



St Helen's Church

Loving God, loving others, loving the world

Notices for 15th November, 2020

Dear Friends

This week I bought my Christmas stamps and then had a lie-down in a darkened room to get over the cost! They are now sitting, together with my stack of cellophane-wrapped cards, in my sewing room awaiting my attention. It's not a task I relish. Rather, it's a hurdle I try to stagger over before the beginning of December when my working life cranks up another gear.

The way I eventually persuade myself to put pen to card and envelope is an innate sense of fair play: I love receiving Christmas cards and so I need to send them too to give others reciprocal pleasure (I trust!).

It strikes me that this year Christmas cards might take on a special significance; that this year they won't be ripped open, read swiftly, and placed carelessly in the rush of everything else that December usually brings us. No, I suspect that this year Christmas cards will be received with care, attention and appreciation as vital connections to a world, a network, a way of life, from which we have been separated by Covid-19. Particularly for those feeling especially isolated in this pandemic, these cards might come as desperately needed signs that they are not forgotten; that they are precious, remembered, cherished.

And so I wonder whether we can re-brand writing Christmas cards this year as an act of love and service, rather than a chore; whether we can add to our list people we might not always remember in this way, those people who particularly need to know they are loved this year.

And I hope we are making ourselves ready to receive Christmas greetings, too; not just those messages of love from family and friends and colleagues, but also, especially, the message of the angels that into our isolation, a child has been born, for us; that into our darkness, an inextinguishable light blazes; that when we are stripped of all human company then, Emmanuel - God is with us.

Go on! - buy those stamps, break open the cellophane on those cards, and write of your love for the other, of your connection with them, even though apart. And remember: nothing can separate you from God's love.

With love

Mary

NOTICES

Star assembly line: home-workers needed!

The theme of this year's Advent and Christmas services is 'Light in the darkness'. To launch this theme with the town, we are 'yarn-bombing' it with knitted and crocheted stars in the early mornings of 28th and 29th November. Individual stars will be hung from trees, hedges and fences, with the invitation that people take them home.

Each star will have a small gift tag attached, signposting people to our website for details of the services.

Amazingly, our team has produced about 1100 stars! The labels are in production but we need your help to tie the labels to the stars. Could you help?

Because we can't meet to do this together, if you let me know that you could do a batch at home, I will deliver the kit to your doorstep and collect the completed stars from your doorstep when you've finished them. If we had ten volunteers, we'd quickly get through this task.

Please email me if you can help!

Many thanks.

Revd Mary

Ashby Foodbank

Our current opening times are:

Tuesday 9.30am to 11.30am: Ashby Congregational Church

Thursday 9.30am to 11.30am: Woodville distribution centre (at St Stephen's Church)

Friday 9.00am to 10.00am: Measham Baptist Church

Friday 2.00pm to 4.00pm: Ashby Congregational Church

Advent Course: Tuesday evenings in December

The Revd Rob Marsh, who is seconded to us, is offering to lead an Advent course for the Flagstaff Family called "Journeying through Advent with New Daylight" produced by BRF. It is designed for individual use and to also to have a weekly group meeting.

The course is described as 'Five weeks of Advent material for church groups and individuals, offering themed reflections by well-loved contributors from the *New Daylight* archive alongside specially written questions for group discussion.'

Week 1: The Advent antiphons – David Winter

Week 2: 2 and 3 John – Steve Aisthorpe

Week 3: Light in the darkness – Amy Boucher Pye

Week 4: Word incarnate: John 1:1–16 – Andy John

Week 5: Psalms of hope – Margaret Cundiff

The individual price of the book is £2.99 and the suggestion is that we bulk purchase to save the postage costs. A donation to the Church to cover the cost if you are able, can then be made.

You are invited to get in touch with Rob if you would like to take part in this course via Zoom. Please email Rob at ministry@family-marsh.uk.

12 Days of Giving

Ecclesiastical Insurance have launched this year's 12 days of giving. During the period 7th – 22nd December they donate £1,000 to 10 eligible charities each weekday totalling £120,000 to 120 charities over 12 days.

To nominate St Helen's visit movementforgood.com/12days and click 'nominate a charity now'.

Each draw will close at midnight the day before, with all nominations rolled over to the next available draw unless the charity is drawn.

The more nominations a charity gets, the greater its chance of receiving a £1,000 donation, so start spreading the word to your friends and family.

PRAYER

The Sick

Pray for those who are sick, disabled or housebound.

The bereaved

Pray especially for the families and friends of anyone known to you who is recently bereaved, and for all families for whom the funerals of their loved ones have taken place during this difficult time.

In love, we remember those whose anniversary of death falls at this time, praying for their families & friends:

- ◆ Frederick John Stanley
- ◆ Gerald Hammond
- ◆ Peter Horatio Jones
- ◆ Winifred Chick
- ◆ Cyril William Vickrage
- ◆ Brian Joseph Hall
- ◆ Arthur Evans
- ◆ Kathleen Cox
- ◆ Sandra Taylor

◆ St Helen's Prayer Chain:

Judith Lewis on 01530 564204
or email jchjcl@gmail.com

◆ Notice Sheet Prayer requests:

Jill Chapman on 07725 519453
or sthelensashby@gmail.com

Services

◆ Sunday 15th November

- 10.30am Holy Communion, streamed live on Flagstaff Facebook page

◆ Sunday 22nd November

- 10.30am Holy Communion, streamed live on Flagstaff Facebook page

◆ Sunday 29th November

- 10.30am Holy Communion, streamed live on Flagstaff Facebook page

Night Prayer/Compline

Lectionary readings for next week are:

• Sun 15th November:

1 Kings 1.15-40

OR Revelation 1.4-18

• Mon 16th November:

Isaiah 9.8—10.4

OR Matthew 7.1-12

• Tues 17th November:

Isaiah 10.5-19

OR Matthew 7.13-end

• Wed 18th November:

Isaiah 10.20-32

OR Matthew 8.1-13

• Thurs 19th November:

Isaiah 10.33—11.9

OR Matthew 8.14-22

• Fri 20th November:

Isaiah 11.10—end of 12

OR Matthew 8.23-end

• Sat 21st November:

Isaiah 13.1-13

OR Matthew 9.1-17

Contact Details

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◆ Flagstaff Team website:

www.flagstaff.org.uk

◆ Facebook:

St Helen's Ashby de la Zouch

◆ Twitter:

@sthelensashby