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The Online Link -Christmas Edition St. John's Hillingdon



Christmas Edition

No. 135 Sunday 17th December 2023- Saturday 13th January 2024

Registered Charity 1128058

Alan & Anne Bradford would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas. God's blessings to you all for 2024!

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Your Sunday Service Link (10.30 am):

Click on the church image above to join our
10:30am service on zoom from Sunday 10am

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89481452808>

St. John's Church, Royal Lane, Uxbridge
UB8 3QP. www.stjohnshillingdon.org.uk

Church Administrator: Nikki Bell

Email stjohnshillingdon@gmail.com

Text/Phone 07972 618584

Vicar: Alan Bradford

Email: abradford@hotmail.co.uk

Emergencies Text/Phone: 07847 672599

Church Wardens:

Rick Williams Phone 01895 232 888

Roy Munday Text/Phone 07711 278498

Safeguarding Officer: Richard Bell

Email: info@shieldsmore.co.uk

Text/Phone: 07934 871538



Alan's Blog

Christmas is good news for all!

For many children Christmas is good news. It means parties at school and parties at church, parties with friends and also parties with family for those that are fortunate enough to have a family. It means lots to eat, games to play and TV to watch. It means a holiday from school after a long and tiring term. Christmas also means presents: presents in a stocking and presents around a tree, presents from Father Christmas and presents from parents. And, of course, Christmas means nativity plays, trips to the theatre and to the cinema.

Christmas is good news for adults too. We also enjoy parties, time-off, presents, being able to 'flop' and maybe watch a film or two, some of which we may have seen many times before! We love the special foods that go with Christmas, the lighting of candles and singing or listening to carols, and above all being together with family and friends, if we have such members still around and living not too far away.

Of course, Christmas is not good news for everybody. Christmas for many is a time of sadness and pain. Christmas is not good news for those who can't get a job, or who are facing redundancy. It isn't good news for families where coming together brings up all the old tensions or feuds. Christmas isn't good news for those who have lost loved ones in the year that has gone by. Neither is Christmas good news for those who have gone through the pain of marriage breakdown, and where mothers and fathers are without their children. Yes, Christmas can be bad news; it can be the time when the pain of living can be potentially worse. The very fact that Christmas is meant to be a time of being happy and jolly can make our unhappiness worse. We might feel we are missing out and we can feel lonely.

But the good news is that precisely for those for whom Christmas is bad news, it is in fact good news! For Jesus has come into our loneliness and pain – and we can let Him do that for us personally. The Word, that is Jesus, became flesh and he shared our humanity, our flesh and blood. He entered our world and has shared our human condition. He knows what it is like to be lonely, depressed and troubled in heart. He knows what it is like to be misunderstood by family and friends. He knows what it is to experience physical pain, emotional pain, mental pain, and even spiritual pain. He knows, and in his knowing he understands. And because he knows and understands he can offer help and strength to those for whom life seems dark and bleak. God is very approachable, not unapproachable. He does not live in some ivory tower remote from human experience. For Jesus is there for us sitting at God's right hand. He intercedes for us. He is a Jesus who feels for us, who wants to be with us and comfort us. As a result of this, let us go to Jesus and approach him in confidence so that he can comfort us.

"Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need." Hebrews 4:16

This is good news for the lonely and the weak, for those for whom life is a struggle. Life does not have to be lived in our own strength. For the Jesus who came is the Jesus who is ready and waiting to give help to us all. Whatever you are all feeling, and whatever you are going through, may God give you a deeper joy this Christmas as you turn to him.

In God's amazing love, Alan



3rd Sunday of Advent Sunday 17th December

Advent 3: John the Baptist

Blessed are you, sovereign Lord, just and true: to you be praise and glory forever. Your prophet John the Baptist was witness to the truth as a burning and shining light. May we your servants rejoice in his light, and so be led to witness to him who is the Lord of our coming kingdom, Jesus our Saviour and King of the ages.

Blessed be God for ever.





Fourth Sunday of Advent Sunday 24th December

Advent 4: The Virgin Mary

Blessed are you, sovereign Lord, merciful and gentle: to you be praise and glory forever. Your light has shone in our darkened world through the child-bearing of blessed Mary; grant that we who have seen your glory may daily be renewed in your image and prepared like her for the coming of your Son, who is the Lord and Saviour of all.

Blessed be God for ever.



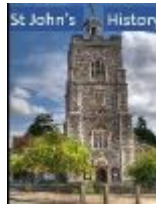
Christmas Day

Light a candle for Christ our Saviour

Christmas Day: Jesus Christ

God our Father, today the Saviour is born and those who live in darkness are seeing a great light. Help us, who greet the birth of Christ with joy, to live in the light of your Son and to share the good news of your love. We ask this through Jesus Christ, the light who has come into the world.

Blessed be God for ever.



The Heming Dynasty

A memorial plaque next to the organ in St John's leads us into the story of the Heming family covering several generations represented by 7 memorial plaques dotted around St John's and one family vault outside in the churchyard.

Ken Pearce has kindly provided me with a family tree for the Hemings which has been very helpful.

The first Heming to settle in Hillingdon was Thomas Heming. He was a royal Goldsmith, and in fact one of our 17th century chalice's was repaired by him in 1780. Thomas Heming died in 1801 and his memorial is in the South Aisle. Nearby is a memorial to Thomas's son George and his wife Ann.

In the south transept the stained glass window was dedicated to the memory of Richard and Harriett Heming and their son Thomas.

Richard was the brother of Thomas mentioned above, his gravestone is in the south aisle near the café area but it is very badly worn and so the inscription cannot be read.

Also remembered on a brass plaque in the south transept are the 5 daughters of Richard and Harriett: Mary Ann, Harriett, Eleanor, Henrietta and Ann. Outside in the churchyard just the other side of the south aisle wall is where they are buried. I am particularly fond of this gravestone, the inscription is carved beautifully and snowdrops bloom around it every year in early spring, which are such a joy to see.

A plaque next to it tells us that the organ was purchased in memory of John Garratt. He married into the Heming family who lived at the Manor House (where The Crossway is now). John Garratt's wife Ann (daughter of Richard and Harriett) has her own memorial plaque in the South Aisle near to other members of her family. John and Ann lived at Bishop's Court in Devon. Their son Lt Colonel John Arthur Thomas Garratt inherited the Heming wealth and became the principal landowner in Hillingdon. He was married to Georgina De Salis. In the nave aisle there is a monument to Mary wife of the first Thomas Heming and it bears this motto in latin which translates as "either do it perfectly or do not attempt it at all" I'm not sure I agree with this sentiment, and I think my motto would be "the most important thing is that you do your best". What would your motto be?

Christine Bartlett





Reading for Sunday 31st December 2023

Theme: Praise The Lord

Reading: Psalm 148

- 1 Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise him in the heights above.
- 2 Praise him, all his angels, praise him, all his heavenly hosts.
- 3 Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars.
- 4 Praise him, you highest heavens and you waters above the skies.
- 5 Let them praise the name of the Lord, for he commanded and they were created.
- 6 He set them in place for ever and ever; he gave a decree that will never pass away.
- 7 Praise the Lord from the earth, you great sea creatures and all ocean depths,
- 8 lightning and hail, snow and clouds, stormy winds that do his bidding,
- 9 you mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars,
- 10 wild animals and all cattle, small creatures and flying birds,
- 11 kings of the earth and all nations, you princes and all rulers on earth,
- 12 young men and maidens, old men and children.
- 13 Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted; his splendour is above the earth and the heavens.
- 14 He has raised up for his people a horn, the praise of all his saints, of Israel, the people close to his heart. Praise the Lord.

Reading for Sunday 7th January 2024

Theme: Epiphany

Reading: Isaiah 60:1-6 & Matthew 2:1-12

- 60 "Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you.
- 2 See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you.
- 3 Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.
- 4 "Lift up your eyes and look about you: All assemble and come to you; your sons come from afar, and your daughters are carried on the arm.
- 5 Then you will look and be radiant, your heart will throb and swell with joy; the wealth on the seas will be brought to you, to you the riches of the nations will come.
- 6 Herds of camels will cover your land, young camels of Midian and Ephah. And all from Sheba will come, bearing gold and incense and proclaiming the praise of the Lord.

2 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem

2 and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."

3 When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him.

4 When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born.

5 "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

6 " 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.' "

7 Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared.

8 He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

9 After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.

10 When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.

11 On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh.

12 And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.



The great Festival of Christmas is drawing near and we are busy preparing for it
 – choosing presents, writing cards, planning get-togethers, buying food
 – so much has become an accepted part of this season. In all the bustle we can
 so easily forget the most important thing of all – thanking you and responding
 to the most important gift of all – your Son.

We could also remember that You called the universe into being, heaven and
 earth, night and day, the sea and the land, life in all its manifestations. You
 spoke and it was done, our world and very existence owing to you.

We therefore thank you Lord for the resources of the world, and for the many
 goods available to us. Grant us wisdom to restrain in our spending and
 consumption. Grant us inspiration in the re-use and recycling of resources.

We ask your blessing Lord on all those who collect our waste and all those
 who work to recycle it.

In Jesus name

Amen



Please include in your prayers;

For all those Living in fear, suffering, injured, bereaved, displaced, caught up in tragedy and
 disaster around the world.

For Ken Hogg and the family and friends of our lovely Brenda who went to be with God on
 Thursday 14th December

Brenda's service will take place at St John's on Friday 12th January at 12:15pm.

For those that are in need Beryl Rowles, Marigold Marsh, Bill White, Gervase Craven, Amer Peters and his family, Joyce & Hughie Marshall.

NOTICES



Sunday 3rd December 10:30am- Advent Sunday.

Sunday 10th December 4pm - Carols for All. (There will be no other services on this day)

Friday 15th December 10am 'Let's Go' Under 5's and care giver fun.(Booking required)

Sunday 17th December 10:30am Journey to Christmas.

Friday 22nd December 6:30pm Christingle Making.

Sunday 24th December: 3:30pm & 5:30pm Christingle Service.

11:30pm Midnight Holy Communion.

Monday 25th December 10:30 Christmas Day Service.

Other events will be taking place over Christmas please do look out for them in the Link or on posters in church.



On Monday 11th December some of the knitting ladies took some much needed knitted/crocheted goods to Hillingdon Hospital.

Wyn, Gail and Nikki had made some toys to be given to children who will arrive in the outpatients department for tests. These toys will help ease their worries something for little ones to hold on to and play with to take their minds off the tests and procedures.

We also donated hats which Carol Toombs had kindly made for prem and newborn babies.



Shirley Clipp from the Hillingdon Hospital Charity accepting our gifts from Wyn and Gail.



Cleaning St John's

The next big clean will take place on Saturday 13th January 2024 at 9:30am all cleaning materials will be supplied.

If you do find yourself with some free time and would like to clean please contact Nikki or use the laminate sheet in the kitchen to look at what area/s may need some attention (Please do record what area you clean so that others are aware)



Volunteering at St. John's

We are always looking for volunteers at St John's if you would like to help out, please speak to Nikki. No matter how small even 30 mins can make a huge difference. We are especially looking for individuals to help with our refreshments on Sundays at St. John's.



St John's Prayer

Father God Almighty, we love you for your Majesty.

We are truly sorry for our thoughtless actions and deeds.

We ask for you to share your wisdom with us and grant us healing, peace and the ability to forgive, however hard it may be.

We promise to listen for you. We will sacrifice for others and accept your desire for us.

Thank you, God for the joy of your love. Amen



Looking Ahead....

Sunday 17th- 10:30am Journey to Christmas Service.

Monday - 9:30am Private Prayer, 8pm Bellringing Practice.

Tuesday - 9:15am Private Prayer, 7:30pm Accordion Band.

Wednesday - 9:15am Nikki Office.

Thursday - 9:15am Nikki Office, 12noon Jazzy Christmas,

Friday - 9:15am Private Prayer, 12noon Jazz, 6:30pm Christingle Making

Saturday - 9am-2pm open for private prayer

Sunday 24th- 3:30pm & 5:30pm Christingle and Carols, 11:30pm Midnight Holy Communion

Monday - 10:30am Christmas Day Service

Tuesday - 9:15am Private Prayer, 12noon Jazz, 7:30pm Accordion Band.

Wednesday - Church Closed

Thursday - 12noon Jazz.

Friday - 9:15am Private Prayer, 12noon Jazz.

Saturday - 11:30am Music Tuition - Grundon Room.

Sunday 31st- 10:30 Church Service.

Monday - Church Closed

Tuesday - Church Closed

Wednesday - Church Closed

Thursday - 12noon Jazz.

Friday - 9:15am Private Prayer, 12noon Jazz.

Saturday - Church Closed.

Sunday 7th- 10:30am Service

Monday - 9:30am Churchyard Clearing, Private Prayer, 8pm Bellringing practice.

Tuesday - 9:15am Private Prayer, 12noon Jazz, 7:30pm Accordion Band.

Wednesday - 9:15am Nikki Office, 9:30am Church Hire, 12noon Words and Music, 1pm Knitting.

Thursday - 9:15am Nikki Office, 12noon Jazz.

Friday - 9:15am Private Prayer, 12:15pm Funeral Service.

Saturday - 11:30am Music Tuition - Grundon Room.

How to join the Sunday service from your landline/mobile (without Internet).

- Dial **020 3481 5237** or **020 3051 2874**.

- Enter meeting ID Code **894 8145 2808** then the # key

- You will be asked to enter your participants' ID. Ignore this, and just press # key

- There is no password. If you are asked for one, then just press the # key.

CHEQUES

Payable to:

Hillingdon Parochial Church Council

St. John's Church

Royal Lane

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Barclays Bank, 142 High St,

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