



St NICOLAS' CHURCH
ABINGDON-ON-THAMES

Sunday 20 December 2020

Fourth Sunday of Advent

2 Samuel 7.1-11,16

Canticle: Magnificat

Romans 16.25-27

Luke 1.26-38

Collect: 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 saviour, so we may be ready to greet him when he comes again as our judge; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Message from Fr Paul – Our Yes to God:

Dear Friends

It is wonderful that we can have a Service of Carols and Readings for Christmas at 11.15am today. In these days of upheaval, the service will of course be different, as congregational singing is not possible. We shall nevertheless worship with joy as we meditate on the mystery of the Incarnation.

The gospel reading set in the Lectionary today to be used at principal services – and which we shall hear at our Carol Service – is the well known narrative of the Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is a wonderful passage shot through with so much and at its climax is Mary's unequivocal 'Yes' to God. She makes this response despite the confusion, fear, and consequences of her obedience.

I wonder how Mary's response to God leaves us feeling? Do we believe that our 'Yes' to God was a 'one-off' event? Or do we believe that saying 'Yes' to God and all that means for his purpose and will for us is a daily commitment we need to make? Furthermore, it is perhaps good to reflect on the truth of God's 'Yes' to us. He invites us to say 'Yes' to him, of course. But his love for us is such that he constantly says 'Yes' to us. He takes us as we are, without conditions. Neither does he force himself upon us. He is always waiting. He is always ready for our 'Yes', because he has already said 'Yes' to us.

With love and blessings,

Fr Paul

CHURCH NEWS

All three churches in the Parish are now open for Sunday worship in line with Covid-19 restrictions within our own Tier 2 in this area. Details of Christmas Services across the parish will be on the church websites, but at **St Nicolas'**:

December 25: Christmas Day – 10am Holy Communion led by Bishop Henry Scriven

December 27: No Service at St Nicolas' but at St Helen's and St Michael's

January 3: 8am Holy Communion BCP, led by the Revd Dr Jane Baun

As before, worship takes place under Covid-19 regulations and members wishing to attend will have to book:

For St Nicolas:

❖ 8:00 am – Jan Lawrence jil129@live.co.uk or 01235 203144

❖ 11:15 am – Andrew Coker andrew.r.coker@gmail.com or 01235 539929

Please see the [website](#) for details of how to book for all three Churches in the Parish.

The **Parish Office** will be closed from Wednesday lunchtime, 23rd December, until Monday 4th January 2021.

Christmas and the New Year

This season creates love, joy and peace
Hopefully within our reach.

A time to come and pray

We can find our way.

Next year should bring cheer

Celebrating life to be here

Judith Hicks



Christmas Cards: if you would like to leave cards for congregation members at church, please place them on the Blacknall Memorial, from where they can also be collected. Thank you

Christmas Crib and Christingle – Christmas Eve On-line services this year! There will be a service on Zoom at 3.30pm on Christmas Eve which will be interactive and aimed more at younger children. To get the Zoom code for this please email AoT.Christingle@gmail.com before 24 December. There will be a second, recorded, service available on the website from 4.30pm which will be a fuller service (about 30 minutes). For further details see the St Helen's Church website. Christingle kits will be handed out from the West Porch at St Helen's Church, 1:30-3:30 pm each weekday 16 to -23 December also 10:30 am-12:30 pm on Saturday 19 December.

The Radio 4 book of the week Readings for the week after Christmas (28/12 – 1/1) will be from **John Barton's A History of the Bible.**

December Faith Forum: hear *The Revd Dr Emma Percy talk on Ministry and Motherhood:* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A2Vjzj6cn0Y&feature=youtu.be>

Watch and learn: Online courses from the Diocese for 2021 Spring courses from the Diocese are out now. These courses are for anyone with a passion to learn more about their faith, about God and our place in his world. Find out more: [Equipping for life](#)

COMMUNITY NEWS

Blue Christmas - a service from Trinity / All Saints for all those who find this time of year difficult and challenging - is now available from: <https://youtu.be/UYLUK0r9dPg>

The **Church-In-Abingdon Christian Aid Walk 2021** will be 'self-service' this year and can be done anytime *during January*, singly or in household/wider groups that must follow the COVID guidelines in place at the time the walk is completed. Visit 9 CiA churches to find a single letter [on a poster] at each church to make an anagram of a word connected with Christian Aid's Christmas Appeal. Sponsors are invited to make a donation via a Just Giving page. If you'd like to know more – please contact Eluned (see end). If you'd like to make a general donation to Christian Aid via the Abingdon group please use: <https://www.justgiving.com/team/Abingdon-Churches-OR838>

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

- That we may respond to God's call on us and his purpose for our lives;
- Those who are lonely or alone this Christmas;
- For the care homes in our parish, for all residents, families and staff at Bridge House and Old Station House, with whom we have special links;
- For the Ven Gavin Collins, Bishop-designate of Dorchester, his wife Christina, and their family;
- For all shops, restaurants and pubs in our town in this time of anxiety and uncertainty;
- For the homeless in our parish and beyond especially as Christmas approaches and for all agencies supporting them;
- All those in positions of authority or influence, especially for our Prime Minister and Government;
- All suffering in body, mind or spirit and those suffering, throughout the world, from the health, economic and political effects of the coronavirus.

WORSHIP & OTHER RESOURCES

The [Parish resources](#) page contains links to Sunday's Service at St Helen's, plus an archive of Parish resources.

The [St Nicolas' website](#) has recordings of our 11:15 am Services.

ONLINE: [Diocesan Church at Home](#) (Live-streamed). The order of service, together with links to view or listen to the service will be posted on the Diocesan [website](#) on Saturday.

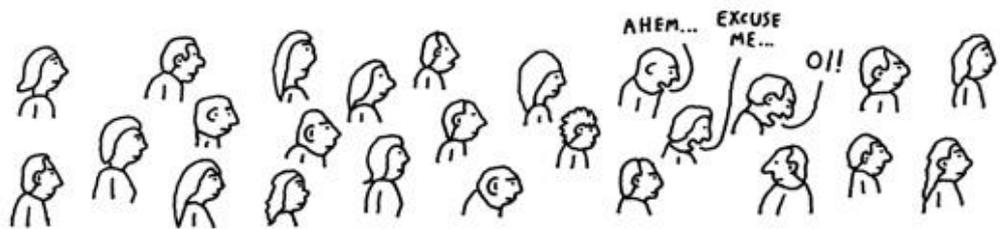
[Oxford Cathedral on-line services](#) (includes service booklets and sermons)

An archive of cathedral services and sermons is available on Soundcloud

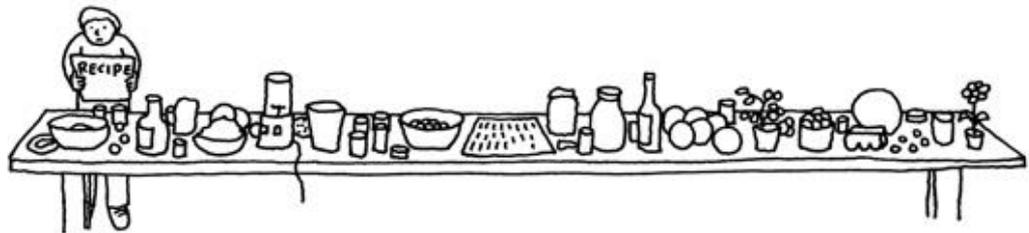
<https://soundcloud.com/user-867515242>

ADVENT

WE LOOK FORWARD



WE PREPARE



WE WAIT



CartoonChurch.com

Dave Walker, <https://cartoonchurch.com/>

CONTACT US

Team Rector	The Revd. Dr. C Miller	01235 520144
Team Vicar	The Revd. Paul Smith	01235 534654
Associate Priest	The Revd. Charles Masheder	01235 520959
Church Wardens	Mr Paul Rast-Lindsell	07876 277363
	Mr Andrew Coker	01235 539929
Parish Office	Mrs Jenny Balshaw	01235 520144
Website	https://www.stnicolasabingdon.org.uk/	
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/stnicolasabingdon	

Contact the Parish Administrator: leave a message on the office phone 01235 520144 or use the office mobile: 07395 943957 or administrator@sthelens-abingdon.org.uk

Please send any information for next week's pew slip to eluned@hallas.org.uk by Wednesday