

In & around the Benefice....

13th December | Third Sunday of Advent

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www.yardleyhastingsbenefice.co.uk



New Benefice Twitter account: If you are on Twitter, please follow us [@BeneficeYardley](https://twitter.com/BeneficeYardley) and keep in touch with the photography challenge and other events around the benefice.

Worship in our churches today - 10.00am Holy Communion at St Margaret's, Denton

Benefice Zoom Service - This Sunday Rev'd Amanda will be taking our service. The details to join are:

Topic: Benefice Service 13th December

Time: Dec 13, 2020 10:00 AM London

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85287580554?pwd=YkJKYk5XMWVjbmtpMDVvT1BBa2JyQT09>

Meeting ID: 852 8758 0554

Passcode: 876736

Zoom Christingles - today at 4.00pm. Joining details have been sent to those who registered

Daily Prayer

Rev Morna says Morning Prayer in our Benefice at 8:30am and Evening Prayer at 4:30pm on Sunday to Thursday. If you would like to join in with these Daily Offices, please text Rev Morna on 07526 236030 at least 10 minutes before to receive a Zoom link.

Tea and Theology - Tuesday 15th at 3.00pm

We meet for an informal chat on Zoom about the advent photography challenge. All are welcome! Please email me photos for us to talk about and we can also look at some of the photos that have been on Twitter and Facebook. We plan to meet every Tuesday at 3pm, do join us if you can, bring a cuppa and pets are always welcome! Liz. (liztyardley@aol.com)

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81531725074?pwd=R1RMZ3pMbHk2bWZrUTdKVmZONeY3dz09>

Meeting ID: 815 3172 5074

Passcode: 463925

Midweek Eucharist - Wednesday 16th December, 9.30am at St Mary's Grendon

Doorstep Carols - Wednesday 16th December at 6.00pm, BBC Radio Northampton will be broadcasting Christmas Carols for us to sing along to on our doorsteps - Let's join in with this marvellous community act and remind ourselves of how it feels to join together in song. Download a song-sheet here:

https://www.doorstepcarols.co.uk/Documents/Words-Nov-20_compressed.pdf

Blue Christmas Zoom - Saturday 19th December 5.00pm

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82030886311?pwd=THFyNXN1azZKMxhQUFpnd0VncTFXZz09>

Meeting ID: 820 3088 6311

Passcode: 337545

Next Sunday, 20th December:

8am Holy Communion at St Mary the Virgin, Whiston

10am Holy Communion at St Mary's, Grendon

5pm Benefice 5 Lessons and Carols by ZOOM

I had the very great privilege of being the only 'guest' at Grendon C of E Primary School carol service earlier in the week. This beautiful service happened outside in the grounds of Grendon Hall and marked the first time that the whole school had been together in the same place, at the same time, since lockdown was announced in March. It was truly special. The pupils had each made wonderful lanterns to carry with them and light the way as darkness fell. My role was to draw together the Christmas message from the songs they performed and the readings we heard. As I stood before them, all holding their lanterns with great excitement, and looked beyond them to the walls which held us all in that space, over which their beautiful voices carried out into the darkness, I was struck by their symbolic similarity with John the Baptist. Here, in our benefice, from the metaphorical wilderness of these last months and the literal darkness of the night these voices sang out into the wilderness, bringing much joy - no doubt - to any parents who may have been able to hear, or passers by. John the Baptist described himself as "the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord!" The pupils were doing exactly that, except *singing* into the wilderness, and asking us to prepare the ground for the coming of Christ. So let us do as they asked, and as John the Baptist said before them - let us prepare our hearts and minds, and homes to receive Christ - our light that shines in the darkness!

Every Blessing, Morna

Please hold in your prayers this week:

- Each of our villages as we make sense of new regulations
- Pubs and other businesses in our area who may be finding these times very difficult
- The schools in our benefice:
 - * Grendon C of E Primary School with John Wayland their Headteacher and Charlotte French their Deputy Head, the staff and pupils
 - * Denton Primary School with Louise Brown their Headteacher, the staff and pupils
 - * Yardley Hastings Primary School with Louise Brown their Headteacher, the staff and pupils
- Those areas in the Midlands and the North of England who find themselves in Tier 3
- Businesses and those who are struggling to make ends meet
- The health and well-being of our nation, all who are fearful and anxious
- Those who are suffering from or affected by the COVID-19
- Those who are suffering with non-COVID-19 related illnesses, and are afraid to seek help
- NHS staff caring for COVID-19 patients, that they may have strength and resilience
- Those living in North Korea, who are not free to make their own decisions
- Those who are in residential care or housebound, among them: Audrey Desborough, Ruth Williams, Gwen York, Ann and Colin Dix
- Those struggling in body, mind or spirit, among them: Jane Cave, Tom Stock, Nicholas Vaughan, Freddie Hogan, Mandy Bates, Muriel Coulson, Malc Wright
- The recently departed, amongst them Avril Chick and Norma Knight, and all who grieve at this time

If you are looking for some activities for your children / grandchildren as we continue our journey through advent towards Christmas, visit our advent website. Each day has ideas and activities to try at home:

<https://sites.google.com/view/yardleyhastingsbenefice>



This advent, why not try taking a photograph each day with the word for each day to inspire you?

If you are on social media you could post them each day.

If not, keep them and bring them to 'Tea and Theology' to talk about.

Please do email Liz or Rev Morna with particular photographs which have inspired you!

Thank you to all those who have already entered into the spirit of this challenge and shared photos, please keep them coming!

The Collect

God for whom we watch and wait, you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way of your Son: give us courage to speak the truth, to hunger for justice, and to suffer for the cause of right, with Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

First Reading

Isaiah 61: 1-4, 8-11

The servant of the Lord said:

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.

They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory. They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

For I the Lord love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed.

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading

1 Thessalonians 5: 16-24

My brothers and sisters, Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading

John 1: 6-8, 19-28

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord**

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?'

He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, 'I am not the Messiah.'

And they asked him, 'What then? Are you Elijah?'

He said, 'I am not.' 'Are you the prophet?'

He answered, 'No.'

Then they said to him, 'Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?'

He said, 'I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord" ', as the prophet Isaiah said.

Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.

They asked him, 'Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?'

John answered them, 'I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.'

This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Post Communion Prayer

We give you thanks, O Lord, for these heavenly gifts; kindle in us the fire of your Spirit that when your Christ comes again we may shine as lights before his face; who is alive and reigns now and for ever.

Amen