

Welcome to St Mary's Apsley



and welcome to our service today

3rd December, 2023
Advent Sunday (Ordinary Time II)

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 in the Refectory

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
12.00 Christmas Bazaar

Sunday 10th December

9.00am Bellringing
9.30am Eucharist at St Mary's

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,

Happy New Year! Today is Advent Sunday, the beginning of the new liturgical year and the start of the most beautiful season of the Church's year. Advent teaches us to wait joyfully and expectantly for the Love of God coming into the world as a tiny, helpless baby. Someone in our Advent group said yesterday "If God can come into the world as a human baby then anything is possible! Anything!". I like this interpretation a lot. As humans we get used to focussing on the worst-case scenario, we manage risk and make plans for if everything goes wrong, because we are vulnerable and we are used to having to protect ourselves. The good news is that it doesn't have to be this way – miracles can and do happen. We have a real hope, which is not just a vague wish for everything to turn out right, but a real promise that God is at work amongst us.

I am always encouraging you to make more space for God in your life, even if it's just 5 mins more per day. It won't surprise you to hear that I think Advent especially is a time for more space, more stillness, more silence, and less noise and fuss. We all know the reality of our busy lives, but the reality is no-one is going to make that space for you (quite the opposite!). You have to take control, and plan for that space before everything else crowds in. So, pick up your diary. Turn to the beginning of December. Look at the month ahead (don't panic! Just look.) Pick up a pencil and write in the daily time you're going to spend being quiet with God. 5 mins, 10 mins, a dog-walk on your own, the time it takes to drive to work, whatever it is. It doesn't matter when or how long, it really only matters that you make the time, and you keep the time for God to speak to you and for you to rest in his love. I am trying, and sometimes failing, to do exactly the same thing. A great adventure awaits us! I am looking forward to everything we have planned.

Yours in Christ,
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 Matthew

25.31-end

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)

Collect

Almighty God,
as your kingdom dawns,
turn us from the darkness of sin to the
light of holiness,
that we may be ready to meet you
in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Amen

A reading from Isaiah 26.1-6

On that day this song will be sung in the land of
Judah:

We have a strong city;
he sets up victory
like walls and bulwarks.

Open the gates,
so that the righteous nation that keeps faith
may enter in.

Those of steadfast mind you keep in peace—
in peace because they trust in you.

Trust in the Lord for ever,
for in the Lord God
you have an everlasting rock.

For he has brought low
the inhabitants of the height;
the lofty city he lays low.

He lays it low to the ground,
casts it to the dust.

The foot tramples it,
the feet of the poor,
the steps of the needy.

This is the word of the Lord.

THANKS BE TO GOD!

A reading from Psalms

118.18-27

18 The Lord has punished me sorely, ♦
but he has not given me over to death. [R]

19 Open to me the gates of righteousness, ♦
that I may enter and give thanks to the Lord.

20 This is the gate of the Lord; ♦
the righteous shall enter through it.

21 I will give thanks to you, for you have answered
me ♦ and have become my salvation.

22 The stone which the builders rejected ♦
has become the chief cornerstone.

23 This is the Lord's doing, ♦
and it is marvellous in our eyes.

24 This is the day that the Lord has made; ♦
we will rejoice and be glad in it.

25 Come, O Lord, and save us we pray. ♦
Come, Lord, send us now prosperity.

26 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord;
♦we bless you from the house of the Lord.

27 The Lord is God; he has given us light; ♦ link the
pilgrims with cords right to the horns of the altar.

This is the word of the Lord.

THANKS BE TO GOD!

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

7.21, 24-27

GLORY TO YOU, O LORD!

'Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord", will
enter the kingdom of heaven, but only one who
does the will of my Father in heaven.

'Everyone then who hears these words of mine and
acts on them will be like a wise man who built his
house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the
winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not
fall, because it had been founded on rock. And
everyone who hears these words of mine and does
not act on them will be like a foolish man who built
his house on sand. The rain fell, and the floods came,
and the winds blew and beat against that house,
and it fell—and great was its fall!'

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
Administrator/ Benefice Office:	Sue Bassett	01923 266596	SaintsKL2@tiscali.co.uk
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	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@fiscali.co.uk by noon on Wednesday and copy it to StMarysApsleyEnd@gmail.com.

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

Advent 'Faith and Hope' discussion group.

Wednesday 6th Dec, and 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!

Christmas Bazaar - 9th Dec 12-3pm

We still have spaces for more volunteers and are now asking for people to leaflet drop, bake cakes and be generally involved in this, our major fundraising event of the year. For leaflets please speak to Laura or Harry Graham-Brown or Sylvia Low.

Sponsorship for our organists



Our organist Peter Lipman 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.

Carols Outside Sainsburys

Saturday 16th December 1pm-2pm

In aid of DENS. Please come along and join the choir!!

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

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

Sun 3rd Dec Advent Sunday
Wed 6th Dec Faith and Hope Discussion Group 7pm
Sat 9th Dec St Mary's Bazaar
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

	3rd December	10th December
	9.30 Eucharist	9:30 Eucharist
Music	Peter Lipman	Bruce Boardman
Warden	Dan Shirley	Rosemary Bladon
Sides duty	Sylvia Low	Rosie Sutton
Welcomer	Roger & Angela Witts	Peter Bladon
Reading	Fiona Shirley	Katharine Harper
Intercessions	Katharine Harper	Sue Jakeman
Offertory	Thao Pham & Rosemary Bladon	Alfie Cacciapuoti & Ralph Henley
Chalice	Janet Wright	Katharine Harper
2nd Counter	Roger Witts	Jim Aylott
Refreshments	Jan & Trevor Wilson	Colin & Susan Rivett
Sunday School	Peter Bladon	Lilian Hepwood

Sue Bassett 01/12/2023