

St Paul's Church

Dear all,



In last week's update I mentioned the lighting of the second candle on our Advent Wreath in church that reminded us of the prophets from ancient times that spoke of a 'Messiah' figure. This week we light the third candle as we fast forward many years in history and the biblical character called John the Baptist, cousin of Jesus, who uttered these words;

"The man who will come after me is much greater than I am. I am not good enough even to bend down and untie his sandals." Mark 1:7

And so, John joins that prophetic tradition as being one who paves the way for something greater and calls people to re-think their direction of travel and to align themselves with the one who presents the kingdom of God in his very being, Jesus Christ.

John's 'mission plan' is neatly summed up in the words of an advent carol that gets sung at this time of year;

**On Jordan's bank, the Baptist's cry
Announces that the Lord is nigh;
Awake, and hearken, for he brings
Glad tidings of the King of kings!**

**Then cleansed be every breast from sin;
Make straight the way for God within;
Prepare we in our hearts a home
Where such a mighty Guest may come.**

**For Thou art our Salvation, Lord,
Our Refuge, and our great Reward.
Without Thy grace we waste away,
Like flowers that wither and decay.**

**To heal the sick stretch out Thine hand,
And bid the fallen sinner stand;
Shine forth, and let Thy light restore
Earth's own true loveliness once more.**

**All praise, eternal Son, to Thee
Whose advent sets Thy people free,
Whom, with the Father, we adore,
And Holy Ghost, forevermore.**



Please do come along to one of our services, as detailed below, whether that be Carols, Crib or Christmas Day. Also please remember those in need this Christmas and when out shopping put some extra items (non-perishable) into your shopping basket and keep those Foodbank donations coming in.

**Blessed are you, sovereign Lord, just and true:
to you be praise and glory for ever.
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.
Amen**

Advent blessings,
Rev Chris

HOME COMMUNION – should you wish to receive Home Communion this Christmas time please contact me and we will arrange a mutually convenient time for me to come to see you.

Contact details – 01622 297307 rev.chris@hotmail.co.uk

FORTHCOMING SERVICES

SUNDAY 12th DECEMBER – THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

10am HOLY COMMUNION – Rev Chris ([Zoom](#))

5pm CAROL SERVICE – Rev Anthea & Rev Chris

SUNDAY 19th DECEMBER – FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

8.30am HOLY COMMUNION (said) – Rev Chris ([Zoom](#))

10am MORNING SERVICE OF PRAYER & MEDITATION – Rev Anthea ([Zoom](#))

FRIDAY 24th DECEMBER – CHRISTMAS EVE

4pm CRIB & CHRISTINGLE – Rev Anthea & Rev Chris

SATURDAY 25th DECEMBER – CHRISTMAS DAY

10am FAMILY COMMUNION – Rev Chris ([Zoom](#))

SUNDAY 26th DECEMBER – FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

10am HOLY COMMUNION (said) Red Book – Rev Chris ([Zoom](#))

EVENTS

THURSDAY 16th DECEMBER

12 noon (for 12.30 pm) ST PAUL'S FELLOWSHIP - Christmas Lunch, Newnham Court Inn, ME14 5LH

THURSDAY 20th JANUARY

2.30 pm ST PAUL'S FELLOWSHIP - Bring and Buy Auction

COVID RESTRICTIONS

Please note that following the latest government announcement wearing a face covering in church has moved from 'recommended' to 'required' as they are now mandatory. The regulations do offer the opportunity to sing without face coverings, however, to my mind, this sends mixed messages and I will therefore require those attending services to keep face coverings in place. With regard to after service hospitality this can continue where possible, however refreshments must only be consumed whilst seated at which point face coverings can be removed for that purpose – they must remain in place whilst moving around.