

# Welcome to St Mary's Apsley



and welcome to our service today

**19<sup>th</sup> November, 2023**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday before Advent (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  
3.00pm Messy Church

### Monday

10.00 - 12.00 Working Party  
7.00pm PCC Meeting  
8.00pm Bellringing practice

### Tuesday

9.30am Buzzy Bees in the Refectory

### 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

9.30am Fundraising Committee Meeting  
10.00 - 12.00 Saturday Community Café  
11.00am Special Bellringing  
4.00pm Special Bellringing

### Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> November

9.00am Bellringing  
9.30am Eucharist at St Mary's

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### Morning Prayer at St Benedict's:

Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday at 9.30am

### Evening Prayer at St Benedict's:

Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday at 5.30pm

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Dear Friends,

As I write, it is a dark, grey, cold day. The nights are fast drawing in and I am finding it harder and harder to get out of bed at the usual time in the morning (Coral does the morning dog walk for this reason exactly). Did you know, you might need 2 more hours of sleep per night during winter? Your body needs so much more rest and nourishment when it doesn't get as much Vitamin D from exposure to the sun. The dark and the cold, the tiredness, the news... all these might conspire to depress us. I am taking things back to basics and creating as much light and comfort as I can; I light candles all around the house, we light the fire, we plan nice things to off-set the difficulty and darkness. There is a reason that the festive season is usually a time of indulgence and nice things – nice food, parties, treats for children. It is all about survival of what R.S Thomas calls 'the long cold'.

Is any of this relevant to our faith? I love the realism of Christmas, the incarnation always finds a way to break through our busyness and stress and tiredness. The God who is coming amongst us was unplanned, un-prepared for, and not met with great fanfare or a perfect home. We can prepare as much as we want, but Jesus will always meet us in the after-thought, the crisis, the chaos, the worry, the shadowy edges of things. The Christmas we fantasise about is largely that, a fantasy, made up of bits of childhood memory and fable. Real Christmas happens amongst whatever is happening for us at the time – grief, fear, loneliness, poverty, anxiety, fatigue. It is amongst these realities that I want us to imagine our presence as a Christian community. We will be thinking about our mission action plan, our goals for the kind of church we want to be in this community, throughout Advent (which this year is only 3 weeks long!). Please do come to church ready to consider this question and to share your thoughts (we will start next week, on Christ the King, because I am actually away on Advent Sunday. If you don't like it, you will have to take it up with my Mother, and I don't fancy your chances...).

Yours in Christ  
Mother Alice

# Sunday's Collect and Readings (Year A)

## The Collect

Heavenly Father,  
whose blessed Son was revealed  
to destroy the works of the devil  
and to make us the children of God and heirs of  
eternal life:  
grant that we, having this hope,  
may purify ourselves even as he is pure;  
that when he shall appear in power and great  
glory we may be made like him in his eternal and  
glorious kingdom;  
where he is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

**Amen**

## A reading from the book of Zephaniah 1.7, 12-end

Be silent before the Lord God! For the day of  
the Lord is at hand; the Lord has prepared a  
sacrifice, he has consecrated his guests.  
At that time I will search Jerusalem with  
lamps, and I will punish the people who rest  
complacently on their dregs, those who say in  
their hearts, 'The Lord will not do good, nor will he  
do harm.'

Their wealth shall be plundered, and their houses  
laid waste.

Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit  
them; though they plant vineyards, they shall not  
drink wine from them.

The great day of the Lord is near, near and  
hastening fast; the sound of the day of  
the Lord is bitter, the warrior cries aloud there.  
That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress  
and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a  
day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and  
thick darkness, a day of trumpet blast and  
battle cry against the fortified cities and against  
the lofty battlements.

I will bring such distress upon people that they  
shall walk like the blind; because they have  
sinned against the Lord, their blood shall be  
poured out like dust, and their flesh like dung.  
Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to  
save them on the day of the Lord's wrath; in the  
fire of his passion the whole earth shall be  
consumed; for a full, a terrible end he will make of  
all the inhabitants of the earth.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God**

## A reading from the first Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians 5.1-11

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers  
and sisters, you do not need to have anything written  
to you. For you yourselves know very well that the day  
of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When  
they say, 'There is peace and security',  
then sudden destruction will come upon them, as  
labour pains come upon a pregnant woman, and  
there will be no escape! But you, beloved, are not in  
darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; for  
you are all children of light and children of the day;  
we are not of the night or of darkness. So then, let us  
not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake  
and be sober; for those who sleep sleep at night, and  
those who are drunk get drunk at night. But since we  
belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the  
breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the  
hope of salvation. For God has destined us not for  
wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord  
Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are  
awake or asleep we may live with him. Therefore  
encourage one another and build up each other, as  
indeed you are doing.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**THANKS BE TO GOD!**

## Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew 25.14-20

**GLORY TO YOU, O LORD!**

'For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned  
his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to  
one he gave five talents, to another two, to  
another one, to each according to his ability. Then  
he went away. The one who had received the five  
talents went off at once and traded with them,  
and made five more talents. In the same way, the  
one who had the two talents made two more  
talents. But the one who had received the one  
talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and  
hid his master's money. After a long time the  
master of those slaves came and settled accounts  
with them. Then the one who had received the five  
talents came forward, bringing five more talents,  
saying, "Master, you handed over to me five  
talents; see, I have made five more talents."

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**PRAISE TO YOU, O CHRIST!**

## Thursday's Collect and Readings (Year A)

### Collect

Creator and Father of eternity,  
whose martyr Clement bore witness with his blood  
to the love he proclaimed and the gospel that he  
preached:  
give us thankful hearts as we celebrate your  
faithfulness, revealed to us in the lives of your saints,  
and strengthen us in our pilgrimage as we follow  
your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

**Amen**

### A reading from Jeremiah 11.18-20

It was the Lord who made it known to me, and I  
knew; then you showed me their evil deeds.  
But I was like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter.  
And I did not know it was against me  
that they devised schemes, saying,  
'Let us destroy the tree with its fruit,  
let us cut him off from the land of the living,  
so that his name will no longer be remembered!'  
But you, O Lord of hosts, who judge righteously,  
who try the heart and the mind,  
let me see your retribution upon them,  
for to you I have committed my cause.  
This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God**

### Hebrews 11.32-12.2

And what more should I say? For time would fail me  
to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of  
David and Samuel and the prophets— who through  
faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice,  
obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions,  
quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the  
sword, won strength out of weakness, became  
mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women  
received their dead by resurrection. Others were  
tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to

obtain a better resurrection. Others suffered  
mocking and flogging, and even chains and  
imprisonment. They were stoned to death, they  
were sawn in two, they were killed by the sword;  
they went about in skins of sheep and goats,  
destitute, persecuted, tormented— of whom the  
world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts  
and mountains, and in caves and holes in the  
ground. Yet all these, though they were  
commended for their faith, did not receive what  
was promised, since God had provided something  
better so that they would not, without us, be  
made perfect.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a  
cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every  
weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us  
run with perseverance the race that is set before  
us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of  
our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set  
before him endured the cross, disregarding its  
shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of  
the throne of God.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God**

### Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew 16.24-27

#### Glory to you, O Lord

Then Jesus told his disciples, 'If any want to  
become my followers, let them deny themselves  
and take up their cross and follow me. For those  
who want to save their life will lose it, and those  
who lose their life for my sake will find it. For what  
will it profit them if they gain the whole world but  
forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for  
their life?

'For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in  
the glory of his Father, and then he will repay  
everyone for what has been done.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**PRAISE TO YOU, O CHRIST!**

### Contact Information

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<b>General Enquiries:</b>	Please contact the Benefice Office		Monday – Friday 9.00am – 12.30pm
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# Notices

Please send any input for next week to Sue in the Benefice office on [SaintsKL2@fiscali.co.uk](mailto:SaintsKL2@fiscali.co.uk) by noon on Wednesday and copy it to [StMarysApsleyEnd@gmail.com](mailto:StMarysApsleyEnd@gmail.com).

## Messy Church

Don't forget that Messy Church is today at 3pm. Come and join the fun!

## Advent 'Faith and Hope' discussion group.

Wednesday 29th Nov, 6th Dec, and 13th Dec, 7pm at the Vicarage. Festive snacks and drinks! More info in the notices at church.

## 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 will be 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.

## 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!

## 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](mailto:janet@apsleyend.co.uk). We could particularly do with sponsorship for Morning Prayer on Sunday 24th December at 9.30am.

## Carols Outside Sainsburys

**Saturday 16th December 1pm-2pm**

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

## 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 29th Nov	Faith and Hope Discussion Group 7pm
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 Church
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

	19th November	26th November
	9.30 Eucharist 3pm Messy Church	9.30 Eucharist
Music	Ian Hope	Ian Hope
Warden	Rosemary Bladon	Sylvia Low
Sides duty	Katharine Harper	Ann Wiggins
Welcomer	Dan Shirley	Viv Hagel
Reading	Melanie Henley	Joy West
Intercessions	Fiona Shirley	Viv Hagel
Offertory	Fiona Ellison & Melanie Henley	Joy West & Lilian Hepwood
Chalice	Susan Rivett	Rosemary Bladon
2nd Counter	Fiona Shirley	Trevor Wilson
Refreshments	Ann Wiggins & Sarah Barnard	Janet Wright & Joy West
Sunday School	No Sunday School	Hazel Pritchard

Sue Bassett 15/11/2023