

At the heart of Christmas



Advent 2021



Last Sunday was 'Stir Up Sunday'. By tradition the Sunday on which we are encouraged to stir up our Christmas pudding or cake mixture – and reflected in the Book of Common Prayer Collet: *'Stir up we beseech thee O Lord ... praying that we may bring forth the 'fruits of righteousness'.*

That is a good thought for us to hold in mind as we approach Advent – how can we stir up our life of faith over the coming 4 weeks so that we are ready to welcome the Christ, to celebrate what lies at the heart of Christmas.



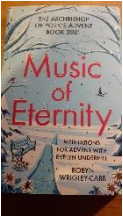
As we continue to journey through a time of uncertainty as we live with COVID we can still mark the Advent Season in some way. Perhaps as well as Advent Calendars or Candles at home you can make a commitment to give some time and space to God and to reflect of the coming of the light into the darkness and confusion of the world.

This leaflet contains a number of ways you can do this and we hope you may join us for some of them.



We will continue to follow the guidance we have put in place with regard to face coverings in Church, maintain some spaced out seating, respecting one another's space, how we administer communion.

We appreciate that for some these moves will not be enough while for other they may be challenging and unsettling. **Please do let the Ministry know your feelings and thoughts and we will be adapting and developing as we believe is best for the common good. Please continue to show the care and respect for each other- and our worship and love of God – that you have shown in such depth over the past months.**



Advent Book Club. There will be an opportunity once a week to meet on Zoom for an hour to explore a book with Revd Sam. The Book is the **'Music of Eternity' – meditations for advent with Evelyn Underhill.** If you would like to join please contact Revd Sam as soon as possible,

Fellowship Lunches These will meet **each Wednesday** in Advent (starting on Nov 30th) and they will include **a discussion on some of the themes in the book** led by one of the Ministry Team. This will be **after the Noon Mass** – please bring your own lunch.

The themes for each week are

- Advent 1 Welcoming God's coming
- Advent 2 Awaiting God's coming
- Advent 3 Recognising God's coming
- Advent 4 Embracing God's coming

Also through Advent **the rhythm of Parish life will continue** – giving you opportunities in Advent to pause and reflect on the presence of Christ with you in your lives.

Private Prayer and Public Worship

St Mary's is open each weekday (Monday to Friday) from 9am – Noon for Private Prayer

At **Noon** on **Monday, Wednesday and Friday** at **St Mary's** there is a **Eucharist** (which is also streamed).

In addition, on **Tuesday at 9.30am at St Faith's** and on **Thursday at 10.30am at St Wilfrid's** there will be a Eucharist (these will not be streamed)

There will be a **streamed reflection** around Noon on **Tuesdays and Thursdays.**

Sundays there will be services at

8am and 10am at St Mary's;

9am at St Faith's and 11am at St Wilfrid's.

Coffee and Chat

You can gather and catch up with others at **Coffee and Chat in St Mary's each Friday at 11am** - you could stay on at the end for the Noon service if you wish. There is also a chance for Coffee and Chat at St Faith's on a Tuesday and St Wilfrid's on a Thursday after the service.

Just Ask Saturdays 10 – 11am at St Mary's – a chance to come and explore arranging Weddings and Christenings or 'just ask' the clergy anything!



Comfort and Joy

We will again be supporting the Churches Homeless Action Voucher scheme. Can you give a Christmas card and a gift card/voucher (suggest £5) to share with one of the local charities supporting those on the margins? Sharing that precious gift of choice. To donate please place in the plate at Church or deliver to the Vicarage.

Christmas Hamper

As part of our support of the Hope into Action House and those who live there we are hoping to create a Christmas Hamper of things we would like. If you are attending an event or carol service in Advent why not bring an item of food (or something else) you would enjoy at Christmas to share with them.

Other events (at St Mary's unless otherwise stated)

Sun 28th Nov

Advent Sunday



11.30am Young Families gathering

and sending out of **the Posada** as it journeys from home to home till Christmas



6pm Advent Music and Readings

A beautiful service which traces the coming of the light into the darkness of the world

Weds Dec 1st

Noon Fellowship Lunch and discussion

Thurs Dec 2nd

7.30pm

Organ Recital – Joel Colyer

The final recital in the Organ Project series before the late Spring when we hope the Organ will be restored.

Fri Dec 3rd

6pm Fratton Big Local Awards

In partnership with Stephen Morgan MP we celebrate those who have served our community in the past year.

Sat Dec 4th



10am Messy Advent – a morning of craft and activities for all ages – come and make an Advent Wreath and other Advent items; help us prepare Christingles; pop in for a coffee or join us for a baked potato lunch at Noon. Please bring family and friends.

Sun Dec 5th



3pm News Carols and Christingle –

our annual celebration with Newbridge and Penhale Schools; a rep from Pompey FC; Chipper and the editor of the News,

Mon Dec 6th



7pm District Scouts Christingle

in the Churchyard – a change to our normal gathering in the Church!

Weds Dec 8th

Noon Fellowship lunch and discussion

1.30pm Interment of Deacon Ken's ashes
in the churchyard

Thurs Dec 9th

6.30pm Portsmouth Music Hub Concert

Fri Dec 10th



7.30pm Reindeer Drive at St Faith's

Come with your antlers and red noses and join the fun in raising funds for Christian Aid - £2.50 per person.

Sat Dec 11th



9am Prayer Breakfast

A chance to share a light breakfast and conversation as well as reflecting on our lives of prayer on Advent. Please let Father Bob know if you hope to be there.

7.30pm Portsmouth Choral Union Christmas Concert

Sun Dec 12th

2.30 and 5pm Barrells Memorial Services

If you can help us support Barrells and welcome those who are bereaved, please let Fr Bob know

Mon Dec 13th

7.30pm Julian Prayer Group at St Faith's

Tues Dec 14th

6pm Carol singing around the streets

of the Parish – come and help us remind people of what lies at the heart of Christmas



Weds Dec 15th

Noon Fellowship Lunch and discussion

2pm Can you come and help us **count and sort the Christmas Vouchers** for 'Comfort and Joy'

Thurs Dec 16th

**7.30pm Royal Marine School of Music
Christmas Concert**

Fri Dec 17th

Noon 'Comfort and Joy'

distribution of Christmas Vouchers

7pm Forever Together Memorial Service

Sat Dec 18th

11am Requiem Mass for Angela Carpenter
followed by the Interment of her ashes in the Churchyard

6pm Parish Christmas Quiz

– for details contact Revd Marcus

Sun Dec 19th 10am Fr Giles' 50th Anniversary of priesting There will be a Parish Mass (no services at St Wilfrid' s or St Faith's) to celebrate with Fr Giles.

**11.30am Young Families Gathering
6pm 9 Lessons and Carols –**

a very special service celebrating the Christmas Story in words and music

Mon Dec 20th 7pm Monday Men's Group at St Faith's

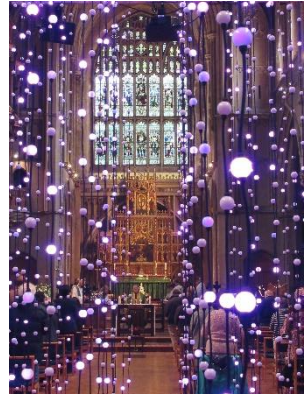
Weds Dec 22nd 9am St Mary's Church 'Deck the Halls' –
help us prepare and clean the Church for
Christmas
Noon Fellowship lunch and discussion

Details of Christmas Services will be published soon

Since our last newsletter we have heard of the deaths of 3 special ladies in the life of our Parish. Angela Carpenter, Elizabeth Gunter and Mary Dewey. Each of them was an example of a life of faith and commitment – and all were very much a part of our church community at St Mary's. Mary Dewey died most recently and we are awaiting details of the interment of her ashes – this will either be the 4th December or the 18th in the afternoon. Please contact us if you would like to know the date.

Also since the last newsletter St Mary's has hosted two major light installations. Both drew large numbers of people of all ages to explore them. All who visited were mesmerised and captivated by the two installations. There are some images on the next page for those who missed them. We very much hope that we will host further arts events in the coming year. Thank you to all who worked to serve refreshments at the 'Ship of Gods' – over 3 nights we served over 600 people and raised £860.

There will be an arts installation through Advent which will be a reflection on the experience of refugees – watch out for it as you enter St Mary's.



Finally, if you would like to make a donation to provide **flowers in our churches and help decorate them over Christmas** – either in memory of someone or in thanksgiving for something – then please place money in a clearly marked envelope before Dec 17th – or if you would like to pay by BACS contact us for details (and mark payment 'Flowers')

Thank you as always to all of you for your support, your care for one another and your prayers for us and all we do, If you are aware of anyone who needs a call from the Ministry Team or you would like them added to our prayer list then please let me know.

We hope that we will see you at some of our Advent activities and that we will together discover more of what lies at the heart of Christmas

Best wishes



Father Bob

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Revd Sue

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