

Welcome to St Mary's Apsley



and welcome to our service today

17th December, 2023

Third 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

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

Monday

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| 10.00 - 12.00 | Working Party |
| 5.00pm | Festive Open Vicarage |
| 8.00pm | Bellringing practice |

Tuesday

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| 9.30am | Buzzy Bees on Holiday. Back on January 9 th |
| 7.00pm | Blue Christmas at St Bs |

Thursday

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| 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

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| 10.00 - 12.00 | Working Party |
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Saturday

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| 10.00 - 12.00 | Saturday Community Café |
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Sunday 24th December

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| 9.00am | Bellringing |
| 9.30am | Eucharist at St Mary's |
| 4.00pm | Bellringing |
| 4.30pm | Crib service |
| 10.45pm | Bellringing |
| 11.15pm | Midnight Christmas Eucharist |



Dear Friends,

Today is the 3rd Sunday of Advent, also known as Gaudete Sunday. Gaudete means rejoice! It is compulsory that you listen to 'Gaudete' by Steeleye Span on a loop. (It isn't, but it is compulsory that you do something that reflects the joy of the anticipation of this season). It is a good time to put the tree up, or do some festive baking, or just light a pink candle and bask in the light of the Love that is coming.

This is such a busy season. As an antidote to the pressure and the rush and the stress, I am counselling rest. Do a little bit less. It is okay if those cards don't get written, or that last minute trip to the supermarket doesn't happen. I know it is hard to admit, but the universe actually won't fall apart if we don't do all of the things on our list.

Instead, stop. Wait. Take a breath. Light a candle. Give your family a hug. Stroke the cat. The great work of this season has already been accomplished - not by you, not by me, not by any human effort, but by divine grace and power. It is yours to enjoy.

Stop. Breathe. Pray in thanksgiving. Rejoice!

Yours in Christ,
Mother Alice

Sunday's Collect and Readings (Year B)

The Collect

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.

Amen

A reading from the book of the Prophet Isaiah 61.1-4, 8-end

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because
the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to
bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the
brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the
captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim
the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of
vengeance of our God; to comfort all who
mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of
gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of
praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called
oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to
display his glory.

They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall
raise up the former devastations; they shall repair
the ruined cities, the devastations of many
generations. For I the Lord love justice, I hate
robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them
their recompense, and I will make an everlasting
covenant with them. Their descendants shall be
known among the nations, and their offspring
among the peoples; all who see them shall
acknowledge that they are a people whom
the Lord has blessed.

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being
shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with
the garments of salvation, he has covered me
with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom
decks himself with a garland, and as a bride
adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth
brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes
what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will
cause righteousness and praise to spring up
before all the nations.

This is the Word of the Lord.

THANKS BE TO GOD!

A reading from the first Letter of Paul to the Thessalonians 5.16-24

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks
in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in
Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do
not despise the words of prophets, but test
everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from
every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you
entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be
kept sound and blameless at the coming of our
Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful,
and he will do this.

This is the Word of the Lord.

THANKS BE TO GOD!

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John 1.6-8, 19-28

GLORY TO YOU, O LORD!

There was a man sent from God, whose name was
John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so
that all might believe through him. He himself was
not the light, but he came to testify to the light.
This is the testimony given by John when the Jews
sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him,
"Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it,
but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they
asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I
am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered,
"No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us
have an answer for those who sent us. What do
you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice
of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight
the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said.
Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They
asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are
neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?"
John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among
you stands one whom you do not know, the one
who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie
the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany
across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

PRAISE TO YOU, O CHRIST!

Thursday's Collect and Readings (Year B)

A reading from Zephaniah

3.14-18

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;

shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart,

O daughter Jerusalem!

The Lord has taken away the judgements against you,

he has turned away your enemies.

The king of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst;

you shall fear disaster no more.

On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:

Do not fear, O Zion;

do not let your hands grow weak.

The Lord, your God, is in your midst,

a warrior who gives victory;

he will rejoice over you with gladness,

he will renew you in his love;

he will exult over you with loud singing

as on a day of festival.

I will remove disaster from you,

so that you will not bear reproach for it.

This is the word of the Lord.

THANKS BE TO GOD!

A reading from Psalms 33.1-4,11-12, 20-end

1 Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous.

Praise befits the upright.

2 Praise the Lord with the lyre;

make melody to him with the harp of ten strings.

3 Sing to him a new song;

play skilfully on the strings, with loud shouts.

4 For the word of the Lord is upright,

and all his work is done in faithfulness.

11 The counsel of the Lord stands for ever,

the thoughts of his heart to all generations.

12 Happy is the nation whose God is the Lord,

the people whom he has chosen as his heritage.

20 Our soul waits for the Lord;

he is our help and shield.

21 Our heart is glad in him,

because we trust in his holy name.

22 Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us,

even as we hope in you.

This is the word of the Lord.

THANKS BE TO GOD!

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke

1.39-45

GLORY TO YOU, O LORD!

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.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

PRAISE TO YOU, O CHRIST!

Contact Information

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|--|--|-----------------|--|
| Vicar: | Mthr Alice Jolley | 01442 615246 | mthr.AliceJolley@outlook.com |
| General Enquiries: | Please contact the Benefice Office | | Monday – Friday 8.30am – 12.30pm |
| Administrator/ Benefice Office: | Sue Bassett | 01923 266596 | SaintsKL2@tiscali.co.uk |
| Facebook: | St Mary's Apsley End | Twitter: | @StMarys1871 |
| Churchwardens: | Sylvia Low | 07742 610932 | SylviaLow@gmail.com |
| | Harry Graham-Brown | 07918 071542 | Harry.GB63@gmail.com |
| Safeguarding: | Susan Rivett | 07908 644600 | SusanRivett55@gmail.com |
| | Katharine Harper | 07881 602024 | KatharineHarper23@gmail.com |
| 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.

Thank you to all those who helped!

A big thank you to everyone who helped make Saturday's Christmas Bazaar a great success. All your help was much appreciated, both on Friday and Saturday. The total amount taken stands at over £1,684 with hopefully some more to come!! - well done.

RCHH Santa Sleigh

We could still do with one more volunteer collector to walk with the Santa Sleigh outing tonight 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.

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!

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

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.

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

Sponsorship for our organists



Our organist Ian Hope 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.

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.

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!

Dates for your diary

Tue 19th Dec Blue Christmas at St B's
Sun 24th Dec 11.15pm Midnight Mass
Mon 25th Dec Joint Christmas service at St M's 9.30am
Mon 25th Dec Free Community Christmas Lunch at 11am
Wed 27th Dec Young@Herts Bell Ringing Masterclass 10am – 1pm
Sun 31st Dec Benefice Service at All Saints KL 10.30am
Sun 7th Jan Christingle service at Epiphany
Sun 21st Jan Messy Church

Morning Prayer at St Benedict's:

Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday at 9.30am

Evening Prayer at St Benedict's:

Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday at 5.30pm

Rotas - Who's doing what when

| | 17 th December | 24 th December |
|---------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | 9:30 Eucharist 3pm Messy Christmas | 9:30 Eucharist |
| Music | Ian Hope | Melanie Henley and her cousin Steve |
| Warden | Sylvia Low | Tim Ward |
| Sides duty | Joy West | Rosemary Bladon |
| Welcomer | Trevor & Jan Wilson | Ralph Henley |
| Reading | Sue Jakeman | Melanie Henley |
| Intercessions | Katharine Harper | Katharine Harper |
| Offertory | Ann Wiggins & Katharine Harper | n/a |
| Chalice | Peter Bladon | n/a |
| 2nd Counter | Trevor Wilson | Colin Rivett |
| Refreshments | Melanie Henley & Thao Pham | Laura & Harry Graham-Brown |
| Sunday School | No Sunday School | Laura G-Brown |

Sue Bassett 13/12/2023