

THE LINK

Keeping you in touch with Outwood, Stanley, Wrenthorpe and Alverthorpe Churches 6th December-13th December 2020

Dear all,

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas....
Well, perhaps that depends on your house, but certainly there are signs that things are brightening up, whether that's in the decorations some people are putting up or the news that vaccinations against Covid-19 will begin next week.

There's also good news in the shorter term: Christmas will mean slightly fewer restrictions than usual and the opportunity for many to see their family. This is, of course, still a risky business: many people in our churches and the wider community will not feel safe visiting others yet, even if it is allowed. The virus is still out there. But even if you aren't able to see others yet, it is at least a sign that we will be able to in the future. The situation we're in isn't forever.

There will be some more hints of that as we get closer to Christmas. The edition of the Link has details of Christmas services, and earlier this past week the government announced it would be possible to sing at these if they take place outdoors, and this will be taking place at some of our services.

But of course for Christian, Christmas is the real good news. Christmas means God coming among us in a form we can recognize; coming as a child among men. Perhaps more than usual, we're aware of the perils that involved. In Jesus' time, infectious disease was common. A baby had only a 50% of seeing its first birthday. God gets involved in the messiness of human life where there is disease, death and suffering. But by God's power, this is not all there is to the story: there is light, and it begins with a baby in a manger.

Every blessing,
Fr Jonathan

Prayers and Readings for the Week

2nd Sunday of Advent (6th December)

Isaiah 40.1-11
Psalm 85.1-2,8-13*
2 Peter 3.8-15a
Mark 1.1-8

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 for ever.

3rd Sunday of Advent (13th December)

Isaiah 61.1-4,8-end
Psalm 126
1 Thessalonians 5.16-24
John 1.6-8,19-28

O Lord Jesus Christ,
who at your first coming sent your messenger to prepare your way before you:
grant that the ministers and stewards of your mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready your way by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just,
that at your second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in your sight; for you are alive and reign with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Christmas Services

Christmas services are happening across our four churches, and you can learn more from each individual church. No singing is allowed, except outdoors, or led by musicians, and numbers will be limited, but Christmas will still happen.



Here are the service times:

Alverthorpe: St Paul's Church

Sunday 20th December

6pm Carol Service

Thursday 24th December

5pm Online Christingle

Christingle materials available from Church (for home assembly during the service) on

Tuesday 22nd 2:00 – 4:00 or Wed. 23rd 5.00-7.00pm

Friday 25th December

10am Family Service

Outwood: St Mary Magdalene's Church

Sunday 13th December

3pm Virtual Nativity Service with St Anne's Wrenthorpe

Sunday 20th December

4pm Carols by Outwood Church

4:30pm Christingle (booking required)

Thursday 24th December

2pm Virtual Christingle Service with St Anne's Wrenthorpe

4pm Carols by Outwood Church

4:30pm Christingle (booking required)

8pm Carols by Outwood Church

8:30pm Christmas Eve Mass (booking required)

Friday 25th December

10am Christmas Morning Mass (booking required)

Stanley: St Peter's Church

Sunday 6th December

10am St Nicholas Service

Friday 11th December

7:30pm Christmas Quiz night online: Join us on zoom for a variety of festive quizzes set by different people.

Saturday 12th December

5pm 'Cinderella – a lockdown pantomime'. See it on our Facebook

page <https://www.facebook.com/stpeters.stanley> and also on

YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/user/stpetersstanley>.

Sunday 13th December

4pm Christingle

Sunday 20th December

10am Carol Service

Sunday 20th – Thursday

24th December 'Five Days of Christmas' dramatization and readings: On the afternoon of each of these five days, a short dramatization with carols will be released on our Facebook page and Youtube (<https://www.youtube.com/user/stpetersstanley>).

Thursday 24th December

11pm Midnight Mass

Friday 25th December

10am Family Service

Wrenthorpe: St Anne's Church

Sunday 13th December

3pm Virtual Nativity Service with St Mary Magdalene's

Sunday 20th December

4pm Christingle (booking required)

Thursday 24th December

2pm Virtual Christingle Service with St Mary Magdalene's

3:30pm Crib Service (booking required)

5pm Christingle (booking required)

11pm Midnight Mass (booking required)

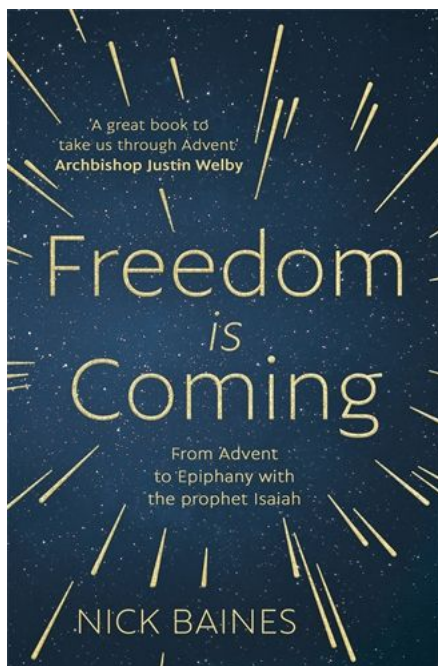
Friday 25th December

10am Christmas Morning Mass (booking required)

To book places at all these services, please be in touch using the contact information at the end of the newsletter

Advent Course

This year, the Benefice will be using Bishop Nick's book on Advent, *Freedom is Coming*, as a way of reflecting on Advent and what it means.



There are three ways to join in. The Monday evening Home Group in St Peter's Stanley will be using it in their sessions on Zoom. Fr Jonathan and Mthr Jo will also be running a session on Wednesday the 2nd on Zoom at 4pm (meeting on Tuesdays in subsequent weeks). The Diocese is also running the course, which is available on Wednesday evenings at 7pm between 25th November and 16th December. You can find out more information about the book and register a place for free on the Diocese's Digital Learning Platform [here](https://spckpublishing.co.uk/freedom-is-coming).

You can buy Bishop Nick's book on Amazon or directly from SPCK Publishing:

<https://spckpublishing.co.uk/freedom-is-coming>

There will also be an opportunity to join in a **shorter course together with Wrenthorpe Methodist Church**, with three sessions, beginning on 1st December at 7:30pm. These will look at Zechariah, Joseph and Mary. These will also be on Zoom.

If you want to join in with these courses, please get in touch, and we will let you know everything you need to do to join.

Tearfund Advent Devotional

Continuing the theme of hope, Tearfund is offering a daily email devotional on hope this Advent. Go to https://www.tearfund.org/about_you/resources/christmas/ to sign up.

Nativity Trail

We are hoping to create a "Nativity Window Trail" this Christmas, either across the benefice or in each parish. We're looking for volunteers to create some scenes from the Christmas story (Gabriel and Mary; Mary and Joseph go to Bethlehem; the Shepherds; the Kings follow the Star). Please get in touch if you'd like to help. You could make a tissue paper stained glass window or draw and paint on the glass with washable paint and tape.

Fr Jonathan & Mthr Jo

A #LightOfHope

The northern diocese of the German Protestant Church is asking people to share the light of hope this Advent, by drawing or crafting stars, hanging them in their windows, and sending stars of hope to friends and family. Why not join in? Draw your own star, or you might like to create a 3D star. You can find a template in our 'Prayer for Use at Home' booklet for All Saints and Advent or go to https://www.nordkirche.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Projekte_und_Kampagnen/Hoffnungsleuchten_Basteln/Bastelstern_hoffnungsleuchten.pdf for a downloadable version.



Upcoming Church Events

Outwood

PCC Meeting: 2 December at 7:30pm (on Zoom)
Mass for the Conception of Mary: 8 December at 6pm (in church)

Wrenthorpe

St Anne's & Friends Quiz Night: 9 December at 7:30pm (on Zoom)

Regular events online:

All our weekday online events are hosted on Zoom, either through the benefice's website's meeting rooms, or through a meeting login. For more information about how to join and how to use Zoom, please contact us.

Sundays

- 11am Coffee Morning on Zoom for St Anne's Wrenthorpe

Mondays

- 10am 'Start the Week – Drop in for Chat and Prayer' on Zoom
- 7:30pm St Peter's Stanley Housegroup on Zoom

Tuesdays

- 10am Coffee Morning for St Paul's on Zoom
- 4pm Advent Study Group for St Mary Magdalene's Outwood and St Anne's Wrenthorpe

Worship Online, on the Radio and on Television

Sunday Worship is broadcast on Radio 4 at 8:10am. Songs of Praise is broadcast on BBC1 at 1:15pm. The Church of England streams a service on YouTube every Sunday at 9am.

You can also join in with our church services online! We're showing them live on the churches' Facebook pages. If you don't have Facebook, you can still watch the services: type your church's name and 'Facebook' into Google, and click on the first link. The videos should be available to view once the service has concluded

The pattern for online services is as follows:

Sundays:

- 10am Parish Mass (St Mary Magdalene Outwood)
- 10am Parish Eucharist (St Anne's Wrenthorpe)
- 10am Holy Communion (from St Peter's and St Paul's on alternate weeks)
- 5:30pm Reflection

Mondays

- 9am Iona Morning prayer
- 5:30pm Evening Prayer (live from St Mary Magdalene's)

Tuesdays:

- 5:30pm Evening Prayer (St Mary Magdalene's and St Anne's) (no service on 8 December)
- 9pm Iona Evening Prayer (St Peter's Stanley)

Wednesdays:

- 9am Iona Morning Prayer (St Peter's Stanley)
- 9pm Sung Compline (St Mary Magdalene's and St Anne's)
- 9pm Iona Evening Prayer (St Peter's Stanley)

Thursdays:

- 5:30pm Evening Prayer (St Mary Magdalene's and St Anne's)
- 6pm Prayer for the Nation (St Mary Magdalene's)
- 9pm Iona Evening Prayer (St Peter's Stanley)

Fridays

- 9pm Iona Evening Prayer (St Peter's Stanley)

Saturdays:

- 12:30pm Midday Prayer (St Mary Magdalene's and St Anne's)

Good News from Around the World



You will almost certainly have already heard this news, but the UK has become the first country in the world to license the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine against Covid-19, and it will begin being rolled out next week. It's great news for everyone hoping for a return to normal life and we're grateful to all the researchers, test patients and funding which has made it possible!



Not quite a good news story, but a fascinating one: an unexpected casualty of the pandemic has been the scented candle industry. You might think that with so many people stuck at home for long periods of time that lots of people would buy candles to brighten things up, but of course people with coronavirus lose their sense of taste and smell, and lots of people have been leaving bad reviews of scented candles after being asked to isolate at home! An unexpected drop in sales has been the result.



We reported on beaver populations returning in the UK earlier this year, and this week, the BBC has reported the first beaver dam in Exmoor in 400 years. Beavers not only represent better biodiversity, their dams can work as natural flood defences, stopping houses downstream from being at risk. You can read more here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-somerset-55125932?fbclid=IwAR3Ujtj-YleddbGrhMidplpRTXvYGNobhvKr5-iPlpu4FbnPUrPBKywWOcch>

Visiting Churches



Our churches are still open for visits at the following times:

Monday 4pm-5pm St Mary Magdalene's Outwood
Tuesday 10-11:30am St Peter's Stanley
Wednesday 2-4pm St Anne's Wrenthorpe
Saturday 10-12pm St Mary Magdalene's Outwood
Saturday 10-12pm St Paul's Alverthorpe

Home Start Hampers



HomeStart help families in need and Outwood Parish Church has helped provide hampers to make the Christmas season easier for many years. This year, we're asking that donations for hampers be left in St Mary Magdalene's Church in a plastic bags so that they can be ready for 6 December, when we're due to restart our public services in church. They'll then be sent to HomeStart on 7 December.

Suggested items for hampers include:

Christmas pudding
Custard
Tin of meat balls

Christmas cake
Tinned fruit
Corned beef (Tin)
Hot dog sausages
Savory snacks
Coffee
Chocolate biscuits
Baked beans
Mince pies
Dried pasta
Jar of pasta sauce
Tin of ham
Chocolates
Children's sweets
Tin of tuna
Tea
Sugar

Wrenthorpe & Kirkhamgate Food Bank



As well as supporting our local Covid-19 Assist Group by hosting their food bank in the St Anne's Church Hall, we're now going to be having a regular collection box for the food bank in both St Anne's and St Mary Magdalene's churches. 72% of families with children who depend on foodbanks are in work, and the need for support is growing, especially in the current Covid-19 restrictions. Please bring non-perishable food and toiletries to church when you are able to, and the boxes will be taken to the food bank as they fill up!

Pinderfields Collection

Along with other churches from across the Wakefield area, we're collecting gifts to cheer up the Christmases of NHS frontline staff in Pinderfields who have been working on Covid-19 wards. This initiative has been pioneered by a member of Ackworth Parish Church who also works at the hospital. We're asking for donations of boxes of chocolates, games, Christmas socks, special tree decoration, candles, spa face masks and hand cream. Please be in touch if you'd like to donate.



A recipe from Mother Jo Kershaw: Pfeffernüsse/ German pepper nuts

Many Germans seem to spend most of late November and December baking various kinds of Christmas biscuits - it's a beloved tradition, and many people will give them as small gifts to friends and neighbours, or arrange "biscuit swaps." While German Christmas markets have become a part of many people's Decembers, the biscuit baking hasn't really caught on - but it is one Advent tradition which isn't affected by Covid! Perhaps you'd like to have a try at this simple classic.

For 25

80g butter
80g sugar
1 large egg
100g runny honey
350g flour
1/8 tsp ground nutmeg
1/8 tsp ground cinnamon
1/8 tsp ground aniseed
1/8 tsp ground black pepper

1/8 tsp ground cloves
1/8 tsp ground ginger
50g ground almonds
1 tsp baking powder

For the icing:
75g icing sugar
2 tbsp lemon juice



Heat your oven to 150C/ 130 fan/ Gas 2
Cream the butter, sugar, and eggs together, then stir in the runny honey.

In a larger bowl, mix the flour together with the spices and ground almonds. Combine with the creamed together ingredients and knead until well mixed. The dough is fairly dry, but keep working it, and it will come together smoothly.

Line a large baking sheet with baking parchment. Roll the dough into small balls - you should be able to make about 25 of them, and place on the baking tray. Leave some space between them, as they will rise and spread a little.

Bake for 15 minutes, and allow to cool completely.

To ice: combine the icing sugar and lemon juice. Using a pastry brush, cover the pepper nuts with icing, and place on a cooling rack to dry.

Notes: naturally you can use SR flour, and omit the baking powder, if you prefer. If you don't own an 1/8 tsp measure (you probably don't), use the tip of a sharp knife to measure.

St Anne's & Friends Quiz Night

Nicholas from St Anne's will be hosting a quiz on Zoom on 9 Wednesday at 7:30pm for or about an hour. All are welcome to join – get in touch if you'd like to join in. All welcome, you don't have to already go to St Anne's! For those unable to Zoom we can post the quiz through doors so people feel included – let us know if you'd like one

RIP

Please remember and pray for those who have died recently whose funerals will be led by members of our clergy team, and others from the local community.

Alverthorpe – Hilda Poskitt
Outwood – Ian Booth, David Hudson, Baby Henry, Ann Hague, Leslie Foster, Emily Jackson, Raymond Robinson

Stanley – Mary Clements
Wrenthorpe – Geoffrey Tallett, Betty Deighton, Margaret Dunn, Ray Crabtree, Stella Bean

Getting help with COVID-19

The current advice from the NHS if you feel ill is to stay at home. If you cannot cope with your symptoms and you're seriously ill call NHS 111. There is a local hotline for Covid-19 support. If you can't get out for things you need and you don't have any friends, family or support available within the community, help is available. Call: 0345 8 506 506 between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Choose option 3 to make a request for support and help will be arranged.

Staying in touch with each other

It's hard to cope with being alone or not seeing many people for a long period of time, and everyone struggles. If you want a chat, you can call any of the vicars in this team. Leave your numbers so we can keep in touch too!

Outwood: Fr Jonathan (01924
373758/frjonathanbish@gmail.com)
Wrenthorpe: Mthr Jo (01924
373758/revdjokershaw@gmail.com)
Stanley & Alverthorpe: Rev'd Glenn (01924
218484/cogginsglenn@gmail.com)

Keeping you entertained!

ADVENT

DURING THE SUNDAYS IN ADVENT THE VICAR MUST CHOOSE SOMEONE TO LIGHT THE ADVENT CANDLE. IT IS ONE OF THE YEAR'S MOST DIFFICULT DECISIONS

