

THE LINK

Keeping you in touch with Outwood, Stanley, Wrenthorpe and Alverthorpe Churches 14th December-27th December 2020 **CHRISTMAS EDITION**

Dear all,

For the two weeks before Christmas, we've put together a 'double edition' of the Link to take us through the week before Christmas and the week of Christmas. This is partly as the Link takes a while to produce and distribute, but also to try to do a more uplifting festive issue.

Things will be changing at Christmas this year. For some, it will be the first Christmas we spend without seeing some of the significant people in our lives: both Mthr Jo and I won't be seeing family over the holiday season. For others, though, this will be the first thing to look forward to in months, as we get a rare opportunity to see friends and family who we haven't in person for some time. For children, it's an exciting time as it always is. I saw one parent whose 6 year old said that inside her brain, it's "Christmas, Christmas, Christmas, Christmas!" Even in times of great change, somethings stay the same!

But of course, the meaning of the season is also about things not being the same again. It says in St Paul's letter to the Philippians that even though Jesus was in the form of God, he did not cling to equality with God, but emptied himself, and taking the form of a servant, was born in human likeness. For the infant Jesus, Christmas is also about things not being the same: the glories of heaven are exchanged for the love of an unmarried couple living in an obscure corner of the Roman Empire. But by emptying himself, and being born as one of us, Jesus opened the way for us to be born again as sons and daughters of God. So, even if it's all change this year... Merry Christmas!

Every blessing,
Fr Jonathan, Mthr Jo & Rev'd Glenn

Prayers and Readings for the days before Christmas

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.

4th Sunday of Advent (20th December)

2 Samuel 7.1-11,16
Canticle: The Magnificat (Luke 1.46-55)
Romans 16.25-end
Luke 1.26-38

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.

Christmas Eve

Evening Prayer Readings – you pray the Church of England's service of evening prayer by going to 'Join us in Daily Prayer' online.

Psalm 85

Zechariah 2

Revelation 1.1-8

Almighty God,
you make us glad with the yearly remembrance
of the birth of your Son Jesus Christ:
grant that, as we joyfully receive him as our
redeemer,
so we may with sure confidence behold him
when he shall come to be our judge;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Christmas Night

Midnight Mass Readings

Isaiah 9.2-7

Psalm 95

Titus 2.11-14

Luke 2.1-14 (or 2.1-20)

Eternal God, who made this most holy night
to shine with the brightness of your one true
light: bring us, who have known the revelation of
that light on earth,
to see the radiance of your heavenly glory;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Christmas Morning

Christmas Morning Readings

Isaiah 52.7-10

Psalm 98

Hebrews 1.1-4

John 1.1-14

Almighty God,
you have given us your only-begotten Son
to take our nature upon him
and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin:
grant that we, who have been born again
and made your children by adoption and grace,
may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,

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

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

Several houses in our church team have created a Nativity trail, depicting different scenes from the Nativity for you to visit

2 Bankfield Court, Wrenthorpe, WF2 0TA – The Shepherds

61 King George Street, Outwood, WF12NG – Scenes from the Nativity: Shepherds, Angels and Kings

15 Church Lane, Outwood, WF1 2JS – The Visit of the Wise Men

St Anne's Church, Wrenthorpe – Outdoor Crib Scene, live from Monday 14th December

Wrenthorpe Nine Lessons And Carols Prayer Trail

Follow our prayer trail around Wrenthorpe! Starting at Wrenthorpe Methodist Church, and ending at St Anne's, the prayer trail will allow you to follow the familiar readings which explore the meaning of the coming of Christ - and if you have a smart phone, you'll be able to scan a QR code and enjoy listening to an appropriate carol. The trail will be available from this Monday.

The stations are:
Wrenthorpe Methodist church
33 Westways
2 Bankfield Court
4 Troughwell Lane
34 Woodside Ave
32 Lyndale Dr
7 Lyndale Dr
St Anne's Vicarage (gate)
St Anne's Church (by the crib)

Thank you very much to everyone who has helped by displaying a poster, and with grateful acknowledgement to Rev Shuna Dicks for the idea and templates.

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.



Carolling for Nursing Homes

There will be a couple of opportunities to go carolling for our local nursing homes in the week before Christmas on 21st December at 2pm a group will sing outside the West Ridings Homes

and on 22nd December at 2pm a group will sing outside Ashby Lodge. We're not able to go into the homes for safety reasons, but hopefully this is an opportunity to bring Christmas cheer to people who might otherwise not hear carols sung at Christmas.

Carols in the Carpark

On 20th December at 5pm, there will be carols in the carpark at Wrenthorpe Methodist Church, which will be a joint event with St Anne's! All are welcome to come along for a Christmas singing event!

Upcoming Church Events

Outwood

Carolling at the West Ridings Home: 21 December at 2pm

Carolling at Ashby Lodge: 22 December at 2pm

Wrenthorpe

Carols in the Carpark: 20 December at 5pm (Wrenthorpe Methodist)

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 all have seen this good news story already, but let's have it again to cheer us up! Margaret Keenan who turns 91 this week received the first injection of the Coronavirus vaccine on Tuesday 8th December. She said it was the "best early birthday present." Thousands of vaccines have already been distributed to healthcare workers and those over 80 from the first 800,000 doses, and 4 million more doses are due to arrive in the UK from Belgium and Germany by the end of the month.



What have the Romans ever done for us? Teach us the art of mosaics, that's what! National Trust archaeologists at Chedworth, a Roman villa in the Cotswolds, have uncovered a 5th century mosaic in what was the dining room. It is significant as it dates from after the Roman withdrawal from Britain, when living standards were falling, and suggests that despite raids in the east and north of England, at least some people continued to enjoy a comfortable standard of living and high standards of craftsmanship continued into the 'Dark Ages'.

But apart from mosaics, what have the Romans ever done for us?



You might not think of Coventry as a 'City of Culture', but Coventry: City of Culture is a group which promotes the city and its cultural heritage. They have set up 21 portraits of 'Everyday Heroes', voted on by the ordinary people for their acts of kindness and service to other people during the pandemic. The 21 include Kelly Iles, who delivered over 60,000 free meals to local hospitals, and 10-year old Evie Barriscale, who made keyrings to raise money for the children's air ambulance. The portraits will go on baubles on Christmas trees in the city centre.



You might not think of London as a birdwatching destination, but after river restoration projects in London, sightings of kingfishers have increased by 450% since 2000. Big increases have happened in Lewisham and Tower Hamlets which have 10 times more sightings than they used to have. London has 400 miles of riverways, but most are underground. Since 2000, more than 20 miles have been restored

in a project led by Catchment Partnerships in London Group (CPiL), which hopes to see 3 new miles of river every year until 2050.

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 (on 19th December only)
 Saturday 10-12pm St Paul's Alverthorpe

Our churches will be closed for visiting over the Christmas break, but services will continue. Please let us know if you want to go in for private prayer.

Wrenthorpe & Kirkhamgate Food Bank



Regular collection boxes for the food bank are hosted 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.

Happy Christmas from Christians in Wakefield!

Have you received your Christmas card from Wakefield Christians? We've got ours! 65,000 Christmas cards are being delivered to all homes in Wakefield in an initiative organised by the leaders of Baptist, Methodist, Anglican, Nigerian and Assemblies of God churches in the city. See attached for a copy of the Christmas card and a press release. Visit the website that has been set up: www.visionwakefield.co.uk to find out more, and to get details of the Drive-In carol services at 1pm, 3.30pm and 6.30pm on Sunday 20th December at Wakefield Trinity rugby league ground and to book your tickets.

Christmas recipes from Mother Jo Kershaw: Cinnamon Stars and Lemon Biscuits

Cinnamon stars (Zimtsterne) are one of the most popular German Christmas biscuits - it's hard to imagine a German Christmas without them. Their delicious flavour perfectly evokes the run up to Christmas for me. The method might seem a little unusual, but works very well- you start by making a meringue, and save some of it for an unusual baked icing. They're also gluten and fat free!



A word of advice - the dough can be sticky. You really do need to use the baking parchment when rolling out!

3 egg whites (from medium eggs)
375g icing sugar
2 drops vanilla essence
1 tsp ground cinnamon
375g ground almonds

Additional icing sugar for rolling and cutting

In a very clean, large, bowl, beat the eggs into a meringue, forming stiff peaks.

Sieve the icing sugar and fold gently into the meringue, a spoonful or two at a time. Put aside three spoonfuls of meringue for the icing.

Mix the cinnamon, almonds, and vanilla essence together. Carefully mix it in to the meringue. The final result should be only barely sticky - if it is very sticky, add a bit more ground almond.

Roll out the dough between two sheets of baking parchment to about one cm thick. If you have space in your fridge, you might like to cook it for

an hour or two, but if you do, make sure it's on some kind of firm board or you will spoil your work.

Preheat your oven to 120 C/ gas mark 1/2.

Dipping your star cutter into the icing sugar periodically, cut out stars and transfer to a lined baking tray.

Using a brush, coat the top of the stars with the reserved meringue mixture. (If you don't have a pastry brush, you can use a teaspoon)

Bake in the middle of the oven for 15 minutes, then lower the temperature to 100 C/ below mark 1/2 and continue to bake for another ten to fifteen minutes - when they are done, the biscuits will have begun to change colour, but the icing will still be light in colour.

Lemon biscuits

This is another favourite German biscuit, though with a fresher, lighter flavour. (It also contains no hard-to-find spices!). The biscuits that results is not unlike a richer lemon shortbread - if you're in a hurry, they are still good without the icing. The hour's rest in the fridge will make your life much easier when you come to roll the dough out. If you are lactose intolerant, you can of course replace the butter with margarine.

Note: this makes two baking sheets worth of biscuits, and it's hard to make a smaller amount because then you end up trying to half an egg. The biscuits keep well in an airtight tin, but if that is more biscuits than you want at once, you can cut the dough in half and freeze one half for another occasion.



300g flour
200g butter
125g sugar

A few drops of vanilla essence (or replace 25g of the ordinary sugar with vanilla sugar, should you have it)

1 egg
Zest of half an unwaxed lemon
Juice of half a lemon

For the icing
300g icing sugar
Lemon juice

Make a dough using the flour, butter, egg, and sugar - you may find it easier to do this using a dough hook, if your mixer has one. Towards the end, add in the lemon juice and vanilla essence.

Rest the dough in the fridge for an hour.

Preheat the oven to gas mark 3/ 175 C.

On a floured surface, roll out the dough to about half a centimetre in thickness (or about the height of a pound coin). Cut whatever shapes appeal to you.

Bake for 12 minutes in the centre of the oven, or until golden but not browned. Cool on a wire rack.

Once completely cool, make up a smooth lemon icing, and ice the biscuits. You could add sugar sprinkles, if you like!

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 – Ian Hirst, Richard Barnes, Pat Goodwin and Ron Churm

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

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/cogginglenn@gmail.com)

Keeping you entertained!

From Cartoon Church

CHRISTMAS CARDS

