Advent** – Following discussion with Brian we are offering a quartet of singers who will be singing Advent and Christmas carols during this service.

**6.00pm Service of Nine Lessons and Carols on Zoom** – Please see the connection in the Newsletter. 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.

**24<sup>th</sup> December 11.30pm Midnight Mass – The Nativity of The Lord** If you are intending to celebrate the comfort and joy of Christ with us at this service please can you book via;

The email [allsaintsboynehill@gmail.com](mailto:allsaintsboynehill@gmail.com)

Or [jeremy-harris@outlook.com](mailto:jeremy-harris@outlook.com)

Or Telephone 01628 621933 -leave a message or 01628 626921

We are hoping that a quartet of singers will provide carols at Midnight Mass service

**25<sup>th</sup> December 10.00am Christmas Day Eucharist** – A quartet of carol singers will provide us with carols singing.

**Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December** – 10.00am Eucharist for the First Sunday of Christmas – At this service we will have some live music and recorded carols.

Please try and come to one of the services over Christmas. If you are a family with young children and are concerned about coming to church at this time, we are going to be open for visits for families between 2pm and 5pm on Christmas Eve. We will have the Nativity scene and Christmas music being played.

Thanks to Open the Book teams and a mixture of Zoom and recordings we are sharing the Christmas joy with schools.

## 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 3 December**

**8.00pm Night prayer on Zoom**

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

Meeting ID: 759 7654 4021

Password: 5rHziV

We celebrate the theme of Friendship through St Francis Xavier, Jesuit missionary

Psalm 40, Matthew 13: 1-23 Hymn: 'Brother Sister let me serve you.'

**Sunday 6 December SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

**10.00am EUCHARIST**

**11.00am – 12noon 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.

**Monday 7 December 7.30pm Prayer Group via Zoom Theme: The Deaf Church**

<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.

## 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](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](mailto:jeremy-harris@outlook.com)

Our prayers are asked for Angela Brewerton, Mandy Rogers, Danielle, Sister Margaret of Burnham Abbey, Nick and Fr John. And for Keith Green, recently died.

In our Parish Cycle of Prayer this week we pray for the Ministry of the Deaf Church, our Senior Saints unable to meet as a group at the moment but keeping in touch by telephone, and for our Choir as they begin to bring live music back to church; for Brian our organist whose weekly contributions to this publication are much appreciated and for Relf, our assistant organist who has played on Wednesdays and Sundays and given pleasure to many people.

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

*Fr Jeremy*

## Worship for SUNDAY 6 December SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

### Sounds of Worship      Brian Graves

The Epistle is a reminder of the unexpectedness of life on earth and the need to be prepared and at peace when we come to the end of our days. Our joy in life is to receive the repentance of God and look forward to a new heaven and a new earth. With this awareness and preparation, we can look forward with eagerness to the time of the coming of Jesus and ultimately our own salvation through him. The gospel tells of John the Baptist, "a voice crying in the wilderness" who brings baptism to those who seek repentance. However, he is merely preparing the way because Jesus will come to baptise with the Holy Spirit.

The two hymns I have selected today reflect the theme of the hope in Jesus' redemptive power and the heralding his mission on Earth. The first of which is "Come thou long-expected Jesus" AM 30 words by Charles Wesley (1707 – 1788) with the tune "Cross of Christ" by John Stainer (1840 – 1901).

In 1744, Charles published a prayer with the words: "Born Your people to deliver, born a child and yet a King, born to reign in us forever, now Your gracious kingdom bring. By Your own eternal Spirit, rule in all our hearts alone; by Your all sufficient merit, raise us to Your glorious throne. Amen."

Wesley adapted this prayer into a hymn in 1744 and published it in his "Hymns for the Nativity of our Lord" hymnal.

Like so many of Wesley's texts, "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus" alludes to one or more Scripture passages in virtually every phrase. The double nature of Advent is reflected in this text, in which we remember Christ's first coming even while praying for his return. Verses 1 and 2 recall Advent prophecies in the Old Testament; verse 3 speaks of Christ's birth and kingdom, and verse 4 is a prayer for Christ's rule in our hearts.

The tune is taken from a hymn used Stainer's oratorio "The Crucifixion" published and first performed in 1887.

1. Come, thou long expected Jesus,  
born to set thy people free;  
from our fears and sins release us;  
let us find our rest in thee.

2. Israel's strength and consolation,  
hope of all the earth thou art;  
dear desire of every nation,  
joy of every longing heart.
3. Born thy people to deliver;  
born a child and yet a king;  
born to reign in us forever;  
now thy gracious kingdom bring.
4. By thine own eternal Spirit,  
rule in all our hearts alone:  
by thine all-sufficient merit,  
raise us to thy glorious throne.

Come thou long expected Jesus

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

The second piece of music I have chosen is “Wait for the Lord, whose day is near” AM 53. This piece is unmistakably a piece from Taizé Community in France but using a specific musical structure that defies our usual classifications of hymns or Psalms. The music is by Jacques Berthier (1923 – 1994). The piece consists of phrase “Wait for the Lord, whose day is near. Wait for the Lord, be strong take heart.” which is repeated over and over again. However, after a couple of repetitions, another voice sings short phrases independently of the recurring “Wait for the Lord”. These improvisatory phrases take their words from a range of sources, including the Psalms, Isaiah and the Gospels. As you will see they are all relevant to today’s theme.

The Taizé Community is an ecumenical Christian monastic fraternity in Taizé, Saône-et-Loire, Burgundy, France. It is composed of more than one hundred brothers, from Catholic and Protestant traditions, who originate from about thirty countries across the world. It was founded in 1940 by Brother Roger Schütz, a Reformed Protestant. Guidelines for the community’s life are contained in The Rule of Taizé written by Brother Roger and first published in French in 1954. Taizé has become one of the world's most important sites of Christian pilgrimage, with a focus on youth. Over 100,000 young people from around the world make pilgrimages to Taizé each year for prayer, Bible study, sharing, and communal work.

In 1955 Berthier was first asked to compose music for the Taizé Community, which was then consisted of a monastic community of twenty brothers. Six years later he became organist at the Church of the Jesuits in Paris, Saint-Ignace, where he worked until his death. In 1975, Berthier was again asked to compose for Taizé, this time for chants to be sung by the increasing numbers of young people coming to worship there.

*Wait for the Lord, whose day is near*  
*Wait for the Lord, keep watch, take heart*

1. Prepare the way for the Lord; Make a straight path for God. Prepare the way for the Lord.
2. Rejoice in the Lord always; God is at hand. Joy and gladness for all who seek the Lord
3. The glory of the Lord shall be revealed. All the earth will see the Lord.
4. I waited for the Lord. God heard my cry.
5. Seek first the kingdom of God. Seek and you shall find.

Wait for the Lord AM 53

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s7GexlvX8HU>

## COLLECT

O Lord, raise up, we pray, your power and come among us, and with great might succour us; that whereas, through our sins and wickedness we are grievously hindered in running the race that is set before us, your bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit, be honour and glory, now and forever.

**Amen**

## **EPISTLE 2 Peter 3: 8 – 15a**

Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed. Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

## **GOSPEL Mark 1: 1 – 8**

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,"' John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.

## **SERMON Fr Jeremy**

Fergus Walsh has become a famous figure on BBC News and television and Radio programmes generally during the last year. His role as the BBC's medical editor is a newly created one and only started on 2020. Walsh has been with the BBC as its medical correspondent since 2006 and has the gift of making difficult health issues just a little bit more understandable to people like me. He was recently asked what the potential arrival of the new vaccines might mean for Britain and the world's fight against the Pandemic. His reply was 'we are not yet out of the woods, but we may have found the right path.' For those of us that have experienced the wilderness over this last year there will have been feelings of isolation and indeed suffering but hopefully the knowledge and experience that God is with us. We may too have both offered and received small acts of kindness, sharing community and we may have learned new things about ourselves, other people and what we miss and have taken for granted. It may be that in this time of wilderness we may be re-formed as God's people.

John the Baptist is pointing to some good news too. John is pointing to the hope that in Jesus Christ we can look forward to the saviour, the Son of God, coming among us, to journey with us and to lead us in the right path to New Life. We do not hear in our text from Jesus but from John the Baptist the eccentric in the wilderness. People are called into this place to be forgiven of their sins, to seek repentance and a new way of living. Metanoia the Greek word challenges us to think about a change of direction and a change of mind or thinking.

The Exodus from Egypt reminded the people, of God rescuing Israel from slavery and taking them through the wilderness and the Red Sea to the promised land. In Isaiah we hear comforting words of the prophet as he gives hope that we will experience the tender loving care of God. Again, the people will go through the wilderness of exile in Babylon to return to a new way of living as God's chosen people. In these times of wilderness then people are formed to think again how they might live better lives. As we think about the Pandemic what are we learning that might make the way we view our neighbours, our community and creation in a better way? Do we notice those who support society, do we notice those who are powerless, do we see people on the margins in a way we perhaps had missed before?

Perhaps we too are finding the right path through self-discovery and a journey back to God. Perhaps we are learning once again to recognise Jesus' presence with us on our journey. One of the ways that the people of God, the body of Christ can be described is as a 'Pilgrim People'. This understanding is that we journey together, supporting one another in the presence of the loving God as we journey to the Kingdom of Heaven. Pope Francis in his wonderful book 'The Church of Mercy' writes that one of his favourite words for describing the church or Christians is one of

'walking' together. 'Walking together is helping one another, asking forgiveness, acknowledging mistakes, accepting other's apologies by forgiving. It is important to walk in unity, without running ahead.' This is important as we walk, we talk to each other and get to know each other. By walking in unity, we grow as a family. I am pleased to look back on this year and notice how many people have tried to support others in community. One lady who works for the local authority and offered community funding was thrilled that people at All Saints had been phoning, shopping, offering signs of support and getting to know each other better. That lady has accepted an invitation from us (an idea of Jeanette's) to read at our Zoom Christmas carol service on the 20<sup>th</sup> December.

Those of us that have experienced a pilgrim journey like the Camino in Northern Spain know what the wilderness might feel like. There are times of feeling exhausted, times when we feel down, times of physical weakness and difficulty. As I began a walk of 15 miles through the Meseta desert I noted in my blog, no roads, no villages, no bridges, no signposts, no shade, no drinking fonts, no food, no beer! However, I had company and we walked together. We got lost in the wilderness and arrived late in Mansilla. I remember though Laura (who ran the Albergue) the lady who fixed peoples blistered feet and the story of an American woman who had walked that brutal trek only to discover she had left her purse in the last town. Laura set up a chain of people who relayed that purse back to it's owner. These are acts of kindness offered that can be replicated in our daily lives.

If we look to the people who follow John the Baptist we notice too that people do not return to the Temple to seek forgiveness but the wilderness. We see here the belief that Jesus' death and resurrection will point not to his presence within buildings but in the hearts and minds of believers. In Mark 16.15 we find the charge to go out into the world. Bear witness to the gospel. Pope Francis wants the church to go out to people. Mistakes and failure can happen out on the road but better that than 'Keeping Jesus locked within the church'. We don't let him out because of our need for security. Instead we need to see the world in an incarnational way. That way that acknowledges we are in the presence of God through his spirit and we are supported on our journey by others.

Finally, when I arrived in Santiago, I didn't find the joy I had expected. Instead I missed the experience of the journey, of the wilderness. I was surprised by this but maybe I shouldn't have been. As an early Jesuit called Jeronimo Nadal said, 'The Road is our home.' This means that the more we come to know the destination, the more we feel at home on the road or in the wilderness. God is the destination, and we journey as pilgrim people together and it is with him that we discover true joy. As we journey out of 2020 we may not have found our way out of the woods or the wilderness but we can look forward to knowing that we can share the right path alongside the one who came among us as a vulnerable baby boy.

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

### **CHILDREN'S SOCIETY NEWS**

The Children's Society Box Collecton 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 (1)**

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](mailto:nordbergjs@aol.com) All profits go to the Floor Project.

*Jeremy Nordberg*

## ALL SAINTS CHRISTMAS CARDS (2)



As it will not be 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 altogether in our Christmas 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*

## OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SHOEBOX APPEAL UPDATE

To date we have donated 62 boxes! This is brilliant! And there's still time! 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](mailto:jwilks@jwa-consultancy.co.uk).

## REFLECTION by Greg Hurst

Before the end of this second lockdown I travelled to London for a business meeting. That morning I received a message from our elder daughter, who is studying in London. What was our news, she asked? I'll be in London later, I replied. Let's meet, she said.

After my appointment, therefore, we met under a clock tower in Victoria. Under lockdown rules we could not hug or meet indoors but we could walk, if we kept two metres apart. So we walked. Strolling through central London I was struck by how few businesses were trading in comparison to a suburban town like Maidenhead. Many coffee shops and restaurants were not offering take-aways but were closed. In the dark we made our way to St James Park, whose paths were lit by street lamps. In the gloom I became aware that at least half of the benches were filled by groups of three or more.

We had much to talk about and nothing else to do so we carried on walking, crossing the Thames at Embankment. On the south bank of the river several make-shift bars were operating from marquees. Crowds thronged around them; groups of four, six, eight holding plastic glasses of beer or cider. We had to thread our way through them.

My head swam. That day the news was full of the new rules that would follow the lockdown and whether London would be placed in the second or higher tier. And yet all around us lockdown rules were being flouted.



## 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](http://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!



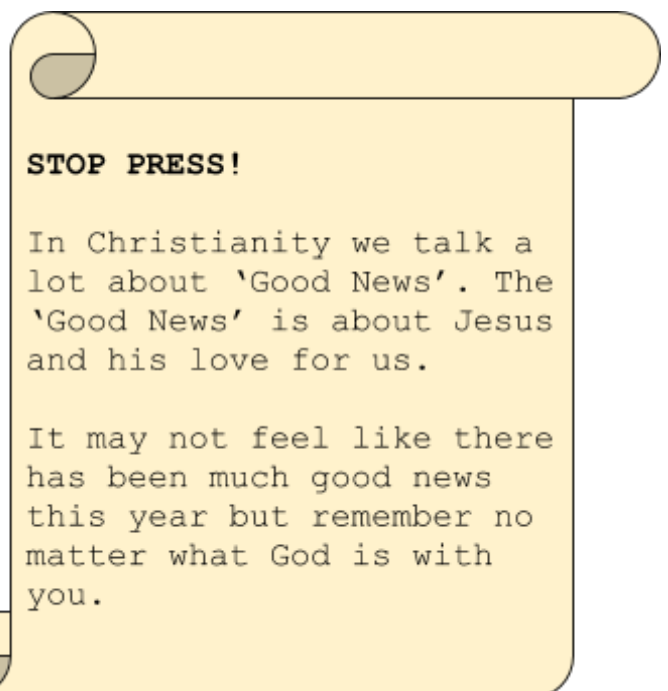
Crumple up some kitchen foil until you have a nice rainbow shape. Tie a piece of string around your rainbow so that you can hang it up. Use tissue paper and pva glue mixed with a little water to cover your rainbow, leaving the string free. When dry, use paint or pens to colour your rainbow. You could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



Sharing  
some  
Good



### 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.

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

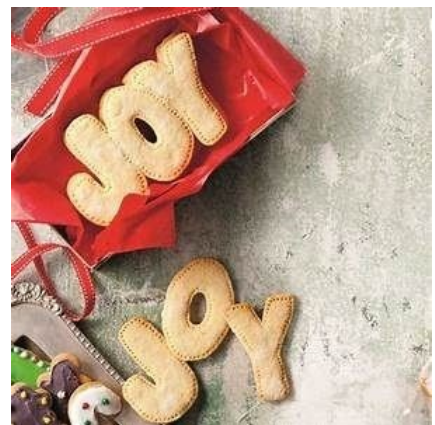
most important moment in Christian life. It marks the time you become a follower of Jesus and become part of the Christian family. Baptism is a time of huge joy and this candle helps us to remember this and how all of us are connected as a family, all the way back to Jesus' own baptism.

## 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