



**St John the Divine Church
Selsdon
Sunday 19th December 2021
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

Welcome

Welcome to St John's, we hope that you enjoy today's service. The refreshments this week will be served by Jane G and Janice White please join them in the church hall after the service.

PLEASE TAKE THIS LEAFLET HOME WITH YOU

Opening Prayer

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.

Post Communion Prayer

Heavenly Father, who chose the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of the promised Saviour: fill us your servants with your grace, that in all things we may embrace your holy will and with her rejoice in your salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

First Reading – A reading from the book of prophet Micah 5: 2 – 5a

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labour has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel.

And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; and he shall be the one of peace. If the Assyrians come into our land and tread upon our soil, we will raise against them seven shepherds and eight installed as rulers.

This is the word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God

Second Reading – A reading from the letter to the Hebrews 10: 5 – 10

Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, ‘Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; in burnt-offerings and sin-offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, “See, God, I have come to do your will, O God”(in the scroll of the book it is written of me).’

When he said above, ‘You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt-offerings and sin-offerings’ (these are offered according to the law), then he added, ‘See, I have come to do your will.’ He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. And it is by God’s will[c] that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

This is the word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God

The Gospel according to Saint Luke 1: 39-55

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, ‘Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.’

Mary’s Song of Praise and Mary said,

‘My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All Praise to you, O Christ.

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For your prayers:

We pray for God's love to surround:

Jonathan Aitken, Ian Brentnall, Linda Gordon, Chloe Lou, Michelle Lord,
, Marjorie Tarlton

We pray for those who have died recently:

Greta Carey, Jean Cynthia Jones, Margaret Rapp, Jean Treasure

We pray for loved ones on the anniversary of their death:

19th December	Leslie Bull	(1969)
	Wally Johnson	(1984)
20th December	Josephine Deacon	(2013)
	Lynne Whittaker	(2017)
	Muriel Rowland	(2019)
21st December	Florence Yorke	(1959)
	Ted Green	(1980)
	Lester Dutton	(2015)
22nd December	Toni Simmons	(1980)
	James Hall	(1965)
	Robert Frankham	(2019)
23rd December	Colin Blood	(2015)
	Heather Reynolds	(2016)
24th December	Dorothy Williams	(2008)
25th December	Marjorie Tyrrell	(1990)
	Mary Ann Wailes	(2004)
	Sylvia Edie	(2010)
	Winifred Cameron	(2010)

If you'd like prayer either for yourself or for another, please email

Revd Younis revd.younis@gmail.com

And if you would like to include the name of a loved one among the list of the departed on the anniversary of their death, please speak to Younis.

If you'd like to discuss arranging any of the following



***Baptism (christening) *Wedding *Funeral * Home Visit**
Please call Revd Younis on

Tel: 0208 6572343 / 07504 721 294

email revd.younis@gmail.com

Just a reminder that nothing should be left at the church door if you need to drop anything off please do this on a Sunday morning or office times. Monday – Thur 9am-2pm or call Amanda on 0208 6579466 and arrange a time

COVID

The number of cases is rising significantly

- **Please do not come to church if you are unwell**
- **Wear a mask as you come in and out of church and as you go up to take communion**
- **Remember all the other precautions that we have got used to taking and consider carefully whether you want to start keeping a bit more distance, wear your mask more etc**

If you have any concerns, please speak to Younis or one of the wardens.



The Croydon Refugee Centre is in desperate need of :

- **Men's, women's and children's shoes inc trainers and sandals**
- **Men's and children's clothing**
- **Toiletries and food.**
- **Toys for children aged four-to-twelve-year-olds**
- **Saucepans**
- **Mugs**
- **Utensils**
- **Mens Belts**

All items need to be clean and in reasonably good condition.

Please rummage in your cupboards and donate any unwanted items to Debbie Brown.

You can leave your items in the office Mon -Thur 9am -2pm or bring to the service with you and leave in the porch on Sunday.

Stamp Appeal

For every kilo of stamps, Bone Cancer Research Trust receives £20.

The Trust is dedicated to save lives and improve outcome for people affected by primary bone cancer through research, information, awareness and support.



Please save your stamps for me, useful guide:

- **Any stamps (modern more valuable, old ones are pre-2008), foreign ones accepted please keep separate**
- **Minimise amount of card/paper attached, good guide is finger width (1cm) all the way round**
- **No pre-printed labels**

**Thank you
Catherine Sands**

Notes from the Choirmaster - Not another Christmas Carol?

You just can't avoid them at this time of year: on the radio, TV, in shops, pubs, restaurants, hotels and even in some elevators! The carol has become synonymous with Christmas in the minds of almost everyone. Historically a carol referred to a hymn or song dedicated to any of the principal religious festivals, like Advent, Epiphany, Easter and Whitsun, as well as for Christmas. The name is derived from an old French word meaning a circular dance which was accompanied by singers, popular from the 12th century onwards. Following the Protestant Reformation, a great deal of effort was made to translate hymns, previously only sung in Latin, into the language of the people and much new music was written by the likes of William Byrd and his contemporaries to support this.



So, where did the tradition of carolling come from? Well, it's probably worth bearing in mind that the church did in fact hijack and reappropriate an already existing pagan mid-winter festival into what we now know as Christmas! From ancient tradition in the UK came the practice of "Wassailing". There are two manifestations of this, firstly that of orchard visiting which takes place in parts of the country where cider apples are grown. On or around twelfth night, people would visit the cider orchards and pour cider over the roots of trees to bless them so that a good crop would be guaranteed the following year. The other form of the Wassail is also sometimes referred to as "Mumming", where ordinary people would swap clothes, put on masks, and go around the community with a large wooden bowl containing a drink made from mulled ale, curdled cream, roasted apples, eggs, cloves, ginger, nutmeg and sugar.... yum!! Singing as they went, they would visit the wealthy houses, offer a drink of the intoxicating brew and demand gifts (for example the verse in "We wish you a merry Christmas" where the singers demand figgy pudding). However, there are records of this often descending into riotous behaviour and even vandalism!

It wasn't until the 19th century that we saw the publication of Christmas songs intended for use in religious worship published in English. The carols familiar to us today such as "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen", "The First Nowell", "I Saw Three Ships" and "Hark! The Herald" first appeared in William Sandy's collection in 1833. Later in the 19th century, men such as Sir Arthur Sullivan and Sir John Stainer championed the revival of carols in Britain. The next great milestone was publication in 1928 of The Oxford Book of Carols edited by Ralph Vaughan Williams, Martin Shaw and Percy Dearmer, which is still in use today. This included many arrangements intended for use by choirs, as well as congregational carols. Next came publication of the first Carols for Choirs in 1961 edited by David Willcocks and Reginald Jacques, the series is now under the editorship of John Rutter. Inclusion of what we might consider as "the usual" popular carols in all of the mainstream church hymnals has of course cemented their place in our Christmas festival elaborations.

So, as can be seen, what we consider to be our traditional carols have a comparatively short history. For the truly old carols, look for those translated from the Latin, like "O Come, All Ye Faithful" or those written originally for the Mediaeval Mystery Plays, like The Coventry Carol.

A truly happy, peaceful and joyful Christmas to you all.

Ian Brentnall.

Church Breakfast

Just a reminder that there is no breakfast in January and the next breakfast will be on Sunday 5th February 2022

Hope you all have a lovely Christmas break

The Breakfast Team.



The late Greta Carey

Greta's family would like to let you know that Greta died on Sunday. She has been living in a care home not far from them in Somerset; You may know that she was suffering from dementia. During her last few days Greta faded gently away and on Sunday evening she died very peacefully. We would be grateful if you could inform anyone at St John's who knew her.

Greta's funeral is at Mendip Crematorium on Wednesday 22nd December at 12.30pm. We appreciate that it is probably too far for anyone to want to travel to Shepton Mallet for the funeral, but the service is being live-streamed (and a recording of the funeral will be available for a week afterwards). If anyone would like to see the live-streaming on-line please could they get in touch with Anne (sear.a@btinternet.com) so that she can forward the necessary password etc.

Best Wishes Peter Sear

LET IT SNOW CHRISTMAS MARKET

Thank you to all who helped make the Let It Snow Christmas Market a great success. We will let you know how much was raised as soon as possible.

Thank you to those who gave up your time to organise, man a stall, make a cake, donate a item and spread the word.

We are grateful for all your help!!





ST JOHN'S CHURCH

CHRISTMAS REMEMBRANCE TREE

Christmas can be a difficult time if you have lost a loved one. This year St John's is again offering the opportunity to remember those we never forget by placing a label decoration on the Christmas Remembrance Tree

The tree will be in place at St John's from **Saturday 4 December 2021 until Sunday 2 January 2022** and will be dedicated at our **Quiet Christmas Service on Monday 20 December 2021 at 7pm**

If you would like to take part by writing your loved one's name on a label to be attached to the Christmas Remembrance Tree, full details with dedication labels are available from the back of the church.

If you would like any further information or help, please contact Gill Salter on 0208 405 9971 salterg@outlook.com or Ann Orchard on 0208 686 6163

Sunday School now open!!!!

Come and join us every Sunday at 10am the children will go into the garden room to do activities and then join the congregation during communion and share what they have been doing that morning.





Father Michael's Diary

17 DECEMBER 2021

I am so sorry there was no diary last week. We had the decorators in, and my diary was a casualty of the ensuing turmoil. To make up for it here are two diary notes this week.

BAPTIST OR BAPTIZER?

In Advent we hear a lot about a man called John who appeared on the banks of the River Jordan shortly before Jesus began his public ministry. In our western tradition he is called John the Baptist while the Orthodox call him John the Forerunner. He also appears in the Koran. In the Gospels John is seen as preparing the way for Jesus, as the fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah: "the voice of one crying in the wilderness 'prepare the way of the Lord'". His part in the gospel story culminates in his "baptism" of Jesus. The Gospels go on to record his imprisonment and eventual execution by King Herod.

"Baptism" is in inverted commas because what John did in the Jordan delta (just north of the Dead Sea, near the town of Jericho) was not baptism as we understand it. Christian baptism is the ceremony of initiation into the Church by symbolically dying (through total immersion) and rising from the waters of death to share Christ's risen life. John called people to wash themselves in the Jordan as a sign of penitence to prepare them for the coming of the Messiah.

The Christian denomination we know as Baptists originated as part of the Reformation in 1609, although some people have claimed an inheritance from New Testament times from various dissident groups. Their main distinction is that they reject infant baptism believing that this sacrament can only be administered to people who made a conscious commitment to Jesus Christ. Back in the 17th century the Church denounced them as Anabaptists (which means "no baptism") because of their rejection of infant baptism.

As you can see John had nothing to do with what we call Baptists and indeed what he did at the river Jordan was not baptism as we understand it, so Baptizer is scarcely more appropriate. Perhaps it would be better to follow the example of the Orthodox and call him John the Forerunner. John preceded Jesus not only in his ministry at the Jordan but also in his death at the hands of Herod. He was not only the last of the prophets but also the first of the martyrs.

A MESSY NATIVITY

In the years that "Call the Midwife" has been running we have all got used to the sight of babies being born. Even though the programme has introduced umbilical cords into delivery scenes these are still pretty sanitized, and we are still shielded from the whole messiness of birth. Although one Christmas carol tells us that Jesus "came all so still where his mother was /as dew in April falleth on the grass" can we really doubt that Jesus' birth was just as messy as any other?

There is no reason to suppose that Jesus birth was any different from any other. After all the whole essence of the doctrine of the incarnation (of God becoming human) is that Jesus became a human being just like us. He came to share all human life, its joys, its sorrows, its happiness, its pain and its messiness. Jesus assumed human life and with it human death. Jesus' passion and death are implicit in his birth as it is in ours.

Jesus' birth was messy, there would have been blood and amniotic fluid just as in every birth and it took place in a messy place a stable the air heavy with the smell of sheep horses and cattle. Mediaeval artists may have tidied up the stable and the animals but they included other powerful pieces of symbolism: the Christ child is represented naked with his right hand raised in blessing and his left hand indicating his genitals which bear the marks of circumcision. The genitals indicate that Jesus was a true human being, and the hand raised in blessing shows that he was the Son of God. The circumcision reminds us that Jesus was obedient to the Father's will which entailed the shedding of his blood, itself foreshadowing the way Jesus would shed his blood to redeem the world.

Jesus' birth was messy because our world is messy and if we try and sanitise it we rob it of its full significance. As the Fathers have said: "what he did not assume he could not redeem" Jesus took upon himself all that is entailed in being a messy human being in a messy world and he redeemed it all.

READINGS AND PRAYERS

19 DECEMBER – FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT – Luke 1.39-55 – my soul magnifies the Lord – that we may recognise the full significance of the Incarnation

20 DECEMBER - O Clavis – O key of David and sceptre of the House of Israel – Isaiah 22.20-23 – the leaders of the nations

21 DECEMBER – O Oriens - O Morning Star – Numbers 24.15b-19 - that the whole world may acknowledge Christ as King

22 DECEMBER – O Rex – O King of the nations and their desire – Jeremiah 30.7-11a – refugees, asylum seekers and the homeless

23 DECEMBER – O Emmanuel – O Emmanuel our King and our lawgiver – Isaiah 7.10-15 - all expectant mothers

24 DECEMBER – Christmas Eve – Luke 1.67-79 – a light to lighten the gentiles – all who will visit our churches at this season

25 DECEMBER – CHRISTMAS DAY - John 1.1-14- the mystery of the Incarnation – the hope of redemption in the Christ child.

Love and prayers and every blessing

Michael

Thank you !!!!

The Scarecrows would like to thank everyone for donating to walks they took part in back in October to raise money for the warm church fund. They have raised over £1000.

Thank you to all who contributed

Monica, Lesley, Janice and Eunice

The late Jean Treasure

There will be a memorial service in the church on Tuesday 21st December at 4pm for the late Jean Treasure who was a part of the congregation and the Mothers Union

Instead of flowers, if anyone wants to donate, please can they put a donation for the church heating fund - to St John the Divine PCC.

Please could anyone attending wear colourful clothing as we are celebrating her life.

There will be refreshments in the Garden Room and back of the church following on from the service.

Church Diary

(Sunday 19th December – Sunday 26th December)

Sunday 19 th	8am	Eucharist Service
	10am	Eucharist Service
	6pm	Nine Lessons and Carols Service
Monday 20 th	10am-4pm	Private Prayer
	6pm	Meeting God In Silence – Garden Room
	7pm	Quiet Christmas service
Tuesday 21 st	10am-4pm	Private Prayer
	4pm	Jean Treasure Memorial Service
Wed 22 nd	10am- 4pm	Private Prayer
Thursday 23 rd	10am	Eucharist Service followed by Coffee
Friday 24 th	4pm	Crib Service
	11.30pm	Midnight Mass
Saturday 25 th	10am	Christmas Day Service
Sunday 26 th	8 am	Eucharist Service (BCP)
	10 am	Eucharist Service

Coming Soon....

Monday 20th December

Quiet Christmas Service @ 7pm

Friday 24th December Christmas Eve

Crib Service 4pm

Midnight Mass 11.30pm

Saturday 25th December Christmas Day

Christmas Eucharist Service – 10am

Saturday 1st January New Years Day Service

Service 12 Noon followed by bring and share lunch in the hall

Contact Us

You can contact the Revd Younis by Calling

0208 657 2343 / 07504 721294 or emailing: revd.younis@gmail.com

The Parish Office is normally open Mon- Thur 9am -2pm

Tel: 0208 6579466 Mobile: 07958 682103

Email: bookingsstjohns@gmail.com

St John's Website address is: www.stjohnsselsdon.org.uk

To find our Facebook page simply search

St John the Divine Selsdon