

Please carry on putting things aside for Jude's families.

If we are allowed back to church on 6th December please bring them with you as she will come and collect from us on Monday 7th and again on Monday 14th. Goodies can also be delivered to church on Wednesday morning 2nd December between 10 and 12, The Playgroup are also making a special collection for FSW.



Here is the information about sending a financial donation just in case! Cheques payable to CDAFSW and send to FSW's Central Office, 22 Stanford Avenue, Brighton, BN1 6AA. If you also add a note asking for your donation to be directed to

work in Jude's area they will make sure that happens. You can also pay online via BACs to the following bank account: Sort Code: 20-12-75 Acc.No: 40257133 Barclays: Chichester Diocesan Association for Family Support Work Please email nina@familysupportwork.org.uk and let her know its for Jude's area. Thank you.



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THE BENEFICE OF WESTFIELD AND GUESTLING

A letter from Rev Joy 29 November 2020

It's been a sad week in the Old Town. Hastings fishermen are united in their grief for the loss of two crew from the Joanna C, a Newhaven based scalloper originally from Brixham. The Joanna C capsized at 6am last Saturday 3 miles off Seaford. The body of Adam Harper, 26, was discovered by divers in the wreckage on Monday night but Robert Morley, 38, is still missing. Dave Bickerstaff, the skipper, was rescued on Saturday after clinging to a lifebuoy for several hours. Fishermen are like a big family, there may be lots of arguments, but when tragedy strikes they will always look out for one another and their compassion and generosity for the families of the bereaved is extraordinary. It's also a reminder of just how dangerous fishing can be. Alex, a fisherman who had worked with the pair said "We all know what we do, we know the risks, but we still love it and we still do it. If Rob and Adam were still here they'd be saying the same. They will live on forever in all of us."

The good news this week is that we can soon go back to church even though East Sussex is now in Tier 2 and infection rates locally are rising. You can find provisional details of services on page 2. I am so happy that we will be together again in church and able to celebrate Advent and hopefully Christmas too, but I can't shift an undercurrent of anxiety about everyone's safety in these uncertain times. Mixed feelings are always tiring and it has been a very difficult year. But Advent is an excellent time to remind ourselves that we find our hope in the God-with-Us, Emmanuel.

This comes with my love and prayers for you all,
Joy

Westfield Church

The church will be open this Wednesday 2nd (10-12) for private prayer as usual. Here is the calendar for the rest of December which may be subject to change should coronavirus guidance change.

Sunday 6th Advent 2 10am Communion

Wednesday 9th 9.30am BCP Communion
10am—11.30am Private Prayer

Sunday 13th Advent 3 10am Morning Praise

Wednesday 9th 9.30am Communion
10am—11.30am Private Prayer

Sunday 20th Advent 3 10am Communion

4pm A sort of Carol Service (tbc)

Wednesday 23rd 9.30am BCP Communion
10am—11.30am Private Prayer

Thursday 24th **Xmas Eve 10pm** First Communion of Xmas

Friday 25th **Christmas Day 9.00am** BCP Communion
10.30am Family Communion

Sunday 27th First Sunday of Xmas 10am Morning Praise

Wednesday 30th Church closed

We will soon publish the times when families can collect a 'Christingle takeaway' from church to enjoy at home.

Guestling Church

St Laurence's will re-open on Sunday 13th December for a service of Holy Communion at 11am. The next service will be at 4pm on Christmas Eve and then Communion at 11am on Sunday 27th December. It will be very good to be together again for worship. Val has asked me to say a huge thank you to everyone for all the cards, messages and prayers that have so encouraged and supported her on her long road to recovery.

Advent

I found this poem on the website of the Diocese of Chester. It was written by the Revd Steve Sheridan.

The Advent Wreath

First flame alight to bring us hope.
Flickering on this advent wreath.
Lighting the dark in which we grope,
Leading us on to new belief.

Faith is the theme of candle two,
Urging us on to Bethlehem!
A child is born; the dawn breaks through,
While angels sing. Let's join with them

In ringing out the sound of joy.
This is the theme of advent three,
As shepherd's wonder at this boy;
One born to set the nations free.

We then light candle number four,
This flame our prayer for lasting peace,
That by the love which this child brings,
All war and conflict might yet cease.

There is one candle left to light,
As we begin our Christmas Day.
It is that one of dazzling white,
Hope, faith, joy, peace be yours I pray.



to this passage in the run up to Easter, but for now, the Advent message looks at the outcome of the Servant's work; justice, freedom and an understanding of the God who loves us and longs for sad and lost human beings to be restored into his loving family. Happy Advent!

Love Cathy

The Star of Bethlehem?

The great German astronomer, Johannes Kepler, did ground breaking work on the orbits of the planets and his laws of planetary motion were published in 1609 and 1619. He was fascinated with the true identity of the Star of Bethlehem. He began to wonder if the 'star' the magi followed was actually a conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn. By tracking the planets' motions backwards, he concluded that the giant planets were indeed in conjunction in the year 7 BC, in the constellation of Pisces, with a separation of a degree at best. On 21 December this year, the winter solstice, Jupiter and Saturn will be coming together in a 'Great Conjunction', appearing to the naked eye for many as a single bright 'star'. Indeed, this year's event is no ordinary one – it will be the closest such conjunction since 1623. The main event will have Jupiter and Saturn separated by a mere 0.06° – 6 seconds of arc – at 13:30 GMT on Monday, 21 December. Sunset will take place at 15:53 in London and about 45 minutes after sunset observers should look 10° above the south-southwest horizon to see Jupiter and Saturn shining almost as one. It's our best chance of seeing what might be the Star of Bethlehem until 2080!



Advent Sunday 29 November 2020

Collect

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of Darkness and to put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility; that on the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Westfield and Guestling

Lectionary Readings

Isaiah 64:1-9 Mark 13:24-37

BCP Readings Advent Sunday

Romans 13:8-14 Matthew 21:1-13

Online services: Please check the website on Sunday for services for Westfield

<http://www.westfieldchurch.co.uk/online-services-for-westfield-church/>

Guestling <https://www.westfieldchurch.co.uk/online-services-for-guestling-church/>

Lord Jesus Christ, in these dark and difficult days, we turn our hearts to you. In ages past, you have delivered our nation from disaster. Do it again, we pray. Give wisdom beyond human wisdom to our leaders, Give strength beyond human strength to the NHS and all our frontline workers. Give comfort beyond human comfort to the elderly and all who grieve. Lord Jesus Christ, in these dark and difficult days, turn your face towards us, have mercy upon us, and heal our land, we pray.

CV19 Homegroup

Dear Everyone,

I was preparing a session for our Zoom Youth Church about Advent looking at people who prophesied about Jesus before he was born. It is amazing to read some of the details that God revealed to prophets. They foretold many practical details of Jesus' birth (of a virgin in Bethlehem, lit by a great star), his family origins (in Nazareth), his childhood exile (in Egypt), and of his death: riding on the foal of a donkey, having people divide his clothing by throwing lots, dying with criminals but being buried in the grave of a rich man. The prophets also tell us much of Jesus' character and mission. Isaiah was one such prophet and we have already looked at chapters 40 and 55. We are looking today at the first part of chapter 42, a wonderful description of the person, character and mission of Jesus.

Isaiah chapter 42 verses 1 to 4

Isaiah frequently refers to a special person that the Lord will send to his people. We often refer to that person as the Messiah but Isaiah constantly refers to him as **the Servant of the Lord**, stressing that this person is following the Lord's wishes and does not have an agenda separate from that of the Father; indeed, this person will have the very spirit of God within him. God has not only chosen him but delights in him (verse 1).

The Servant's mission is to be faithful in bringing justice to mankind (verses 3 and 4). Some Jews believed the Messiah would come as a great warrior who would free them from their oppressors by force, but this person is not violent

(verse 2), quite the reverse, he will nurture the faith of even the most damaged and weak amongst us (verse 3). I find this a supremely encouraging verse. Do you pray for someone (perhaps yourself) who seems constantly to struggle with their faith? Do you have a long-standing friend who seems to stand on the edge of faith in God, afraid to launch in? Are you fearful for someone who has died and wonder if they were at peace with God at the end? This verse is surely a comfort; Jesus responds to the tiniest mustard seed of faith in him. The thief on the cross cried out to Jesus in the last moments of his life and Jesus assures him that they will soon be in heaven together.

Isaiah chapter 42 verses 5 to 9

In verses 5 and 6, we see God sets out his ultimate authority. God created all things and gives us our very lives. It is our Creator God who sends the Servant, not just to God's chosen people, the Jews, but to everyone else too, the Gentiles of verse 6. God's Servant will bring us light and freedom. A light that helps us understand our Creator God and a freedom from the things that enslave us (verse 7), harmful habits, fear, jealousy, deceitfulness and hatred: the sin that clings so closely and damages our relationships with each other, with our environment and with our Creator himself. This is the Servant's mission, to set us free and enable justice to reign in human affairs.

Isaiah does not speak here of how the Servant will achieve all this, although if you read chapter 52 verses 13 to 15 and on into chapter 53 verses 1 to 6, you will see a strong indication of what God's Servant will have to endure in order to bring God's justice and salvation. We will no doubt return