

December 2021 Edition 71

And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Colossians 3:17



Appreciation

I am very rarely rendered speechless, but that is what happened during the notices on 21st November, the feast of Christ the King, when Martin Gerrard DL presented me with a certificate of appreciation from Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Surrey for support towards the community during the pandemic.

Everything that happens at St Mary's is undoubtedly a team effort, dependent on the generosity of so many individuals giving their time and skills in the service of God. During the periods of lockdown, though, we were physically isolated from one another. This made it so much more difficult to know how people

were feeling, and in particular whether our efforts were making a difference.

I am incredibly proud of the way the community at St Mary's has held together, supporting one another through the most challenging of times. And I am thankful to Martin and the Church Wardens for putting me forward for this certificate. It really does matter to know that our efforts are both noticed and appreciated – and I discovered that afresh when the presentation was made. Thank you for noticing; and thank you for your appreciation. They mean a great deal.

Rev Theresa Ricketts

“Light out of Darkness”: Advent Course 2021

I wonder what the season of Advent means to you. For many of us, the weeks leading up to Christmas become quite frantic. There are preparations to be made – decorations to be put up; food to be bought and prepared; gifts to be selected. It can also be a busy time socially, with Christmas meals and parties, not to mention various fairs, concerts, nativity plays and carol services.



Last year provided a different kind of experience. After a period of lockdown in November, many of us were hoping to be able to see close family for Christmas, yet in the end that wasn't possible. While we might have thought this would provide an opportunity for a more spiritual and reflective Advent, mainly we were just plagued with uncertainty.

One thing we have discovered over the last 20 months is just how easily our plans can be disrupted. Perhaps that leaves us able to discover something new in the season of Advent this year. Perhaps by loosening our grip on the desire to plan and control, we can allow ourselves to prepare for Christmas in a different way. A way that involves preparing ourselves to hear afresh the good news of Christ's birth. A way that makes us ready to hear and respond to God's call – a call which relies on a preparation of our hearts, minds and souls.

This year's Advent course focuses on this kind of readiness by offering readings and reflections over 4 weeks. In the first week we will simply stop and take time to notice God's presence. The readings in the second week draw attention to the ways that we might seek to prepare ourselves. In the third week we explore the theme of darkness and light, acknowledging the darkness in the world in order to fully appreciate the light. Finally, we spend some time thinking about our own calling, setting that alongside our unity in Christ.

Each week over Advent there will be an opportunity to come together for a period of discussion and prayer, focusing on the week's theme and readings, and preparing ourselves for the coming of the Christ child.

Sessions take place in the Cuddington Hall on Monday evenings at 7.30pm beginning on 29th November, and concluding on 20th December.

While there is a theme running through, each session stands alone, so please come along whenever you are able.



Induction Service: 16th January 2022

The Archdeacon of Dorking, Martin Breadmore, will be at St Mary's for the main 9.30am service on Sunday 16th January to install and induct Theresa as Vicar. Please put the date in your diaries as she would really love to share the occasion with as many people as possible. There will be cake and bubbly after the service.

December Services and Events

Saturday 4	11-14.30	Christmas Fair
Sunday 5	08.00	Holy Communion
	09.30	Sung Communion and Children's Groups
	19.00	Epsom & Ewell Silver Band Concert
Sunday 12	08.00	Holy Communion
	09.30	Sung Communion
Wednesday 15	19.00	Men's Group Christmas Meal
Thursday 16	14.30	Afternoon Club in the Cuddington Hall
Saturday 18	10.00	Women's Group in the Cuddington Hall
Sunday 19	08.00	Holy Communion
	09.30	Sung Communion and Children's Groups
	18.00	Nine Lessons and Carols
Friday 24	15.00	Blessing of the Crib
	17.00	Blessing of the Crib
	23.30	Midnight Communion
Saturday 25	10.00	Christmas Family Communion with Carols
Sunday 26	08.00	Holy Communion
	09.30	Sung Communion

Morning Prayer is said in church every weekday morning at 9am

Everyone is very welcome

The Knit and Natter Group will next meet in January

