



St Nicolas Church, Cranleigh

WORSHIPPING AT HOME

Advent 4

Sunday 20th December 2020

WELCOME to our Worshipping at Home resources for this week, provided for us by The Rector, Canon Roy Woodhams.

URGENT UPDATE for safety reasons, we regret that **CAROLS IN THE CHURCHYARD IS CANCELLED.** However, as of the time of going to print, all Worship planned for Church is going ahead.

THIS WEEK (*Events in red will be online events*)

Sunday 20th December – Advent 4:

8.00: Holy Communion (CW).

10.00 (**Zoom**): Church at Home.

11.15 (**Zoom**): SEA Church (for young people)

(the Zoom joining code for both of these is ID: 148-785-166)

11.00: Holy Communion (CW). **In Church and Livestreamed**

From 15.00: Virtual Village Carol Service (Pre-recorded with our choir).

Tuesday 22nd December

12 noon: Holy Communion (1662)

Christmas Eve - Thursday 24th December

10am: Advent Reflection: 'Hope'

3pm onwards: Virtual Nativity **Streamed on our YouTube Channel (And available on Zoom to those who have pre-registered)**

11pm: Midnight Communion **In Church and Livestreamed**

Christmas Day - Friday 25th December

8.00: Holy Communion (BCP).

10.00 (Zoom): Church at Home.

(the Zoom joining code for both of these is ID: 148-785-166)

11.00: Holy Communion (CW). **In Church and Livestreamed**

Sunday 27th December (Christmas 1):

11.00: Holy Communion (CW). **In Church and Livestreamed**

ALL AGE WORSHIP for today is provided by Guildford Diocese

RULES AND REGULATIONS in connection with COVID-19 are changing fast at the moment – we will make every effort to keep you up to date with what’s happening!

If you know of anyone who does not have internet, and who would like a written communication from us each week, please email:

nicola@stnicolascranleigh.org.uk or call the Parish Office on 01483

273620. I am aware that this Christmas is going to be challenging and

difficult for many people, so please feel free to contact either Nicola, or

myself (roy@stnicolascranleigh.org.uk 01483 800655), if you have, or are

aware of, any particular pastoral or practical needs during this time.

ADVENT 4:

COLLECTS:

God our redeemer,

who prepared the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of your Son:

Grant that, as she looked for his coming as our savior,

so we may be ready to greet him when he comes to be our judge:

Who is alive and reigns with you,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Eternal God,
as Mary waited for the birth of your Son,
so we wait for his coming in glory;
Bring us through the birth pangs of
this present age to see, with her,
our great salvation in Jesus Christ our Lord.

FIRST READING: *Romans 16: 25-27.*

Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

GOSPEL READING: *Luke 1: 26-38.*

“This is what the Lord has done for me when he looked favourably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured among my people.”

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. And he came to her and said, “Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.” But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” Mary said to the angel, “How can this be,

since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

SERMON (written by The Rector, Canon Roy Woodhams):

The Fourth Sunday of Advent gives us an opportunity, in a church sense, to make our final preparation for Christmas – and we are given this lovely Gospel reading – Luke's account of the Annunciation - one of the 'great' passages of scripture!

What I am going to offer you this morning, is not so much a 'sermon' as a 'reflection' as we make this final preparation to receive, again, 'God with us'!

Mary was little more than a child herself – probably we are told, no more than 16. And Joseph was an ordinary working man. What a strange scenario, into which God sent his Holy Messiah!

And, so, I wonder what it must have been like for Mary, and for Joseph?

To help us to ponder that question, I am going to use two short meditations – the first is written as Joseph's thoughts as he works at his carpenter's bench, and responds in his heart to the strange news that Mary is to be the mother of God's child

(‘What Child is This?’ written by Jill Jenkins)

*‘An Angel came to me’, she said;
Glimmer of glory in the wrap of wings.
Greeting her gladly, with strange salutation,
That she, a virgin still, should bear a son.
‘The Son of God, she said.
What fantasy is this?
She is to be my wife – my cherished ornament
Close to my heart in love and honour bound.
What shame must sound from such a revelation –
Two families disgraced – the pain of pride – the bitterness of loss.
What can I say to her – that she is mad?
That witless she may wander through the world –
Yet, witless, innocence may still be hers?
How can I turn against my beloved
Whose brightness lies so breathless on my heart?
How can I brand her whore
Whose hand is in my hand while life may last?
What mystery is this, that she who is my wife,
Within her womb, carries creation’s child,
And brings to birth, the promise of God?
I cannot understand what work is here –
Yet as my fingers fashion at my trade,
I trust that all is well – I feel the tolls strike true,
And in the fall of shavings, glimpse a drift of wings.*

And the second Meditation is written as Mary’s thoughts as she as she awaits the birth of her child, and reflects on the journey that she is taking.

('Mary's Lament' by Margot Arturton)

*Who am I, that chosen I should travel now in pain
Through Darkness? That I should ride upon a simple beast
Along the journey of my travail,
Not knowing when or where my lying-in shall be?*

*It is cold, cold and bleak along the way –
And my exhausted body seeks some other comfort now.
But there is none, and no escaping this,
The final culmination of my time.*

*Who is this babe that he should rack me so
With pain upon his coming?
And no rest, no rest to succor me upon his arrival.
He comes with endless hardship!*

*But my child is all my hope – to me a simple child
Who waits dependently upon my sustenance,
For nourishment, by body, and by love.*

*So why this fear for him? Who is he then?
And why me, me to bring him forth?*

I wonder, will the world be kind to him?

*The mother in me fears some strange pre-sentiment of doom
For him, my unborn son – that endlessly the world
Unleashes venom on the innocent,
And tears them limb from limb
On small excuse or none.*

*What have I done to carry such a burden
In the hollow of my heart?
How do I keep him safe, knowing as I do
My love can offer scant protection from his fate?*

*How can I keep him safe?
I cannot!*

In the first meditation, Joseph comes through as an optimist – after questioning his situation, his dark thoughts turn to optimism, as he looks at the bright side of what is happening to them. In the second meditation, Mary is fearful, and her lament ends in concern for the future of the child she nurses!

I am more than ever aware this Christmas, as we live in these ‘COVID Times’, of the fear that is deep down in many people’s hearts – perhaps doo deep, even to voice! And this fear has only added to all the other fears and worries that people suffer, even in ‘normal’ times! And I am reminded, too, of the whole way that our world seems to be at odds with itself!

But God's story always leads us in hope and promise, and it always points us towards the message of Joy which is the theme of today. This is the message of Christmas and it's a message which goes on and on. Whatever happens in life, or however bad we might feel, there is always hope, there is always promise.

And that’s why we must continue to celebrate Christmas, this, and every year!

POST COMMUNION PRAYER:

Heavenly Father, who chose the Blessed Virgin Mary
to be the mother of the promised saviour:

Fill us your servants with your grace, that in all things we may embrace
your holy will and with her rejoice in your great salvation;
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

SEASONAL PROVISION (to be used at the Live-streamed Communion)

ADVENT CANDLE LITURGY

FOURTH WEEK OF ADVENT: Responding with Love

SCRIPTURE: Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit
rejoices in God my Saviour.”

LITANY:

Leader: Our response is “O God, we sing your praise.”

Leader: Few will sing your praises forever, O God, for your constant love
shown to your people! R

Leader: For the wonders you have done among us, we shout your name
all day long. R

Leader: We sing about the abundant grace of your mercy shown to all
generations! R

Leader: Our souls magnify you for the promise of joy and new life! R

Leader: We joyfully sing your praise for that gift of Love that came down
to earth on Christmas. R

(The fourth Advent Candle is lit)

PRAYER: God of the ages, like Mary, may our souls reflect your greatness and our spirits rejoice in you, for you have looked with favour on us and done marvellous things. May our lives be a response to the love you have shown us in Jesus, born of Mary, who lives forever and ever. Amen.

Invitation to Confession:

When the Lord comes,
he will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness,
and will disclose the purposes of the heart.
Therefore in the light of Christ let us confess our sins.

Introduction to the Peace:

In the tender mercy of our God,
the dayspring from on high shall break upon us,
to give light to those who dwell in darkness
and in the shadow of death
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Extended Preface:

It is indeed right and good to give you thanks and praise,
almighty God and everlasting Father,
through Jesus Christ your Son.
He is the one foretold by all the prophets,
Whom the Virgin Mother bore with love beyond all telling.
John the Baptist was his herald
and made him known when at last he came.
In his love Christ fills us with joy
As we prepare to celebrate his birth,
So that when he comes again he may find us watching in prayer,
Our hearts filled with wonder and praise.

And so with angels and archangels,
And with all the company of heaven,
We proclaim your glory,
And join their unending hymn of praise:

Blessing:

Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you,
scatter the darkness from before your path,
and make you ready to meet him when he comes in glory;
and the blessing

WEEKLY PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION:

Church and Christian Ministry:

- For our diocesan overseas links: the Church of Nigeria (Primate: The Most Revd Nicholas Okoh), the Diocese of Viborg, Denmark (Bishop: The Rt Revd Henrik Stubkjaer) and the Diocese of Sialkot, Pakistan (Bishop: The Rt Revd Alwin Samuel)
- For the overseas mission charities supported through the work of St Nicolas Church
- For all churches working to provide stimulating and creative worship resources both live and online this Christmas.

National and World Affairs:

- For our government, seeking to bring about a good Brexit solution.
- For those parts of our nation who are in stricter tiers, unable to see loved ones.
- For those whose role it is to administer the delivery of Covid vaccinations around the UK.

Community and Family:

- For those who live in The Mount
- For all who will be alone at Christmas.
- For all the businesses in our High Street, struggling as a result of COVID.

The Sick and those in Need:

- Jane Bloss, Ray Corver, Mike Ford, Stefan Godier, Stella Goldsmith, Michael Hart, George Hill, Amy and Dennis Loveless, Libby O'Brien, Brian Pettyfer, Jean Quallington, Jean Sandow, Jack Sieber, Bert and Eileen Steed, Maureen Steele, Dennis and Rosemary Talbot, Marion Tomkins, Mac Walker, Frances Webb, Darcy Wigfield, Angela Wild, Henry Young and Nicholas. *(and from Dunsfold and Hascombe: Amanda and Hugh, Tim Bailey, Michael Burt, Barbara Crabb, Sarah Godwin and John Davies, Norman Edsall, Matthew Maslin, William Mason, Sally Rivett, Sue Simper, Jacky Williams, Bill and Tracy Wood, Alli, Judy Bolt, Sue and Dennis Evans, Sheelagh Thomason, Lorna Thompson, Sami Bennewith)*

The Departed:

- All we have known and loved, and especially Kit Gibson *(and from Dunsfold and Hascombe: Ann Lilley, Dru Ridley, Roger Stiles)*

WEEKLY NOTICES:

Items with a blue heading are new or updated this week!

THE CHURCH OFFICE Will not be receiving calls and emails between Christmas and new Year.

NEW YEAR WALK Sadly we won't be able to have a New Year's Day walk and lunch this year. So, have a stroll and raise a glass to St Nicolas friends, on Friday 1 January. Happy New Year to us all!

A MESSAGE FROM MALCOLM KEEPING (CHURCHYARD TIDY UP)

Many thanks for the excellent work done by the energetic band who tidied up the churchyard last Saturday. All the expected tasks were completed for the first time in several years, so well done to all for working so hard. Thanks also to Sandra and Jackie who provided the refreshments **AND ADDED THANKS FROM THE RECTOR** Well done everybody – a fantastic turnout and a stalwart effort – the Churchyard looks amazing! Special thanks to Malcolm for organizing!

ST NICOLAS ADVENT CALENDAR Our 'virtual' Advent Calendar started on 1st December, on our the church website. You can see familiar faces and hear familiar carols along with beautiful pictures and verses to help you prepare for Christmas. There is something to be found for all ages as the days of December unfold! www.stnicolascranleigh.org.uk

COMING TO CHURCH Now that we are open again, we will be operating a more stringent entrance and exit routine to minimize the risk of passing on COVID-19. Please be prepared for this when you come to church, and please do not arrive more than 20 minutes before the due start time! **For the following services you will need to book a place in advance The cut off date for doing this will be 12noon on Tuesday 22nd December:**

24th December, 11pm 'Midnight' Communion

25th December, 8am Holy Communion

25th December, 11am Holy Communion

ADVENT REFLECTIONS There is one remaining Advent Reflection, with words and music to help us prepare for Christmas.

24th December at 10am: 'Hope' (presented by Revd Tim Clifford Hill)

CRANLEIGH LIONS: Do visit the newly established Cranleigh Lions weekly market stall, where you will find a wide selection of donated items that are being sold to raise funds to help those in need in our community. They have new additions every week and some great present ideas, ranging from Bird Boxes to Books and Bikes and Beyond!

TRAI DCRAFT: Sue Knight is offering Traidcraft goods for sale by appointment or would be willing to deliver to Cranleigh on receipt of an order. She will have catalogues or you can go on line at traidcraftshop.co.uk to see the whole range and if she has to order it in, this usually takes about a week. You can pay for any orders by BACS or she will accept cheques. Call Sue on 275032 or 07950 025137.

GIVING TO THE LIFE AND WORK OF ST NICOLAS CHURCH During this year of pandemic lockdown, St Nicolas Church has lost several large income streams – The Rectory Fete, Gift Day, income from the Church Rooms, and the casual gifts made by people who worship at and visit the church! One of the times that we get a lot of cash donations is from the thousands of people who pass through our doors at Christmas, and that is not going to happen this year.

During lockdown, the work we do has continued to thrive and even expand:

- Continuing to offer a vibrant and relevant programme of worship (on-line and in printed form, as well as continuing worship in Church when we have been able to
- Offering Pastoral Care of those who have not been able to get to Church

- Supporting those who have been bereaved or who are experiencing serious illness
- Engaging in a new way with young families and children, through the amazing on-line programme that Gabrielle has put on
- Engaging with Community Groups in supporting the vulnerable
- Being a beacon of hope, shining the light of Christ into a dark time

Our Finance Team have been working hard to restrict unnecessary expenditure, but setting the budget for 2021 has been very challenging, and the PCC have been forced to agree to a deficit budget! If you are someone who would normally donate through one of those streams, I do ask you to consider making a donation this Christmas to support the ongoing work of St Nicolas, as we move into another year, even if you are not able to be with us in person. Cheques should be made payable to 'Cranleigh PCC' and can be sent to our Treasurer via the Church Office, or you can contact the Office about other ways of giving electronically etc. And please don't forget to Gift Aid if you possibly can! This also gives me an opportunity to say a huge thank you to so many who have 'stepped up' to help us avoid making a big deficit in 2020!

We have also arranged for the ability to donate up to £20 via text message. For a one-off donation: Text the word **stnics** followed by a space, followed by the amount (up to £20) you wish to donate in numbers to 70470. e.g: Send '**stnics 10**' to 70470 for a one off donation of £10. After you have donated, you will receive an additional text message regarding gift aid, if you are able to, please follow the guidance in that message.

KEEP IN TOUCH:

The Rector - Revd Canon Roy Woodhams

(Day off: Monday)

Tel: 01483 800655. Email: roy@stnicolascranleigh.org.uk

The Curate - Revd Tim Clifford Hill

(Day off: Monday)

Tel: 01483 276267. Email: tim@stnicolascranleigh.org.uk

The Part time Curate - Revd Rutton Viccajee

(Works Wednesday, Friday, Sunday)

Tel: 01252 910212. Email: rutton@stnicolascranleigh.org.uk

Interim Administrator - Nicola Craven-Smith

(Works Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 9.30-2.30)

Tel: 01483 273620. Email: nicola@stnicolascranleigh.org.uk

Young People's Minister - Gabrielle Clarke

Tel: 07427 748408. Email: gabrielle@stnicolascranleigh.org.uk

Church Website: www.stnicolascranleigh.org.uk

and on Facebook.

NEXT WEEK'S RESOURCES will be prepared on Monday to send out to you, and will include Worship for Christmas, and for Sunday 27th December.