



Dear friends

When we looked up in the night sky on 21st December last year, we could think that Jupiter and Saturn, the two largest planets in our solar system might be aligned, but in actual fact the planets are 456 million miles (734 million kms) apart. It happens every 20 years that the two planets appear spectacularly close together on the sky's dome, but Saturn is nearly twice as far away as Jupiter.

The facts and distances are difficult to comprehend. Thankfully we have scientists who do understand! But what many of us do comprehend is that we see the brightest light in the darkness; we comprehend the feeling we have when we see this light in the sky. In our second year of Covid, we probably understand some of the science now pertaining to the virus, but we depend on the virologists and immunologists to understand more fully and explain it to us.

What we do understand is the pain of separation, the loss of touch, the fear of loss of income many experienced. We understand the loneliness and the isolation many still experience. Perhaps we have become like the shepherds hearing the angels in the Christmas Carol with the lines the angels sing – 'fear not said he for mighty dread had seized their troubled minds'. We might think the angels reply too glib – it's easy for them to say, 'don't be afraid'.

Once again, the virus has mutated, some of our Christmas events have already been cancelled and again we may start to feel afraid. What's going to happen next? When is this pandemic going to end?

Perhaps we need to become like those shepherds, and the refugees, Mary and Joseph who know that this present moment is hard, but that it will pass, and if we can look beyond the moment, with a long perspective, we can see what endures – love and kindness, care and compassion, and as we shall be hearing in John's gospel during our services this Christmas, we can see the light that shines in the darkness, even when the darkness cannot comprehend it.

Wishing you a very blessed Advent.

Ann, Rector

The first Coming by Madeleine L'Engle

*He did not wait til the world was ready,
Til men and nations were at peace.
He came when the Heavens were unsteady,
And prisoners called out for release.*

*He did not wait for the perfect time.
He came when the need was deep and great.
He dined with sinners in all their grime,
Turned water into wine.*

*He came to a world which did not mesh
To heal its tangles, shield its scorn.
In the mystery of the Word made flesh
The maker of the stars was born.*

*We cannot wait til the world is sane
To raise our songs with joyful voice,
For to share our grief, touch our pain,
He came with love: Rejoice, Rejoice!*

Events and Notices

Upcoming Services for December

For Carol Services see below

Please continue to wear a face mask in church

Sunday, 5th December—2nd Sunday of Advent

10.00am Benefice Service with Holy Communion at St Peter's, Monkton Farleigh

Sunday, 12th December—3rd Sunday of Advent

10.00am Holy Communion at St James, South Wraxall

10.00am Refresh at Winsley Church Hall, Winsley

Sunday, 19th December

10.00am Holy Communion at St Peter's, Monkton Farleigh

10.30am Holy Communion at Christ Church, Bradford on Avon



Christmas Eve — Nativity and Crib Services are on our website and in the Benefice Christmas Card

23.15pm Midnight Holy Communion at St James, South Wraxall, joint with Monkton Farleigh

23.15pm Midnight Holy Communion at St Nicholas, Winsley

23.15pm Midnight Holy Communion at Christ Church, Bradford on Avon

Christmas Day

10.00am Family Communion at St Peter's, Monkton Farleigh, joint with South Wraxall

10.00am Family Communion at St Nicholas, Winsley

10.30am Family Communion at Christ Church, Bradford on Avon

Sunday, 26th December

No service in church. Online service through the YouTube link on our website under Upcoming Services

Carol Services

Sunday, 12th December

6.00pm Christ Church, Bradford on Avon—followed by refreshments

6.00pm St Peter's Church, Monkton Farleigh

Sunday, 19th December

6.00pm St James Church, South Wraxall

6.30pm St Nicholas Church, Winsley—followed by mulled wine, mulled apple and mince pies. **Donations of mince pies would be very welcome! Please contact Alison Wells at mawells22@btinternet.com**

Other Christmas Events

The Christmas Experience at St Nicholas, Winsley— an interactive way for everyone to explore the Christmas Story. See more information on page 3.

'Guess the Carol' Churchyard Trail at St Peter's, Monkton Farleigh and St Nicholas, Winsley— on now for everyone to enjoy.

Ministry Team:

Rector Rev Ann Keating
Rev.ann.keating@btinternet.com
(722230)

Rev Tessa Mann (309374)
LLM: Rachel Pound (862223)

Benefice Office:

Caroline Brydon (865046),
nboabenefice@gmail.com

Website www.nboachurches.co.uk

Church Wardens:

Winsley: Roy Ludlow (868779) Linds Batson (720069)

Christ Church: vacant, Contact Rev Ann Keating

South Wraxall: Dave Wyper (865384)
Valentine Thornhill (862552)

Monkton Farleigh: Vacant. Contact Rachel Exley PCC Secretary (851485)

Lay Pastoral Assistants:

Stephen Pike (782537), Denise Davies (863678)

Gill Fairhurst (867560), Daphne Cox (868224)

Elizabeth Bush (866624), James Middleton (920564)

Children's and Families Worker:

Zoe Yeomans - zyeomans3@gmail.com

Postponed! Ladies Night, Winsley Church Hall

Due to the current circumstances, we are very sadly **postponing** Ladies Night from Monday, 6th December until further notice. We hope to meet in the new year but watch this space!

Mary Hewetson



Experience Christmas— St. Nicholas Church, Winsley

During the four weeks of Advent, beginning on the 28th November, there will be displays in the Church which tell the Christmas story. They provide an opportunity for us to pause, read and reflect. Please come in and encourage others to do the same.

Jean Legg-Bagg

Christ Church Project Update

'The Future for Christ Church'

We are delighted to announce that we have now been granted a faculty for our main objective of installing a kitchen, two toilets, an office, storage space and an enlarged meeting space. We can now invite tenders for the scheme which will give us a more accurate indication of the costs involved.

Following receipt of tenders early next year, we will be able to formally apply for grants although preliminary contact is already being made with possible grant making bodies.

'Discover Christ Church'

The 'informal advice' from the DAC for a new lighting scheme, restoration of the clock and wall paintings was very positive. Our chosen lighting contractor is now working on a design upon receipt of which the DAC have indicated that they will be able to consider our application without waiting for a formal committee meeting. Once we have DAC support we will still have to negotiate the mandatory 42 days of consultation with statutory bodies such as Heritage England, before a faculty can be issued.

Assuming that we get the go-ahead we can assume that the wall paintings will have to be restored and preserved prior to the installation of the kitchen and toilets, as the lower walls will be concealed by these structures and will become inaccessible.

It has been a long, hard road to get to this stage but patience has been rewarded. Our thanks are due to those who have worked so hard to get this far and to all those who continue to support us.

Stephen Pike

Refresh at Winsley Church Hall, Sunday 12th December at 10am

We shall have an hour of Christmas poems and music. If you have a favourite poem you would like to read, or have read, please do let me know. Similarly, if you would like to sing a particular carol, or hear a particular piece of music, please let me know.

Roy Ludlow (868779)



Carol Singing around Winsley

We shall be singing carols around the village from **5.00 to 6.00 pm on Monday 13th and Wednesday 15th December**. As last year, we shall sing at three different locations each evening. Please do come and join us! And do please let us **know (Linds 720069) or Roy (868779)**

Advent Activity Tea

It was a joy to welcome many families from across our Parishes to South Wraxall, Village Hall on Advent Sunday. A team of wonderful helpers representing all our churches, headed up by Zoe, our Children's and Families worker, hosted a special activity tea.

Over 25 children, alongside their parents/carers joined in the fun. Highlights were candle making, Christmas decoration painting and peppermint cream making. The children also made Advent wreaths for St. James Church and decorated the Advent Candle Wreath for inside church.

We played a form of pass the parcel where each layer was a different line of a special grace we shared before tea was served. The tea was delicious and even included mulled wine for adults! Each child left with a special Advent Calendar and chocolate coins.

A massive thank you to everyone who helped on the day, with activities and behind the scenes and to those who made cakes and sandwiches. Your help is invaluable. It was the most perfect way to begin Advent!

Tessa Mann and Zoe



ST. PETER'S CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL



Come and see the Christmas Tree Festival
at St Peter's church
Monkton Farleigh, BA15 2QJ

Open daily 10.00am to 6.00pm
from 12 December 2021 to 2 January 2022

*Wishing you a joyous and peaceful
Christmas and New Year*

From the Churchwardens
of St James, South
Wraxall...

The crib is now in St. James's Church porch and there is a box beside it for anyone who wishes to give Christmas presents for local children who would otherwise not get any this year.

There is a list in the porch of the sort of items that are most needed, but anything your own young relatives would appreciate would be perfect. Thank you!



The next edition of NewsLink will be on the **19th December**. You can read the full version on our website www.nboachurches.co.uk.

If you would like an electronic version of NewsLink or require a hard copy, please email or leave a message for Caroline at the Benefice office on 01225 865046.