

# *In & around the Benefice....*

*20th December | Fourth Sunday of Advent*

Our Rector is The Reverend Morna Simpson  
Tel: 01604 319902; Email: revmorna@gmail.com  
Our Associate Priest is The Reverend Janet Tebby  
Tel: 01933 384628; Email: jtebby@gmail.com  
Our Curate is The Reverend Amanda Oliver  
Tel: 01604 983003; Email: yhbcurate@gmail.com  
Our Benefice Reader is Liz Taylor, Email: liztyardley@aol.com

[www.yardleyhastingsbenefice.co.uk](http://www.yardleyhastingsbenefice.co.uk)



**New Benefice Twitter account:** If you are on Twitter, please follow us **@BeneficeYardley** and keep in touch with the photography challenge and other events around the benefice.

***“Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.”***

I'm not sure about you, but I'm fairly confident that an angel has not showed up, unexpected or otherwise, around me and greeted me in this way. Our gospel passage for Sunday often draws my attention to the number of times I have read aspects of the Bible, but it has not touched me - by that, I think I mean the magnitude of what I am reading has not become apparent to me. I notice that in the way I read the news also - it can be as if I have been de-sensitised to it.

On the fourth Sunday of Advent we focus on Mary, having looked at the Patriarchs, or fathers of our faith, on the first Sunday, the prophets on the second and John the Baptist on the third Sunday. Mary was likely to have been around fourteen years old. This probably meant she still lived with her parents. She was betrothed, but not married. If she was known to be pregnant before she was married, that would have brought great shame on her and her family...how much more meaningful these few facts make her response:

***“Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.”***

Do we have the courage to respond in this way?

*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 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 Christopher Burrige, and all who grieve at this time including Christopher's parents (Russell and Elaine), Auntie (Nicky Wye) and cousins (Daniel, James and Dominique)

**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

There will be a chance to chat and have some fellowship or support after the blue Christmas service. If you feel you'd like support or the chance to chat after the service please exit the blue Christmas service once it has finished and follow the zoom link below. *Liz and Morna.*

Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89589806265?pwd=Y20wUWRXbEswRUU0M2htbUZvbEVnZz09>

Meeting ID: 895 8980 6265, Passcode: 777014

**SUNDAY WORSHIP - 20th December**

**services in our churches** 8.00 am Holy Communion at St Mary the Virgin, Whiston  
10.00 am Holy Communion at St Mary's, Grendon

**Benefice Zoom Service** 10.00 am <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89019542716> Meeting ID: 890 1954 2716

**Benefice Carol Service** 5.00 pm

If you would like to watch the Five Lessons and Carols socially with a mince pie and sherry, this is the Zoom link for a 5pm start - I look forward to seeing you there:

Join Zoom Meeting : <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89018538358?pwd=ZXpKMjJSRUITSkFCMFhIOGtWS3dBZz09>

Meeting ID: 890 1853 8358, Passcode: 533817

**Daily Prayer**

Rev Morna says Morning Prayer in our Benefice at 8:30am and Evening Prayer at 4:30pm on **Tuesday to Thursday** only this week. If you would like to join in with these Daily Offices, please email Rev Morna on [revmorna@gmail.com](mailto:revmorna@gmail.com) at least 10 minutes before to receive a Zoom link.

**\*Please note: There will no daily prayer after Thursday 24th December until it resumes on 11th January\***

**Tea and Theology** - Tuesday 22nd at 3.00pm

All are welcome to chat about the advent photography challenge, bring a cup of tea and pets are always welcome!

Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86826637830?pwd=bmxUbK5Rc05DZWswcWNGTHVERnI0QT09>

Meeting ID: 868 2663 7830

Passcode: 820155

**Midweek Eucharist** - Wednesday 23rd December, 9.30am at St Mary's Grendon

**CHRISTMAS SERVICES**

There have been a few changes to our Christmas services as follows:

**Christmas Eve**

**8.30 pm** Bethlehem Midnight Communion St Margaret's, Denton (Rev Morna)  
11.30 pm Midnight Communion St Andrew's Yardley Hastings (Rev Morna)

**Christmas Day**

**8.30 am** BCP Holy Communion St Mary the Virgin, Whiston (Rev Janet)  
10.00 am Holy Communion St Mary Magdalene, Castle Ashby (Rev Morna)  
10.00 am Holy Communion St Mary's, Grendon (Rev Janet)

*If you want to find a little oasis of calm, or aren't able to get to a Christmas midnight or Christmas morning service, you might like to join the Christmas Eve Holy Space service on Zoom. We will be taking time out to hear the Christmas story, to listen to music and poetry, to pray and think on the coming of Christ.*

*Arm yourself with a candle or tea light and set aside a half hour from 6pm.*

The link is:

**Christmas Eve Holy Space**

Time: Dec 24, 2020 06:00 PM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83616281785> Meeting ID: 836 1628 1785

**Christmas Day zoom**

Dec 25, 2020 10:00 AM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89208812317?pwd=V2I4QUxSeHFuTVhJMitDMFo0bm1nUT09>

Meeting ID: 892 0881 2317, Passcode: 949884

**Sunday 27th December at 10.00 am - United Benefice Service on zoom**

There will only be a service online on Sunday 27th and we will be joining with Derek and the URC congregation for a united service.

Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82233625149?pwd=ZUK0djV0SnJ0MkJK6M2d5dE0xRzhrdz09>

Meeting ID: 822 3362 5149 Passcode: 992944

## 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 David, 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.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Second Reading

*Romans 16: 25- 27*

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 for ever! Amen.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Gospel Reading

*Luke 1: 26-38*

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

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 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.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## 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 salvation;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**