

After Christmas...

After Christmas Day our churches will be closed during the week until Tuesday 5th January when the usual pattern will be resumed.

Wednesday Worship and Zoom chat will resume on 6th January.

We thank all those who have helped to keep our churches open, safe and clean over the past year.

The St George's Foodbank collection will resume on Saturday 2nd Jan from 10am—2pm. Please use supermarket collection points until then. Thank you for your ongoing generosity.

Notices

CTNA is providing Christmas Dinners for those who will be on their own (delivered to your home). This replaces the Christmas Day at St George's Church this year. Orders are still being taken please phone Joanna Abraham on 07828244119.

Coming Soon...

For details of all the planned Christmas services and celebrations across the Benefice, go to our website (being updated regularly with new information) www.stg-stj.org.uk/christmas-2020/

Key contacts

Vicar of Benefice

Revd Becky Bevan 01635 524994
bbevan.vicar@stg-stj.org.uk *Day off Monday*

Associate Vicar

Revd Gary Collins 07986 901879
gary@st-john-newbury.org.uk *Day off Monday*

Associate Priest—St George's

Revd Terry Winrow 01635 45380
terry-winrow@st-george-newbury.org.uk

Curate

Revd Julie Howell 01635 228968
jhowell.curate@stg-stj.org.uk *Day off Monday*

Benefice Office Manager

Alex Brown 01635 41249
alex.brown@stg-stj.org.uk *day off Monday*

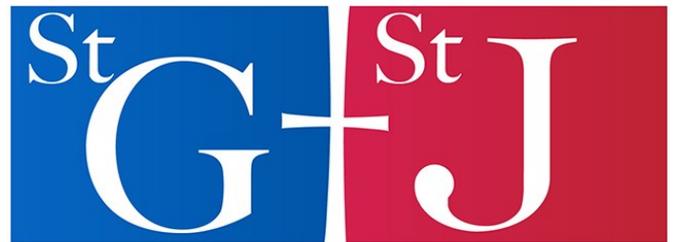
Churchwardens

St John's David Oats, Alison Foulkes
churchwarden@st-john-newbury.org.uk

St George's Rita Gardner, John Huckle
churchwardens@st-george-newbury.org.uk

Website www.stg-stj.org.uk

Facebook facebook.com/stjohnnewbury
facebook.com/StGeorgesNewbury



Newbury, St George & St John

20th December 2020
Fourth Sunday of Advent

We enter the final week of Advent and stand with Mary on the threshold of Christmas filled with wonder and awe at God's love reaching out to us, coming down to meet us in our need and our longing. We stand with Mary anticipating the birth of a child and knowing what a risky business it is to love like a mother. We stand with Mary and contemplate our response to this love, and sing with her of the lowly being lifted up, the hungry being filled with good things, of God's promises of justice and mercy being fulfilled. 'Let it be' says Mary ... And as we make our journey to Bethlehem this week we wonder how we too can be, in the words of Meister Eckhart, 'mothers of God'.

May Christmas in this difficult year bring surprising joys and blessings as we welcome the Christ-child.

Sunday Worship in Church

**Services for the fourth Sunday of Advent -
9am and 11am at St George's Church
9.30am at St John's Church**

The usual restrictions apply—face masks must be worn and social distancing observed.

Remember to let the Office know if you plan to attend a service.

Sunday and Christmas Worship Online

Benefice Communion streamed on YouTube:

Service of Benefice Holy Communion (pre-recorded)
<http://tiny.cc/stg-stj>

Or go to the benefice website and click the link
www.stg-stj.org.uk

Online services for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day
Crib service available to view from 4pm
Midnight Mass available to view from 8.30pm
Christmas morning available to view from 11am

In need of help?

If you need a listening ear, or a have a prayer request contact the clergy on the numbers overleaf.

Readings for Sunday, 20th December 2020

The Collect

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.

Amen

First Reading: 2 Samuel 7. 1-11, 16

Now when the king was settled in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, 'See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent.' Nathan said to the king, 'Go, do all that you have in mind; for the Lord is with you.'

But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the Lord: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not built me a house of cedar?' Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the Lord of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure for ever before me; your throne shall be established for ever.

The Gospel: Luke 1. 26 - 38

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.

Gospel cont.

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 for ever, 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.

Post Communion

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 salvation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prayers for the week

Prayer is at the heart of everything we do. The Weekly Prayer Diary that is sent out by email with this newsletter includes prayers for named individuals, together with prayer intentions for the week for our benefice, the local community and the wider world. Names can be added by contacting clergy or the Office but please note that this must be done with the permission of the named person.

The full monthly cycle of prayer can be found on the website.

Upcoming services this week

Holy Communion	2.30pm	Tues 22 nd	St George
Morning Prayer	8.50am	Wed 23 rd	St George
See separate listing for Christmas services.			
Sunday Worship 27th	9.30am	St John	
	11am	St George	

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