

PRAYERS

Our thoughts and prayers are with everyone who has found themselves alone this Christmas and for everyone who has had to change their plans at the last minute. Please Lord, be with all those who are suffering, stay close to those who are ill, particularly those with Covid and walk beside all of us who are struggling to come to terms with tier 4 restrictions.

We remember all who ask for our prayers and those who are unwell. We particularly remember **Graham Webster, Nick Ward, Jennifer Morshead, Eileen, Sally Calvert, Nicky, Sandy, Ron Backhouse, Beryl, Mary Clarke, Douglas James, Win, Clare, Elizabeth, Finlay Relf, Richard Handforth** and all who are still very vulnerable and continuing to shield, including Zofia Golebiowska.

We pray for those who have died recently, particularly **Ian Rankin**. We pray for Barbara his widow and family that they might find support and comfort in this difficult time. We ask that you remember all those who are mourning and find Christmas especially difficult.

Christmas is a time of new beginnings and hope, in the midst of our worries about the pandemic, there are the first signs of a solution, take comfort from these words (Isaiah 41:10):

‘So do not fear, for I am with you;
do not be dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you and help you;
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

A last note from Revd Liz:

The other day I had to officiate at a rather sad funeral at Sherlock's chapel in Dorking. I was in the midst of trying to cope with all the stresses and strains of last week and thinking what to do for the best for everyone so feeling rather worn out! The undertakers played some accompanying music for the funeral service, one of which was Kings College Choir singing **Stephen Cleobury's Psalm 121 'I lift up my eyes to the hills'**. All I can say it was like having a shot to the arm listening to this beautiful psalm, acting like balm to my soul. I thoroughly recommend listening it or even reading it as a pick me up!

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Parish of Capel and Ockley

Christmas 2020

Welcome to your church



A saviour has been born to you
He is Christ the Lord. Alleluia!
Unto us a child is born,
unto us a Son is given. Alleluia!

Wishing you a very happy Christmas!

Welcome to this special Christmas newsheet which has been somewhat enlarged to try to help us all as we face a very different Christmas this year. It has been with great sadness and deliberation on my part that I and the PCC took the very difficult decision to cancel not only services last Sunday the 20th December but also services on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Sunday 27th December. As many of you know we have had a worrying outbreak of Covid in Capel and with the higher rate and speed of transmission with this mutated virus we felt it was wise to keep everyone safe and well.

Fortunately we already had planned and had recorded an online Christmas Day service which will be available on the website or via the links you will have been sent. Not only that but there is also a DVD being prepared of the service which we plan to distribute to those who don't have online access. On Christmas morning itself we are holding a special Christmas Zoom - again links will be given to you. Obviously we still won't be able to cover everyone with this but you will have these printed resources, the sermon I have given for Christmas and the knowledge that we are all in this together. All of us will be noticing the gaps at our Christmas tables for lots of different reasons so don't feel you are the only one experiencing this. We all have telephones so pick it up and ring someone for a chat and word of encouragement. There will be several completely on their own this year and I am sure they would love to hear a friendly voice.

So we have attached the set readings for the next few days and so we begin with Christmas Day which gives us that wonderful reading from John's gospel in which to begin to celebrate the mystery of Christ's incarnation. We contemplate the meaning of the life that came into the world to be our light and which could not be overcome by darkness and not even Covid! The first reading from Isaiah 52 has the prophet praising the bringer of peace and good news, who tells Zion "Your God reigns". All the ends of the earth will see God's salvation. The second reading from Hebrews 1 tells of how God.

spoke to our ancestors in many ways by the prophets and now God has spoken to us by his Son who is the exact reflection of God. The angels worship him and he sits at the right hand of God on high. The gospel of John describes Jesus as the pre-existing Word of God whose

life became the light of all people. The Word became incarnate and dwelt on earth among us. In our online service I use the Lucan version of the birth of Jesus and preach to that. There are different versions of the Christmas story in Matthew, Luke and today's John's version. We may have a favourite out of all these, but a single account cannot convey everything about an event as momentous as God's incarnation! What an extraordinary thing - God became a human being - this thought is enough to fill a whole lifetime of contemplation!! Talking of contemplation please do read the reflection we have included using a beautiful painting and words provided by a clergy friend of mine.

For the 27th December, the First Sunday of Christmas, Guildford Diocese has prepared a special all age online service available on our website. In the readings for this day we have another chance to join the shepherds on their journey to Bethlehem to see the child that has been born to Mary. We may wish to think on what his birth means for us this year particularly in light of this very difficult and strange year. The first reading from Isaiah again tells how Jerusalem will be vindicated and the prophet cannot keep silent until it comes to pass. God has clothed him with righteousness and will cause righteousness and praise to spring up. The second reading from the New Testament, the letter to the Galatians speaks of how God's Son came in the fullness of time. He was born of a woman and redeemed us so that we could be adopted into God's family and finally in Luke's gospel the shepherds go to Bethlehem and find Jesus lying in the manger, as the angels had told them. They return to the fields glorifying and praising God.

All of our Christmas readings show us how by God joining us on earth our future has been transformed. We know now that we are loved as children of God. Remember these things as we go through these days and enter what we hope will be a far better year for all of us. We have to make sacrifices now in order that we can enjoy future Christmases, meeting once again freely with family and friends and making lots of new wonderful memories. So I send you this with all my love in and through Christ, with my prayers and wish you all God's blessings, good health and happiness for 2021.

Rev'd Liz

Huge thanks to James Burt for all his help in filming and editing the online service for Christmas day and all those who appear in it. Your many hours of hard work have really paid off!

ONLINE RESOURCES FOR CHRISTMAS

Yes, this is like Christmas as we have never known it before. When we took the sad decision to cancel services for Christmas day we wanted to do as much as possible to engage our community in all the wonderful resources available to them. Below is just a sample of what's available, but first the two most important ones are:

Online Christmas Service: Recorded by Revd Liz with lots of help, this is available from Christmas day- a marvellous reminder of what Christmas is all about:

<https://youtu.be/MTdAViyTIX0>

For those who don't have access to the internet, we also have some DVD's of this service available which will be in the churches on Christmas Eve along with hard copies of this sheet.

Christmas Day Zoom coffee: We've never tried this before, but the PCC have set up a Zoom meeting on Christmas day for us all to join in and wish each other happy Christmas. The details are here:

Zoom: <https://bham-ac-uk.zoom.us/j/87637891737?pwd=OGhHVWVsenlxRMkyYm5FdUd2OUlwZz09>

Meeting ID: 876 3789 1737

Password: 25122020

Timings: Approximately 10am-10:45am [tune in any time in this window].

If you've never used Zoom before help will be on hand to help you log on.

Please phone us if you need help:

James: 01306 711671

Debbie: 07774 784008

Guildford diocese online service for Sunday 27th: The Bishops have produced an all age service for Sunday 27th. You can watch it by following the link here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YWnGKHIBExU&feature=emb_logo

Other Resources available:

Christmas Carols from the Chapel Royals at the Tower of London and Hampton Court Palace: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PUwJlrVuYV4>

Songs of Praise showing the nations favourite carol:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m000qpws/songs-of-praise-the-uks-favourite-carol>

For those who have no internet why not try the phone line **Daily Hope** 0800 804 8044 offering music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the C of E at the end of a telephone line.

For children there is a booklet '**it Begins in Bethlehem**' available in our churches.

Lastly, as light relief there is Capel & Ockley's **Open the Book's** very own nativity play – with a very grumpy Angel Gabriel!

<https://youtu.be/-lxjs1kKkxs>

The Friends of St Margaret's have received the most wonderful donation from the highly recognised American Children's Literature author and educator, Karen Gross of Washington DC. Karen's newly published book: "Lady Lucy's Dinosaur Quest" was to be launched at the Christmas service in Ockley and free copies given to all the children present. However, as the service has had to be cancelled, the author has kindly said that anyone who emails or contacts me (Debbie von Bergen - details on back page) may have a copy sent to their school library. There is also a lovely recording made by the author of her reading part of the book which can be found here: <https://youtu.be/rKEB4YaXb58>. Set in Surrey, with several references to Ockley Landmarks, the book has been beautifully designed and illustrated by local artists Dianne Sunda and Georgia Hamp.

