

Welcome to St Mary's Apsley



and welcome to our service today

10th December, 2023
Second Sunday in Advent

If you need anything during the service, please ask someone sitting nearby, they will be pleased to help. Please stay after the service for refreshments and a chat in the Refectory at the back of the church.

This Week at St Mary's

Today

9.00am Bellringing
9.30am Eucharist at St Mary's

Monday

10.00 - 12.00 Working Party
8.00pm Bellringing practice

Tuesday

9.30am Buzzy Bees on Holiday.
Back on January 9th

Wednesday

7pm Faith and Hope Discussion Group
In The Vicarage

Thursday

9.30 - 3.30 Church open for private prayer
9.30 - 12.00 Foodbank and Community Café
9.30am Eucharist at St Mary's
10.15am Study Group in the vestry
8.00pm Virtual Study group on Zoom
All welcome (link on website/calendar)

Friday

10.00 - 12.00 Working Party

Saturday

10.00 - 12.00 Saturday Community Café

Sunday 17th December

9.00am Bellringing
9.30am Eucharist at St Mary's
3.00pm Messy Christmas

Morning Prayer at St Benedict's:

Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday at 9.30am

Evening Prayer at St Benedict's:

Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday at 5.30pm



Dear Friends,

This week we are continuing our discussion about our identity as a Christian community, focussing particularly on Faith. Our lovely Advent group has been thinking about how Christian faith interacts with the reality of living in the world as it is - so much of it is beyond our control or understanding, and we will not be around long enough to see what fruit, if any, comes from some of the little seeds we plant. What does it mean to be people of Christian faith in this place, and amongst such difficult realities?

I am not going to give you the answers (I don't have them!), but John the Baptist points us in the right direction in our Gospel passage set for the 2nd Sunday in Advent. John is good at pointing, good at showing us the way, good at directing our attention. John goes before Jesus in everything he does; he is a few months older, he hears God's call in the wilderness and on the wind, he baptises with water, he gets the rumours going, he points people to Jesus, and in the end he foretells the 'end' of the story when he is maliciously executed for show.

People came to John to confess their sins and to be forgiven and baptised. John holds a space where people can come - having heard that something interesting is going on - to be forgiven, be transformed into the people God intended them to be. But before John can do this, he has first understood his assignment to be a messenger, to be a peddler of truth. John is rough and ready, he comes to do the hard work of preparing the ground. It is not a glamorous task, for John or for us. We will be unpacking some of these themes more when we meet for worship on Sunday.

I want to say a massive thank you to everyone who has worked so hard on our Christmas Bazaar this year! What a team effort. I am very proud of everyone.

Yours
Mother Alice

Sunday's Collect and Readings (Year B)

The 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 for ever.

Amen

A reading from the book of the Prophet Isaiah

40.1-11

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that
she has served her term, that her
penalty is paid, that she has received from
the LORD's hand double for all her sins.
A voice cries out: 'In the wilderness prepare the
way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a
highway for our God.
Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain
and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall
become level, and the rough places a plain.
Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and
all people shall see it together, for the mouth of
the LORD has spoken.'
A voice says, 'Cry out!' And I said, 'What shall I
cry?' All people are grass, their constancy is like
the flower of the field.
The grass withers, the flower fades, when the
breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the
people are grass.
The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word
of our God will stand for ever.
Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of
good tidings; lift up your voice with
strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it
up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, 'Here is
your God!'
See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm
rules for him; his reward is with him, and his
recompense before him.
He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will
gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his
bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

This is the Word of the Lord.

THANKS BE TO GOD!

A reading from the Second Letter of Peter

3.8-15a

But 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 people 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. So also our beloved brother Paul
wrote to you according to the wisdom given to
him.

This is the Word of the Lord.

THANKS BE TO GOD!

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark

1.1-8

GLORY TO YOU, O LORD!

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. He proclaimed, 'The one who is
more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not
worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his
sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will
baptize you with the Holy Spirit.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

PRAISE TO YOU, O CHRIST!

Thursday's Collect and Readings (Year B)

A reading from Isaiah

41.13-20

For I, the Lord your God,
hold your right hand;
it is I who say to you, 'Do not fear,
I will help you.'

Do not fear, you worm Jacob,
you insect Israel!
I will help you, says the Lord;
your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel.
Now, I will make of you a threshing-sledge,
sharp, new, and having teeth;
you shall thresh the mountains and crush them,
and you shall make the hills like chaff.
You shall winnow them and the wind shall carry
them away,
and the tempest shall scatter them.
Then you shall rejoice in the Lord;
in the Holy One of Israel you shall glory.

When the poor and needy seek water,
and there is none,
and their tongue is parched with thirst,
I the Lord will answer them,
I the God of Israel will not forsake them.
I will open rivers on the bare heights,
and fountains in the midst of the valleys;
I will make the wilderness a pool of water,
and the dry land springs of water.
I will put in the wilderness the cedar,
the acacia, the myrtle, and the olive;
I will set in the desert the cypress,
the plane and the pine together,
so that all may see and know,
all may consider and understand,
that the hand of the Lord has done this,
the Holy One of Israel has created it.
This is the word of the Lord.

THANKS BE TO GOD!

A reading from Psalms

145.1,8-13

1 I will exalt you, O God my King,
and bless your name for ever and ever.
8 The Lord is gracious and merciful,
long-suffering and of great goodness. [R]
9 The Lord is loving to everyone
and his mercy is over all his creatures.
10 All your works praise you, O Lord,
and your faithful servants bless you.
11 They tell of the glory of your kingdom
and speak of your mighty power,
12 To make known to all peoples your mighty acts
and the glorious splendour of your kingdom.
13 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom;
your dominion endures throughout all ages
This is the word of the Lord.

THANKS BE TO GOD!

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

11.11-15

GLORY TO YOU, O LORD!

Truly I tell you, among those born of women no
one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet
the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than
he. From the days of John the Baptist until now the
kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the
violent take it by force. For all the prophets and
the law prophesied until John came; and if you
are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come.
Let anyone with ears listen!

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

PRAISE TO YOU, O CHRIST!

Contact Information

Vicar:	Mthr Alice Jolley	01442 615246	mthr.AliceJolley@outlook.com
General Enquiries:	Please contact the Benefice Office		Monday – Friday 8.30am – 12.30pm
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Website/calendar:	www.BeneficeofLangelei.org.uk/StMarys		

Notices

Please send any input for next week to Sue in the Benefice office on SaintsKL2@tiscali.co.uk by noon on Wednesday and copy it to StMarysApsleyEnd@gmail.com.

Carols Outside Sainsburys

Please join us next Saturday 16th December at 1pm outside Sainsbury's as we sing carols till 2pm in aid of DENS to the shoppers. If you can only join us for less than the hour you would be most welcome

Festive Open Vicarage

Alice and Coral would like to extend an open invitation to the Vicarage for festive refreshments on Monday 18th December from 5pm. Please do join us!

Advent 'Faith and Hope' discussion group.

Wednesday 13th Dec, 7pm at the Vicarage. Festive snacks and drinks! More info in the notices at church.

Welcome Boxes for Nascent House

We would be grateful for boxes with lids 17L to 25L, packs of sweets, postage stamps, notebooks and toothpaste. If you can donate any of these items please place them in or near box at the rear of the church. Many thanks. Susan and Viv.

RCHH Santa Sleigh

'We could still do with one more volunteer collector to walk with the Santa Sleigh outing on Sunday 17th December between 5.30pm and 7.30pm. If you are interested and can help please speak to Viv 07837560873 for more information. It's wonderful to see the children's faces when they see Santa.

Could you be our next Safeguarding Officer?

The PCC is seeking a candidate to take over from Susan Rivett when she steps down in the spring of 2024. Please consider prayerfully whether God might be calling you to take on this highly important role in the life of our church. It will be possible to shadow Susan for a few months if early notice of interest is given!

Sponsorship for our organists



Our organist Bruce Boardman is sponsored today by an anonymous sponsor.

If you would like to sponsor the organist one week, perhaps in memory of a loved one, please

email Janet on janet@apsleyend.co.uk.

New tables

We are planning to purchase 5 new square tables for the church at a cost of £50 each. If you would like to sponsor a table or make a donation towards these, please speak to our treasurer Peter. Many thanks, Viv

Church Flowers

Christmas is coming and after the Advent season we will of course have flowers back in church.

If you would be willing to contribute something towards the cost of them there is a basket at the back of church for your support. Many thanks. Rosemary

Foodbanks at St Mary's and St B's

St Mary's foodbank is open 9.30-12.00 on Thursdays with a community café serving simple hot food too. We continue to need donations and assistance at both foodbanks (St Mary's and St B's). If you can help, do speak to Mthr Alice.

Dates for your diary

Wed 13th Dec Faith and Hope Discussion Group 7pm
Sat 16th Dec Tree Decoration in Church
Sat 16th Dec Carol Singing Outside Sainsburys
Sun 17th Dec Messy Christmas
Sun 17th Dec Santa Sleigh Outing
Mon 18th Dec Festive Open Vicarage from 5pm
Tue 19th Dec Blue Christmas at St B's
Sun 24th Dec Crib service 4.30pm
Sun 24th Dec Midnight Christmas Eucharist 11.15pm
Mon 25th Dec Joint Christmas service at St M's 9.30am
Sun 31st Dec Benefice Service at All Saints KL 10.30am
Sun 7th Jan Christingle service at Epiphany

Rotas - Who's doing what when

	10 th December	17 th December
	9:30 Eucharist	9:30 Eucharist 3pm Messy Christmas
Music	Bruce Boardman	Ian Hope
Warden	Rosemary Bladon	Sylvia Low
Sides duty	Rosie Sutton	Joy West
Welcomer	Peter Bladon	Trevor & Jan Wilson
Reading	Katharine Harper	Sue Jakeman
Intercessions	Sue Jakeman	Katharine Harper
Offertory	Alfie Cacciapuoti & Ralph Henley	Ann Wiggins & Katharine Harper
Chalice	Katharine Harper	Peter Bladon
2nd Counter	Jim Aylott	Trevor Wilson
Refreshments	Colin & Susan Rivett	Melanie Henley & Thao Pham
Sunday School	Lilian Hepwood	No Sunday School

Sue Bassett 08/12/2023