

PARTNERS

weekly newsletter



3rd December 2023 - Advent Sunday

Well, it is the 3rd December, and a NEW YEAR for Church. Today marks the beginning of the Season of Advent. It is a time when the Church begins to get ready for Christmas, when we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Advent, is a time for doing various things as well as present buying and writing cards, it is a time to pause and to slow right down with services of prayers and vigils. It is a time when we consider Penitential Rites services, the Four Last things: the Great O; Church and Home; The Jesse Tree; Christingle Services, Crib and Carol services.

And there are lots of other things too. Making time to visit, changing plans, going to events, parties. At home we have to decided to follow a new set of Readings at Church, the readings for B year and year 2 in the eucharist daily lectionary. So many other things too.

But in all this, the most important thing to do, for Advent and the rest of the year, is to find daily time to speak with **JESUS**.



Ian Newman

St Mary's
Fordingbridge
SP6 1BB

St Mary's
Breamore
SP6 2DF

Holy Ascension
Hyde
SP6 2QJ

St Giles
Godshill
SP6 2JJ

St Boniface
Woodgreen
SP6 2AJ

St Mary's
Hale
SP6 2RF

Sandleheath
Uniting Church
SP6 IPT

We welcome all, especially visitors and those attending for the first time. If you need gluten free wafers at Communion, please speak to someone at the door before the service.

Please take this newsletter home with you for the week ahead. God Bless!

Readings for this Week: 3rd December 2023

Advent Sunday

COLLECT:

Almighty God,
as your kingdom dawns,
turn us from the darkness of sin to the
light of holiness,
that we may be ready to meet you
in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

AMEN.

PSALM 80:1-8 18-20

1. Hear, O Shepherd of Israel,
You that led Joseph like a flock;
2. Shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim,
Before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh.
3. Stir up your mighty strength
And come to our salvation.
4. Turn us again, O God;
Show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.
5. O Lord God of hosts,
How long will you be angry at your people's prayer?
6. You feed them with the bread of tears;
You give them abundance of tears to drink.
7. You have made us the derision of our neighbours
And our enemies laugh us to scorn.
- 8 Turn us again, O God of hosts;
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.
- 18 Let your hand be upon the man at your right hand,
the son of man you made so strong for yourself.
- 19 And so will we not go back from you;
give us life, and we shall call upon your name.
- 20 Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts;
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved

A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

Isaiah 64:1-9

Isaiah, writing during the Exile, acknowledges the people's guilt, and pleads for God's mercy.

¹O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence – ²as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil – to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! ³When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. ⁴From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. ⁵You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed. ⁶We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. ⁷There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. ⁸Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. ⁹Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD, and do not remember iniquity for ever. Now consider, we are all your people.

At the end, the Reader says:

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

THE GOSPEL READING

Please stand and turn to face the Gospel Reader

When the Gospel is announced, the Reader says:

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark

Glory to you, O Lord.

(Glory be to thee, O Lord.)

Mark 13:24-37

A warning of coming judgment, and encouragement to keep alert.

Jesus said to his disciples: ²⁴In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, ²⁵and the stars will be falling from

heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.²⁶ Then they will see “the Son of Man coming in clouds” with great power and glory.²⁷ Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.²⁸ From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near.²⁹ So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates.³⁰ Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place.³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.³² But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.³³ Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come.³⁴ It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch.³⁵ Therefore, keep awake – for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn,³⁶ or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly.³⁷ And what I say to you, I say to all: Keep awake.’

c) *New Revised Standard Version of the Holy Bible*

At the end, the Reader says:
This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

(At the end, the Reader says:
This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise be to thee, O Christ.)

POST COMMUNION PRAYER:

O Lord our God,
make us watchful and keep us faithful
as we await the coming of your Son our Lord;
that, when he shall appear,
he may not find us sleeping in sin
but active in his service
and joyful in his praise;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

AMEN

On **Saturday 2nd December Hyde Church** are holding a CHRISTMAS FAIR in the Village Hall from 11am - 2pm. Come and browse the stalls, enjoy soup and rolls, buy Christmas presents and cards - all to raise funds for the Church and local businesses.

Please note the **church office** will be **closed** on **Monday 4th , 11th and 18th** of December.

SP6 Friendship Group – Our friendship group will be held on **Tuesday 5th December and 19th December** from 10.00am – 12.00md at the Ship Inn, Fordingbridge High Street. There will also be a **Christmas lunch** on **December 12th at 12.00noon**. This group is for anyone who is bereaved or lonely and would like a cuppa and a friendly chat. We also organize outings, theatre trips and garden visits. If anyone would like to join us do come.

St Mary's Church Breamore - Christmas Tea and Chat - Wednesday 6th December 2-4.30pm in the Hulse Hall - Come and join us for a pre-Christmas tea and chat. Enjoy making a jigsaw, take part in a Christmas Quiz or just chat with friends. Any enquiries please to mary.awdford@btopenworld.com or 07710 288361

Avon Valley Men's Fellowship - Our final supper this year will be at the Old Beams pub in Ibsley on **Wednesday 6th December**. We will be meeting at **6:30pm** for a **7pm start**. After the one course supper our speaker will be Adam Feak who is the Free church chaplain at Winchester prison. Adam will be talking about his background and prison work and it promises to be most interesting. The cost of the evening is £17. If you would like to join us please contact Stephen Darke for more information and the menu choices. E-mail - darkefamily@btinternet.com or phone 01425 656988.

☆Our Christmas Coffee Morning **Friday 8th December, 10.30am - 12.00noon**, (the last of the year) is also the launch of this years Christmas Tree Festival. at St Boniface, Woodgreen. Do join us for Festive food, songs and a warm welcome. The Fair Trade Coffee Morning team. NB The trees remain on display throughout the Christmas season. Pop in at any time to enjoy the ingenuity of local groups and the interpretations of the theme A Christmas Carol. 🎄

From clay pits to kilns: Bursledon Brickworks revealed. Bursledon is an industrial heritage site which invokes the sights, sounds and smells of Victorian life. Come along and hear its story with Fordingbridge History Society on **Monday 11 December from 2.30pm in the Church Hall**. Visitors are most welcome. Further info from Helen Coote on 01425 654995.

The next **Hyde Mothers' Union** will be on **December 12th at 2.30pm** in Hyde Church Centre. We will have the enrolment of a new member followed by Christmas Readings and Carols, a Quiz and Christmas refreshments. Sheilah Collis 01425 470343

Janet, Helen & the team will be offering **Christmas wreaths & table decorations** in aid of church funds. Wreaths will be £25 and table decorations £12. A traditional wreath with poinsettias or a natural country wreath is the choice. **Collection** will be on **Wednesday 13th December at 10.00 am** from Newman's Central Stores in Shaftesbury Street. We will notify the date of the table decorations later. Please email Helen at thetagues@fordingbridge.com or telephone 01425 655462 or telephone Janet on 01425 653269

Avon Valley Community Matters - Families Together Upcoming dates:
Wednesday 20th December - Family Christmas Dinner and Nativity, 11am-2pm at St Mary's Church Hall You can find information about our events by going to <https://AvonValleyCommunityMatters.eventbrite.com> or emailing familybefriender@yahoo.com

Shortest Day Christmas Service at St Giles, Godshill - The Shortest Day Christmas Service is one with a difference! Like last year, it will be a more reflective half-hour service open to everyone, including those people who might recoil from a full-blown Carol Service, but may find welcome solace and sanctuary in a troubled world through this time together. There will be readings and carols and prayers, followed by mince pies and mulled wine. **The Date: Thursday 21st December, 11 am at St Giles, Godshill.** All are Welcome!

Save the date : Sunday, 21st January Epiphany concert to be held at St. Mary's Church, Hale, from 4pm. It will have all the tradition of our Advent concert but with a slightly different feel to it. Do come and support us. Raising funds for Trussell Trust and the roof fund. Thank you.

Open Gardens 2024 – Fordingbridge/Godshill/Sandleheath

We now have a small list of gardens that will be open over the late May Bank Holiday to help us raise funds, but we need a few more. Your garden doesn't have to be either large or spectacular, we aren't trying to do Chelsea! It would be great if you could also host your guests with refreshments (or perhaps have a few plants to sell) but if you don't bake we can find you are partner. Or do you have a non-churchgoing friend with a garden they would be prepared to open? We need to begin to plan after Christmas so please let me know if you are willing to help. Mark Ward: mark@fordingbridge.com or 01425 656120

CAN YOU HELP? There is a cupboard in the cloakroom at St Mary's Church Hall which has had a new lock fitted. We do not know who asked to have a new lock, what the contents are, whether it is still being used and we do not have a spare key at the Church Office. **Please contact the Church Office before 4th December** on 01425 653163 or office@avonvalleychurches.org.uk if you or someone you know is using this cupboard or further action will be taken to gain access. The very successful AVCM projects need additional space to support their community catering activities. Thank you very much, FB LCC.

Found - a pretty **silver ring** was found on the floor of the church hall on Saturday 25th November . If you think this might be yours please contact the church office (office@avonvalleychurches.org.uk or 01425 653163).

Fundraising for St Mary's Hale roof repairs. We have been donated some beautifully knitted childrens cardigans. Many with knitted in rabbits etc on the front. Pastel colours, age 2 - 4 approx. To buy, (they are £5 and at the back of St Boniface) please put your money in an envelope marked Cardigan and post it in the wall safe on the left of the toilet door.

ITEMS FOR PARTNERS need to be sent to the Church Office (e-mail address below) by 5.00p.m. on **Wednesdays**. Please put 'Partners' in the e-mail subject line. Thank you, Zoe

Church Wardens' News

I'm feeling quite conflicted at the moment. I am a staunch supporter of the Common Mission Fund. This is the sum of money collected right across the diocese which pays for our clergy, their houses, training and towards their pensions. They give their lives to us so I firmly believe we should make those payments, Yet the Local Church Area of Fordingbridge has just had to apply for a £35,000 reduction in the amount we were asked to contribute for 2024 because we just don't have the money. So along with the LCC I shall be looking at all sorts of ways to plug that gap so that we can make our full contribution again. And whilst not all LCAs have had to ask for a reduction, none of the parish finances are feeling very healthy right now.

What we all choose to give is a very personal matter and for some times are hard, but I wonder if I can encourage everyone to consider what you offer each week or month to whichever Local Church Area you are most attached to in readiness for us to begin our next chapter with our new vicar allowing him and us to concentrate on our mission and purpose rather than worrying if we can keep the lights on. God gives us so much, let's all try to do the right thing with what we have.

Mark Ward

CHURCH OFFICE IS OPEN TO VISITORS between 10.00 am and 12.00
Contact via Email : Office@AvonValleyChurches.org.uk or call 01425 653163 between 10.00 am and 12.00 or
leave a message Website : www.AvonValleyChurches.org.uk

Advent Sunday

3rd December

Online services available via Facebook or Website
at 'Avon Valley Churches'

Sunday	8.15 am	Fordingbridge	Holy Communion
3rd Dec	10.00 am	Breamore	Morning Service
	10.00 am	Fordingbridge	Allsorts Service
	10.00 am	Hale	Holy Communion
	10.00 am	Hyde	Holy Communion
	10.45 am	Sandleheath	Morning Service
	6.00 pm	Fordingbridge	6 O'Clock Service
Monday Wednesday Friday	10.00 am	Online	Morning prayer (<i>Meeting ID: 846 5168 7529, Password: 764200</i>)
Mon 4 th	12.00 noon	Fordingbridge	The funeral of the late James Buckman
Wed 6 th	10.00 am	Fordingbridge	Holy Communion
	10.00 am	Heather Cottage	Advent Celebration
	2.00 pm	Breamore (Hulse Hall)	Christmas tea and chat
Fri 8 th	10.30 am	Woodgreen	Christmas Coffee Morning
Sunday	8.15 am	Hyde	Holy Communion
10th Dec	10.00 am	Breamore	Holy Communion
	10.00 am	Fordingbridge	Sung Eucharist
	10.00 am	Woodgreen	Carol Service
	10.45 am	Sandleheath	Morning Service
	5.30 pm	Hyde	Carol Service
	6.00 pm	Sandleheath	Carols