

St. James Parish Newsletter

29th November 2020



Our Mission Statement

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind...and your neighbour as yourself. Matthew 22:37-38

Sunday Podcasts

of each Sunday Morning Service are available after the service on YouTube.

A time to speak

Parish Podcast on the YouTube channel.

The address for both is at the bottom of the page.

SASS

Throughout the pandemic we have continued to support our asylum seeker and refugee friends. We are grateful for your positive response to appeals we have made over the years.

We would like to put together Christmas gift bags for the children and would be very grateful if you can provide any of the following items:

coloured pencils & felt tip pens, crayons, chocolates for children, drawing pads, picture & story books for children up to age 10, or money for us to buy whatever else is needed.

Please contact Sandra (01792 473569) or Margaret(07719916704) Many thanks.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

This Sunday is Advent Sunday and the beginning of the lead up to Christmas - Christ's Mass - which celebrates the birth of Jesus. Advent then is like a sort of pre-Christmas 'Lent', a time of preparation.

But as we follow the readings we discover that it is not just Christ's birth that we are waiting for, but Christ's second coming. Christ has already come the first time bringing light into a sin-darkened world. However, he will also, as the New Testament and Christ himself tells us, one day come again to judge the quick (living) and the dead. And Advent is a reminder to prepare for both events - the celebration of Christmas; and his second coming again, through repentance - which is an acknowledgement of personal sin; and watchfulness - staying alert and awake so that we do not miss the time of His visitation. Purple, the colour of mourning, is therefore the predominant colour for this particular season. The same colour that is used in Lent as it prepares for Easter.

I will be speaking to this subject on Advent Sunday. So I hope you will be able to go to the YouTube channel to catch what I say about the subject .

But in the meantime, for all those able to come to church, please be aware it is going to get colder. Not just because of the weather but because we are instructed to keep doors open to maintain airflow in the building. This is a Welsh Government, and not just a Church in Wales, instruction. And we are only able to open - like other public places - on the basis that we fully comply with what we are told to do. So wrap up warm if you want to come on Sundays. We will put the heating on but the benefits will not be fully felt because of the open doors.

God bless,

Mark

Advent reflection from Christian Aid

From light comes life.

Deep in expectant earth, a seed stretches.

Through the fire-start of imagination, an idea takes root.

In a passionate flash, love glows with infant intensity.

Safe in the womb, a child senses its season turning and stirs.

It is Advent, something coming, vulnerable in its unstoppable desire...

God, unquenchable light, may they grow – the seed, the love, the idea, the child.

Collect for Advent Sunday

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. Amen

Readings

Isaiah 64.1-9; Psalm 80; 1 Corinthians 1.3-9; Mark 13.24 - end



Advent increases our hope, a hope which does not disappoint. The Lord never lets us down.

Pope Francis

Mark the season of **Advent** by loving and serving others with God's own love and concern.

Mother Teresa

The celebration of **Advent** is possible only to those who are troubled in soul, who know themselves to be poor and imperfect, and who look forward to something greater to come.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

THIS NEWSLETTER IS AVAILABLE ON THE PARISH WEBSITE:

www.stjamesswanse.org.uk

St. James Sunday Services on YouTube are available here:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCoNVea6r8mEr_KnOkSv6qQA/

Congregational news

We were very sorry to hear last week of the news that **Bill Tew** had passed away. Thankfully his wife Freda was able to be with him although she is still in hospital until arrangements are made about her future care. Thank you to Sian and Margaret who have been so kind in helping Freda and Bill through the time they have been at home.

On a different note we are sad to hear that **Marianne Willis** is leaving us for pastures new. After 60 years in the same house she is moving to a bungalow in England to be nearer her family.

Marianne was only recently telling me that she and Peter moved into Ffynone Drive in 1960 with their 5 year old son Nicholas and two-year-old twins Simon and Carol. Not long afterwards the family started attending St. James where they became active members. The children were choir members and were confirmed at St James'. Carol was married there in 1983.

Marianne was the Sunday School Leader for many years until her retirement from teaching (at Terrace Road School) in 1985. She and Peter were well known for the bottle stall they ran at the twice-yearly church fetes and they held fundraisers at their home so they could purchase bottles for the stall. They also founded the badminton club.

So the house in Ffynone and St James Church will always have very happy memories for her. We wish her well in her new home.

Five Questions

This week we welcome another contributor to Five Questions:

1. What is your name? - Hazel Williams
2. Where were you born? - Morriston (at home)
3. What is your earliest memory of Church? - Church has always been important to me - I attended St Mary's in Clydach - for as long as I can remember.
4. When did the Christian faith become important to you? - I would say that it became more real to me in October 1981, after attending a rally led by evangelist Selwyn Hughes. It was then that I really understood that Jesus had died for 'me'.
5. What is your favourite Bible verse and why? - My favourite Bible verse is from Jeremiah 29:11:
"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."
Because over the years there have been lots of lows and struggles in my life and this verse always seemed to pop up somewhere to remind me that God has a plan and it's not to harm me, but to help me.

Ecclesiastical joke

A six year old girl had been so naughty that her mother decided to teach her a lesson. She told her she couldn't go to the school fair.

Then, when the day came, her mother felt she had been too harsh and changed her mind. When she told the little girl she could go to the school fair after all, the child's reaction was one of gloom and disappointment. "What's the matter? I though you'd be glad to go to the school fair", her mother said. "It's too late!" the little girl said. "I've already prayed for rain, storms and thunder!"

The Lord is coming, always coming. When you have ears to hear and eyes to see, you will recognize him at any moment of your life. Life is Advent; life is recognizing the coming of the Lord. *Henri Nouwen*

Contact information

For all contributions to the newsletter please email the Vicar, Mark, at: stjamesuplands1@googlemail.com

Home phone number: (01792) 470532

The Parish Website can be found at: www.stjameswanssea.org.uk

Acts of the Apostles

Every Tuesday for an hour we are looking at the Book of Acts via Zoom. Interested? Email the Vicar at the address below. *Please let him know if you want to join anytime and he will send you an invite.*

Important dates

Tuesday 1st December 7pm
Zoom Bible Study The Book of Acts

Thursday 17th December 7pm
Zoom congregational meeting
Christmas edition.

Alternative Christmas Carol

Hark! The herald angels sing
health and safety is our thing
we're all miles apart
which doesn't help the singers
art.

Joyful isn't what we're feeling
Carols don't seem very
appealing
frankly it's an uphill task
singing through a face mask.

Hark! the herald angels sing
we can scarcely hear a thing
with these things across our
faces
altos might as well be basses.
We can't tell the Christmas
story
sung in all its normal glory
Christmas spirit, take a hike
we're all off on a strike.

Sent in by Helen Warner

Advent quotes

"At this Christmas when Christ comes, will He find a warm heart? Mark the season of Advent by loving and serving the others with God's own love and concern."

*Mother Teresa, Love: A Fruit
Always in Season*

Advent: the time to listen for footsteps. You can't hear footsteps when you're running yourself.

Bill McKibben