

ST GUTHLAC'S COMMUNITY NEWS



Parish Church of St Guthlac
Knighton, Leicester LE2 3LF

<https://www.stguthlac-knighton.co.uk/>



Sunday 13 December 2020
Third Sunday of Advent

God is with us! - Christmas Worship 2020

As we continue our Advent journey – reflecting, preparing, watching and learning to wait – it is also time for me to tell you about opportunities in the benefice to worship at Christmas time.

Sundays: our Sunday services at both churches continue at the usual time, and with the usual precautions in place. Please note however that there are no live Sunday services on 27th December.

Carol Service: our online Benefice Carol Service can be viewed anytime from this weekend on the church websites, Facebook pages and the You Tube channel (just search for ‘Knighton Benefice’). Do encourage friends, family and neighbours to take this chance to sing along to some favourite carols at a time that suits them!

Crib Service: our online Crib Service is called ‘*O Zoom All Ye faithful*’ and again will be available to watch in the usual way, from 21st December. Families and children who would like to take part in the live service and recording (20th December) are invited to email ZoomNativity2020@gmail.com as soon as possible for further details.

Christmas Eve Communion: our live service will be at St Guthlac’s on Christmas Eve at 8pm as usual. Early booking is advised – please email churchwardens@stguthlac-knighton.co.uk

There will also be recorded Christmas Communion services from both churches available online on Christmas Eve.

Christmas Day: our live Christmas day service will be at St Mary’s at 10am. A celebration suitable for all ages will be followed by a short Communion for all those who wish to stay. Please book a place for your household by phoning the vicarage (0116 270 4268) or emailing Adrian (adrian.jones@zoho.com), indicating how many people will be

attending in your bubble and whether or not you will stay on to Communion.

Please note that there is no Midnight Communion or 8am service at St Mary's this year, nor a Christmas Day service at St Guthlac's. This was a difficult decision to take but felt wise given the stewarding and cleaning of the buildings that would otherwise have been necessary.

However you choose to worship this Christmas (and there are plenty of other choices online or on television & radio) can I urge you to keep a focus on the miracle of the incarnation – that God himself chose to enter the messy, virus-ridden, strife-torn human world, with all its risks, disputes, and violence. At the same time, remember that the way of Jesus – commitment, grace, love, service and sacrifice – remains the best and only answer to the world's needs.

In friendship and Christ's service,
Adrian

CHRISTINGLE ON LINE SERVICE

This Sunday's online service will be a Christingle celebration. It is planned to merge the Knighton Youth Group hosted by St Guthlacs with the live Church of England's Children Society broadcast from 9am on the Benefice You Tube Channel and Facebook pages.

As usual, when broadcast a link will be emailed to you and available on the website, You Tube Channel and Facebook pages. The link to our Youtube channel is

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChYDSfNmiB2Zamsaz_EdZSg

SUNDAY WORSHIP DURING THE PANDEMIC

As we come out of lockdown once more, you are welcome to join us for worship on Sunday mornings at 10.30am as usual. Sunday services will usually be a celebration of the Eucharist, apart from the fourth Sunday when we have Morning Prayer (in church) and Church Club (online).

Next services:

Sunday 20th December (Advent 4) – Communion Service

Sun. 27th December (1st Sunday of Christmas) - NO SERVICE

Sun. 3rd January (2nd Sunday of Christmas) – Communion
Service

BOOKING SYSTEM

In order to maintain social distancing, we have to limit the number of people who can attend each service; our current calculation is that we can seat a maximum of 19 individuals, small households or ‘bubbles’ safely at any one time. This is sadly very limiting. Consequently, we need to use a booking system.

If you would like to attend, either service you need to contact Tina to book a place.

THE COMMUNION SERVICE

Before the service

- Please arrive by 10.25 to allow time to direct you to your seat.
- When you arrive, you may have to queue for a while - please maintain a distance of 2m from others.

- Please wear a face covering as you queue and all the time you are in the church - we have some extras for those who cannot obtain their own.
- You will be welcomed and asked to sanitise your hands.
- The steward will ask you to give or check your contact details. The Steward only will write these down. These details will only be shared in the unlikely event that anyone develops symptoms. This is to protect everyone.
- You will be directed to a seat. Please sit only in this place as we need to maintain distances and reduce movement.
- Please note there are no toilets available.

The service

- You will find a communion booklet or service sheet and a book (*OCOFOL*) with the day's readings and prayers on your chair.
- A member of the Benefice Team will lead the service.
- The choir is still not able to lead us in worship and we can't sing any hymns. Yolanda will be playing the organ.

The sharing of the bread or blessing

- Great care will be taken to protect the safety of the congregation. Only the priest will handle the elements and vessels, and then only after sanitising their hands. There will be no assistant. The wafers for the congregation will be covered while the priest consecrates them.
- After the priest takes his/her wine and priest's wafer, he/she will put on a mask and sanitise hands again. Only then will the small individual wafers be uncovered and given to the congregation. Only wafers will be offered, not wine. At the distribution, Holy Communion will be administered in silence.

- Please stay in your seats the celebrant will come out to you in turn.
- If you wish to receive the bread, please hold out your hands. The priest will 'drop' the wafer into the outstretched hands, taking care not to touch them.
- There is no obligation to take the bread. If you wish to receive a blessing, please hold up your service booklet. If you prefer to pray quietly and not to receive either please fold your arms.

After the service

- Leave your service sheet and book on your chair.
- Please keep your distance from others as you leave and do not linger in the building - sadly we can't offer refreshments.
- If you wish to leave a donation, please put it in the small box provided.
- You will be asked to sanitise your hands as you leave.

When we have all gone, the church building will remain unused for 72 hours to eliminate any virus.

If you should feel unwell with any of the symptoms of coronavirus in the two weeks following the service, as well as seeking medical advice, please leave a message with Adrian or Matthew.

ADVENT 2020

LIVING IN HOPE-YORK ADVENT COURSE

4 Advent Sundays, Starting 29th November 7-8pm. Getting to the heart of Advent's message, how we live our lives in preparation for the return of Christ. We will focus each week on the York Course themes of Living well, Dying well, & and the afterlife (Hell? Heaven?). The big questions we all ask in an enquiring, supportive space, hosted by our Living Waters group. £2 suggested donation for the course book. You can join in over the phone or on Zoom. Contact Matthew to secure a place and a booklet and the joining details.

Email: revgough@gmail.com, or phone/ text 07754961997

ADVENT MEDITATIONS FOR WEDNESDAYS:

Advent this year sees another opportunity in the benefice to do a little meditative study. On each Wednesday evening members of the Ministry Team will be looking at one of the ancient Advent themes of Hope, Peace, Joy, Love and Light, for half an hour before Wednesday online Compline. Reflections will also be available on our websites and in the newsletters for further study at leisure and/or in preparation for Wednesdays. Our very complementary team will bring their own ways of approaching these themes...we hope you enjoy the reflections.

~~2nd December: **Hope** – the Revd Canon Dr Stephen Foster~~

~~9th December: **Peace** – the Revd Janet Gasper~~

16th December: **Joy** – the Revd Adrian Jones

23rd December: **Love & Light** – Fiona Wingate, Reader

The zoom log in details for this course can be found in 'Worship Information' on page 16.

JOY

More than just being happy?

Everyone will have a different opinion about what joy means to them.

Perhaps it is the view from a mountain top, being with family, being excited about something, a sunny day, no homework, laughter, music, rainbows...it could be anything that makes you happy.

But, is joy bigger, and deeper, than happiness? What happens when life is not so great – can we be joyful even if we're not happy right now?

The Christian faith says it is possible to find lasting joy, one that can't be taken away and that will endure through disappointment and tears. Jesus is our real joy.



Vincent van Gogh Sunflowers
1888 The National Gallery

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sunflowers_\(Van_Gogh_series\)#/media/File:Vincent_Willem_van_Gogh_127.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sunflowers_(Van_Gogh_series)#/media/File:Vincent_Willem_van_Gogh_127.jpg)

Vincent van Gogh is not usually an artist to be associated with joy, but these sunflowers were painted during a period of optimism that was rare for him. He was waiting for his friend, the artist, Paul Gauguin to join him to realise his long-held dream to begin a working community of artists in Arles.

For van Gogh, the colour yellow was the colour of happiness. The house in Arles was called the Yellow House, which boded well for Vincent and the series of sunflower paintings were painted to brighten up the walls of the interior. Later, he saw them as wings of a triptych, either side of *La Berceuse* (The Lullaby), a painting of Madame Roulin, the wife of the Postmaster, rocking her child's cradle. They would be like the candles of an altarpiece, burning on either side of this mother image, his own version of the Virgin Mary.

The flowers show the cycle of life, death and new life. There are buds, flowers in full bloom and flowers whose petals are dropping, with the seeds ripe and ready to fall and begin the cycle again. As with his series of Sower paintings, we are reminded that his life and imagination were steeped in the Bible. Death, life and new life were concepts he explored and reimagined time and time again.

The Bright Field *by R S Thomas*

I have seen the sun break through
to illuminate a small field
for a while, and gone my way
and forgotten it. But that was the pearl
of great price, the one field that had
treasure in it. I realize now
that I must give all that I have
to possess it. Life is not hurrying

on to a receding future, nor hankering after
an imagined past. It is the turning
aside like Moses to the miracle
of the lit bush, to a brightness
that seemed as transitory as your youth
once, but is the eternity that awaits you.

<https://www.poeticous.com/r-s-thomas/the-bright-field>

REFLECTION

- Think back and remember a time when you felt really joyful.
- Advent is a time when we hold in tension the darkness and the coming light. In a world that feels very broken and uncertain, where can we look for Joy?
- Make a prayer space using things or images that give you joy. If you draw or paint, you could make your own images. You could make little prayer cards (as before) with words of joy, images or names of people who have brought you joy. Offer prayer of gratitude and put the cards in the prayer bowl.

PRAYER

God of all joy, we come before you in praise and thanksgiving for all who have brought us joy.

Lead us from the darkness and uncertainty of this world into an Advent of expectation that the light will come, the light has come and will not be overcome.

We pray that through prayer and reflection and through your grace the joyful Christ-child may be born in us anew this Christmas. Amen

With thanks to
Globe Church <https://gochattervideos.com/what-is-joy/>
and Petra Shakeshaft

Collect & Readings for the Third Sunday of Advent

The Collect

O Lord Jesus Christ,
who at your first coming sent your messenger
to prepare your way before you:
grant that the ministers and stewards of your mysteries
may likewise so prepare and make ready your way
by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the
just,
that at your second coming to judge the world
we may be found an acceptable people in your sight;
for you are alive and reign with the Father
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen

First Reading: Isaiah 61.1-4, 8-11

The servant of the Lord said:

¹The 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; ²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; ³to 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. ⁴They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

⁸For 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. ⁹Their 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. ¹⁰I 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.

¹¹For 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.

Psalm 126

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5.16-24

John 1.6-8, 19-28

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

¹⁹This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?'

²⁰He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, 'I am not the Messiah.' ²¹And they asked him, 'What then? Are you Elijah?' He said, 'I am not.' 'Are you the prophet?' He answered, 'No.'

²²Then they said to him, 'Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?' ²³He said, 'I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord"', as the prophet Isaiah said.

²⁴Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵They asked him, 'Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?' ²⁶John answered them, 'I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, ²⁷the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.' ²⁸This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me ...'

Revd Canon Dr Stephen Foster

The first part of the Old Testament reading for today (Isaiah 61:1-4) is one of the most beautiful, hopeful and restorative passages in the Old Testament...beautiful enough in a decent translation, and even more so in Hebrew!

It comes from what scholars call 'Third Isaiah'...yes... there were most probably three from different periods of Israel's history.

Here this Isaiah speaks of the time where Babylonia had been defeated by the Persians under King Cyrus the Great in about

539BC. (Interestingly in Isaiah 45:1 the same prophet refers to Cyrus as the 'anointed one' or Messiah!)

Cyrus releases the captive Hebrews from Babylonia and allows them to return to their homeland. Not only that, he funds, at least in part, the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem, which in reading the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah in the Old Testament was not without its difficulties.

The passage Isaiah 61:1-4 exudes a new hope, a new confidence, a new vision for God's people in their new found freedom.

It is hard to read the passage without thinking of messianic overtones...indeed St Luke has Jesus applying the passage to himself in Luke Chapter 4. A whole paper could appear here on how the New Testament writers use Old Testament texts out of context...but that is for another day!

It is also hard not to think of this passage and its spiritual relevance to where we are now today on the brink of vaccine delivery, and our thanksgiving for the vision of a way out of this dreadful pandemic.

This sort of spiritual relevance is not new and indeed with regards to this very passage.

In 1944, as a vision of the end of the Second World War was becoming a real one, Vaughan Williams wrote his Song of Thanksgiving as a new vision of a period of longed for peace started to become real.

It is a stunning piece, with, in my recording, John Gielgud speaking these very words as a voice over to an ethereal musical backdrop. Do listen on YouTube to any version really, and luxuriate in how such great artists can make already beautiful and visionary words rise to a totally new level, and which speak to our souls in a most extraordinary way.

A PRAYER FOR THE CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy,
in this time of uncertainty and distress.
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may rejoice in your comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Amen.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS Please remember those whom we have been asked to keep in our prayers. Please remember those who have died recently and keep their family and friends in your prayers. For other prayer requests, please contact a churchwarden or member of the Ministry Team.

PRAYERS FOR THE WORLD

Please remember in your prayers the people of Beirut and all Aid Workers and Charities working in the capital and throughout Lebanon. Please take time to remember the people of South America, the Middle East and Africa as cases of Covid-19 start to soar in all three areas.

PRAYERS FOR HEALTH CARE WORKERS Please pray for all our local doctors, nurses, care workers and support staff, especially **Amy and Dan Barnes** and **Katherine Swanson**.

WORSHIP INFORMATION

BBC Radio 4 Sunday Worship 8.10am

BBC Radio 4 Daily Service each weekday 9.45am on long wave only

Catch up available for all these on the BBC Sounds app.

Virtual Sunday Service for the Knighton Benefice.

Each week we will now usually upload a recording of the Sunday service from St Mary's or St Guthlac's onto the Knighton Benefice You Tube channel. This should happen by 1pm each Sunday. Please go direct to

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChYDSfNmiB2Zamsaz_EdZSq?
or via the website or Facebook page.

Wednesday Evening Meditative Study and Compline for Advent

Please note a change to the regular pattern of Wednesday evening Compline. From Wednesday 2nd December you are welcome to join via Zoom or to phone in from 7.30pm each week to explore the themes of Hope, Peace, Joy, Love and Light with the ministry team facilitating a discussion. Compline will follow at 8pm (but without the usual breakout discussion). Join for both or either, you are most welcome. For Phone only: telephone this number 0131 460 1196 When promoted input Meeting ID: 746 767 4408



For internet using Zoom: Join Zoom Meeting

<https://leccofe.zoom.us/j/7467674408>

Input Meeting ID: 746 767 4408

Don't forget to visit the St. Guthlac's Facebook page and website <https://www.stguthlac-knighton.co.uk> Please note that this is a new address with an "s" after "http" to denote it is secure connection. If you don't put the "s" in

you will still arrive at the website, but your browser may indicate that the site is "not secure".

CONTACT DETAILS

Vicar: Revd. Adrian Jones 0116 2704268
adrian.jones@zoho.com

Associate Priest- St Guthlac's: Revd Canon Dr Stephen Foster
safpta6@gmail.com 07966 376905

Assistant Curate: Revd Matthew Gough
revgough@gmail.com 07754 961997

Revd Aphro McCullough

Revd Janet Gasper

Reader: Fiona Wingate

Churchwardens:

David Hunt

Tina Jarvis

churchwardens@stguthlac-knighton.co.uk

Knighton Benefice Magazine: Nigel Siesage
stmaryknighton.magazine@gmail.com

FOR THE NEWSLETTER Please send material to be included in the next newsletter by **Thursday 10pm** to
administrator@stguthlacknighton.co.uk

MAKE YOUR CHRISTMAS GREETINGS GO FURTHER.

We are, as in previous years, accepting donations to Bishop Christopher's Malawi charity instead of exchanging Christmas cards with one another.

If you wish to donate in this way, you may do so by cheque or online transfer:

Cheques should be made payable to St. Guthlacs PCC. Please write 'Malawi' on the reverse of the cheque and post it to Jane Wright.

Bank Transfer, account name St. Guthlacs PCC, code 20-49-08, account number 53861341, please put 'Malawi' & your name as the reference.

Next week's issue is the last newsletter before Christmas. If you would like your Christmas Greeting included in this newsletter please ensure your donation is received by noon on Thursday 17th December. Any donations received after this date will be included in the first issue in January. Thank you

PLANNED GIVING SCHEME

Regular giving is an integral part of our church life supporting our day to day costs, ministry and mission. A good way to achieve this is through a weekly envelope or a monthly bank standing order as part of our Planned Giving Scheme. Scheme details can be obtained from David Hunt. If you are a taxpayer and gift aid your giving, our church can claim an additional 25%.

During the current Coronavirus pandemic please put aside your weekly offerings ready to bring to church when things return to something like normal. The costs of the church are largely unchanged even though we cannot meet, so your regular giving is extremely important to our collective 'health' and the mission of God here.

CHRISTMAS FAYRE

A huge thank you to everyone involved with the Christmas Fayre 2020. This includes those who have been involved in the production and organisation but equally importantly, those who have so generously supported St Guthlac's by submitting an order. We have made the fabulous sum of over £800 to support the running of the church.

St Mary's Virtual Christmas Tree Festival 2020

This time last year many people were making and decorating trees, in wonderfully imaginative ways, to display in the first ever Christmas Tree Festival at St Mary Magdalen Church. Sadly, a 'real' display is not possible this year but we would still like to recognise the event and the way in which it brought our community together.

So for 2020 we are planting a virtual Christmas Tree forest of photographs on our church website!

We have invited all our contributors to take part and would be delighted for others to join in too. To take part, just email to KnightonTrees2020@gmail.com , any time from Sat 28th November – Sat 20th December, with:

- * a photograph, drawing or painting of a tree - any shape, size or colour;
- * your name or the name of your organisation/business as you would like it displayed on the website;
- * your age if under 16 years old.

We look forward to seeing all your contributions and hope to see you all in person again, in 2021.

Best wishes - The Christmas Tree Festival Team

Images of Knighton 2021

Last chance to get some excellent 'Images of Knighton' Calendars for Christmas, local artists celebrating Knighton life and raising funds for Spire Project. Free postage tubes as they make great gifts. £7.50 each, or 3 for £20. Available St Mary's on Sundays, Flynn's (Londis), Knighton News, Holbrook News, Aileen Orme, Nigel Siesage or Matthew revgough@gmail.com, 07754961997



NEWSLETTER

Next week's newsletter will be a triple issue. The first newsletter in the New Year will be for Sunday 10th January 2021