



ARLE VALLEY BENEFICE

*St John's Church, New Alresford ♦ St Mary's Church, Old Alresford
St Peter's Church, Ovington ♦ All Saints Church, Bighton*

December 5th 2021 Second Sunday of Advent

Services this Sunday:

08.00: St John's: Holy Communion BCP
09.30: St John's: Parish Communion
14.30: All Saints: Focal Ministry Commissioning
16.00: St Mary's: Focal Ministry Commissioning
18.00: St John's: Sunday @ 6

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

Rector: Rev'd Heather Brearey
Email: arlevallyrector@gmail.com Tel: 01962 732105
Benefice website: www.arlevallychurches.org.uk

Wearing of Masks:

A little clarification - we encourage the wearing of masks during our services, but recognise that there are reasons why some people may not do so. All are warmly welcomed to our churches.

Services this Sunday: This Sunday at **St John's** there is a **Holy Communion** service at 8am, and **Parish Communion** at 9.30am. The celebrant at both is Rev'd Heather. The 9.30am service will be streamed live as usual, and the link to a recording of the service will be emailed out and will also be on the Benefice website.

In the evening there is our **Sunday @ 6** service.

There are no morning services today at **St Mary's** or at **All Saints** and there is no Café Church at **St Peter's** contrary to what it says in the parish magazine.

Focal Ministry has come about as part of the answer to ever-decreasing numbers of clergy looking after ever-increasing numbers of parishes. Focal Ministers are attached to a specific parish and are in effect the Incumbent's deputies, responsible for the churches and being a primary port of call for all parishioners in those places.

The first two Focal Ministers in the Winchester Diocese are to be commissioned by Bishop David on Sunday 5th December:

- **Ian Waring Green** will be commissioned as Focal Minister for Bighton at 2.30pm, and
- **Sue Armstrong** as Focal Minister for Old Alresford at 4pm.

These services will be brief and all are welcome.

Please hold Ian and Sue in your prayers as well as the communities they are to serve.

Wednesday 10am Communion Service at St John's:



The next Wednesday service is on **Wednesday 8th December**, the celebrant being Rev'd Heather Brearey. The service will be followed by coffee in the John Pearson Hall.

Morning Prayer will be said by Heather at 9am in the Benefice Churches during the week. *Anyone is welcome to drop in.*

Monday - *All Saints, Bighton.* Tuesday - *St John's, New Alresford.*

Wednesday - *St Mary's, Old Alresford.* Thursday - *St Peter's, Ovington.*

Christingle Service: There is a Christingle Service at St John's on **Sunday 12th December at 5pm.** *All are welcome.*



This week's notices...

SUNDAY@6 is NOW on the FIRST Sunday of the month

6pm Sunday 5th December 2021 at St John's



We would love you to join everyone for a service with a reflective informal contemporary feel.

Worship, Readings, Prayer and a Talk.

Time to chat with tea and cake from 5.45pm

A Gift from St John's 2021

Friday 3rd December 4-8pm & Saturday 4th December, 10am-4pm in the church.

Do bring a Toy / Jigsaw and Book to swap • Drop in for Refreshments • Christmas themed activities for all ages • Nativity story trail • Treasure hunt in the church • Prayer wall.

Generosity: Last year we asked you to donate food gifts which we gave out to schools, businesses etc as a sign of joy from St John's. This year we can still be a giving church but invite schools, businesses, shops etc in to church to share in the above events. We would suggest that instead of asking for actual gifts of biscuits, chocolates etc as we did last year, we would be grateful for money donations to pay for the giving of joy through these free activities, food and drinks. Any contributions would be really appreciated and gratefully received.

You can either pop an envelope into the Parish Office marked 'A Gift from St John's' or pay through a BACS transfer to PCC of New Alresford Parish Sort 51-61-09 Acc 04129849 and mark it *Gift from St John's*.

Thank you in advance for your help to share the much-needed love, joy and peace in our wonderful community.

Please pray for all who are helping with and all those coming to 'A Gift from St John's'.

Benefice Office: We all appreciate the warm welcome Penny gives us when we visit, but we need to remember that the office is open from 10 until 12 daily, and that visits outside those times can impinge on all the other tasks Penny needs to do. This means that she often works beyond her proper finishing time. We are hugely grateful for the way Penny gives so unstintingly of her time, but we must ensure we don't take advantage of her generosity. *Jane and Rosie.*

Prayer requests: If you would like the Prayer team to pray for you, your family, friends or any other situation, please contact Rosie Waring Green: rosie@22rwg.co.uk or 01962 733237. We of course always respect the confidentiality of your requests.



This week's notices...

Christmas Services:

You are all invited to come to the **Churches Together in Alresford Community Carol Service** at St John's Church on **Sunday 19th December at 6pm** which will be followed by mulled wine and mince pies. This service is for all ages and will be live-streamed through the St John's Facebook page and then available to watch on the Arle Valley Benefice website.

There will be **two Crib services at St John's Church** this year on **Christmas Eve December 24th** to ensure that the church will not be too crowded. The identical services will be at 4pm and 5.30pm and as usual the children are invited to come dressed as characters or animals from the Nativity Story. Please could you book the number of places needed, children and adults, at arlevalleychurches@gmail.com.

A reminder that there will be no church services on Sunday 26th December in any of the Benefice churches.

CAROLS FOR ALL

Saturday 11th December 7.30pm

St John's Church



This year, Alresford Community Choir will be presenting its Carol Concert to a select audience!

There will be items from the choir and a good selection of 'old favourites' for audience and choir to sing together.

To offer greater safety and comfort to all present, the choir and the audience will be smaller than for our usual Gala offerings and the concert will be shorter, with no interval. There will be more space, not only between groups and individual listeners but also between the performance area and the first row of the audience.

Although there will be no charge for tickets, we do ask that all ticket holders confirm that they have taken and received a negative flow-test result, within 24 hours before the event. You will be asked to wear an appropriate face mask on arrival, until you take your seat, and then as you leave.

As tickets will be strictly limited in number, we ask that you apply as early as possible, to avoid disappointment. Please contact alresfordchoir@hotmail.com or ask any choir member to reserve a ticket for you.

This week's notices...

St John's Christmas Card **Pack of 5 cards for £3.50**

**An original artwork by
Joanne Bunch
(one of her lockdown sketches).**

It features the Nativity stable
outside St John's Church during
Christmas 2020. The animals in the
foreground represent how the
children would have been dressed
up at the crib service in
'normal times'.

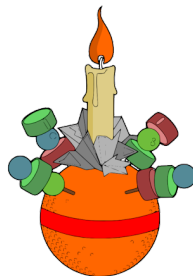
*The wording inside the card
includes the last verse of
'It came upon a midnight clear'.*



Help needed for Christingle Service:

There will be a working party at the John Pearson Hall
on Saturday 11th December between 10am and 11am
putting together the packs for the Christingle service at
St John's on Sunday 12th December. If you are able to
help please come along for an hour at the most.

Thank you.



Giving at St John's: If you would like to make a contribution to church
funds with a debit or credit card, this can usually be done at the back of
the church after the main services, or phone David Griffiths on 734408.

Please direct:

- ▶ **Material for notices:** email notices@arleyvalleychurches.org.uk
Deadline: 3pm Thursday.
- ▶ **Information about those in hospital** to Sue Greenway 732406 or Patricia Todd 738408 or Keith Sweetland 735255.
- ▶ **Information for Intercessions** to the churchwardens.

Collect and Readings for the Second Sunday of Advent

Collect

O Lord, raise up, we pray, your power
and come among us,
and with great might succour us;
that whereas, through our sins and wickedness
we are grievously hindered
in running the race that is set before us,
your bountiful grace and mercy
may speedily help and deliver us;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit,
be honour and glory, now and for ever.

Amen



First Reading: Malachi 3.1-4

To be announced as a Reading from the Book of Malachi

Thus says the Lord God: See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight – indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

At the end the reader will say: **This is the Word of the Lord**

The response is: **Thanks be to God**



Second Reading: Philippians 1.3-11

To be announced as a Reading from the Epistle to the Philippians

My brothers and sisters, I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of

Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

*At the end the reader will say: **This is the Word of the Lord**
The response is: **Thanks be to God***



Gospel: Luke 3.1-6

When the Gospel is announced we respond with:
Glory to you, O Lord

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

‘The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

“Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.

Every valley shall be filled,
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,
and the crooked shall be made straight,
and the rough ways made smooth;
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.”

*At the end the reader will say: **This is the Gospel of the Lord**
The response is: **Praise to you, O Christ***



Post Communion Prayer

Father in heaven,
who sent your Son to redeem the world
and will send him again to be our judge:
give us grace so to imitate him
in the humility and purity of his first coming
that, when he comes again,
we may be ready to greet him
with joyful love and firm faith;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Copyright Acknowledgement:

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Alternative Services comp. David Silk
Collect (2nd of Advent) © Crown/Cambridge University Press: The Book of Common Prayer (1662)

For Prayer

Please pray for:

- Those who are in **hospital**
- Those who are ill **at home** or recovering from being in hospital
- Those **receiving on-going care**
- Those in **Nursing and Rest Homes**
- **Home Communicants**
- **R.I.P.** Those who have recently died. We pray too for their families.

Please pray for...

This time of Advent. Help us to use this season as a time for opening our eyes. Help us to create space for reflection, taking a break from the bustle of Christmas, and to engage with the way in which the birth of the Christ child challenges so many of our values of wealth and attainment, safety and success.

Gods people all over the world where there is conflict, suffering due to climate change or an impending humanitarian disaster, praying especially for the Yemen, Madagascar, Ethiopia and Afghanistan. Pray for all working for charities offering support where it is so desperately needed and for us to be generous in our giving.

For all who are anxious about the latest Omicron Covid virus variant, in South Africa and all countries where few have been vaccinated. Pray for our NHS as staff are overstretched and exhausted by the increasing pressures of backlog, Covid and winter infections. Pray for all who are sick in hospital, all recovering at home, all facing long term serious illness and all who care for them.

Our churches as we prepare our Christmas services. Pray for Sue and Ian as they are licensed as focal ministers to Old Alresford and Bighton on Sunday, and for Heather and her family as the workload increases.

All who are bereaved, all who will spend Christmas alone this year for the first time. Pray that we may be sensitive to others, to recognise when a quick decision causes hurt or distress. Pray that we may live for other people, caring for others and holding them in our hearts.

Lynn Treneary, our CMS link in South Sudan, where problems range from famine caused by drought, followed by damaging floods, to outbreaks of fighting between factions in the civil war. Nevertheless she says that the people of Maridi's faith is strong and "God's joy is in this place". Our support and prayers are much appreciated there.

*For thou art our salvation, Lord, Our refuge, and our great reward;
Without thy grace we waste away, Like flowers that wither and decay.*