

SUNDAY 2 NOVEMBER: CHRIST THE KING

News from St Mary's Walkern

The last Collect of the year: Stir up Sunday



As we are all looking forward to Christmas, with some thought of Advent and Christingle to happen before that, we may think that New Year is a long way off, but for the church, that is not the case.

Because Advent is the beginning of the church's year, this Sunday is the last of the old year and our regular prayers (the 'collects') encourage us to think about the past but also look to the future. This year particularly has been quite a hard time for most of us. For the church, it has been a time of doing things differently, facing hard situations and enduring the loneliness of not worshipping together. If we are going to feel positive about the promise of hope, peace and good will that Christmas brings, we will need the help of the Holy Spirit to stir us out of our gloom.

This is the traditional prayer for this Sunday, the last before Advent

Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may of thee be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

From the beginning of this prayer, we get the name 'Stir up Sunday'. When people (especially the housewives!) heard this collect, they knew it was time to get stirring – to make Christmas puddings, cakes and mincemeat! Hearing the words 'plenteous' and 'fruits' got everybody thinking about the good times to come.



We have got a lot to look forward to, as well, in this new Church year. Let's all try to develop the 'fruit of good works' as we continue to care for our neighbours and friends through lockdown and beyond.

With best wishes,
Beverley and Maggie

Another chat from Guy...

Filling in the pot-holes! Preparing for Advent.

It only takes a moment to turn the pages in your Bible from Malachi to Matthew, from the Old Testament to the New. But in reality they mark a four hundred year gap when it seemed to the people of Israel that God wasn't talking to them any more. No more prophets. No more insights. The old men dreamed no dreams and the young men saw no visions. Just silence.

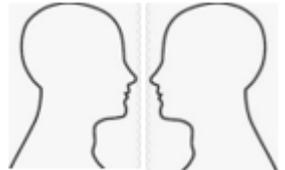


Then, at the point of nearly giving up, a voice cries out in the wilderness 'Prepare the way for the Lord! Clear a straight path for him! Every ravine shall be filled in, every mountain and hill levelled; the corners shall be straightened and the rugged ways made smooth; and all

mankind shall see God's deliverance!' Luke 3:4-6. Nothing less than a road improvement programme after years of neglect! Then, as though that wasn't enough, at the Saviour's baptism heaven itself was opened and the Creator speaks directly! 'Thou art my Son, my Beloved; On thee my favour rests.' Luke 3:22. But does heaven shut again after the event like a window closed? Does God turn his face away once more? No. Not at all. The dove descends and God lives wonderfully among us in His Son.

In John 14:6 the Redeemer tells Thomas 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.' In Greek the Way is Hodus. Ex Hodus or Exodus was the Way Out of captivity for the children of Israel and to freedom in the Promised Land. Christ is the great fulfillment of that Way, that Exodus, the Way out, the Way through, the Way into the Kingdom. He is the Royal Highway that leads His followers straight and directly to perfect freedom and joy and into the very presence of God. Yes, to bring us home. That gives me great hope. To me the present complicated world is a self-reflecting place, a hall of mirrors, a closed in echo chamber where, if we are not careful, we are doomed for eternity to repeat our worst mistakes.

Paul talks of these confusing reflections in 1 Corinthians 13, but reminds us of that clear time when we shall see the Creator Face to Face. Christ is the Way that leads us out of the dark maze of our fallen nature and out into the open marvellous light.



Let's leave the last word to the last prophet, Malachi, when he delightfully says in Malachi 4:2, 'but for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in his wings, and you shall break out leaping like calves released from the stall.'

Thank you Guy

St Mary's: no services

According to the Government regulations, churches are not allowed to open for public worship and so there will be no services at St Mary's in November. Further information will be given in the newsletter and on posters about opening dates and times.



WALKERN FOOD BANK

We will be operating a food bank for those in need in Walkern at church on **Wednesday mornings, 10.30-11.30am, starting on 11th November.**

Initially we will only be taking/offering dried or tinned food and toiletries such as soap, toothpaste etc.

Three new collection points: as well as the church (between 10.30 and 11.30am on Wednesdays), there are three new collection points: outside the shop, at No 100 High Street and at the back of No 32 High Street.

If you know of anyone who could benefit from receiving some help please contact Beverley Harlow on 07881588662 or bevharlow16@gmail.com

If people feel unable to come to church to either donate or pick up items we will arrange collection/distribution.

Thank you – Beverley and Maggie



Advent Sunday Zoom

On **Sunday 29th November** we will all be joining together to celebrate Advent Sunday as a benefice with a zoom service hosted from Cottered.

Friday 4th – Sunday 6th December 2020



Please keep this well-loved village tradition
alive by **entering** your Christmas tree
and/or **voting** in the
**Walkern Walking
Christmas Tree Festival**



Get your entry **Application form** from the porch at St Mary's,
aphillips@cix.co.uk or from our website www.ubbw.org.uk.

Everyone is warmly invited to **view** and **judge** the trees by walking
around the village and seeing what the creative people of Walkern
are doing to keep Christmas alive this year.

!CHRISTMAS IS NOT CANCELLED!

St Mary's Christmas Tree Festival 4th – 6th December



Display your tree in your window or garden (Entry forms from St
Mary's to receive competition number). Voting slips available
from St Mary's - walk round and judge the trees! Pictures also
online.

*Grand prize awarded at Christmas Fundraising Fair
(11.45 a.m.) following: Christingle service at St
Mary's 11a.m. 6th December*

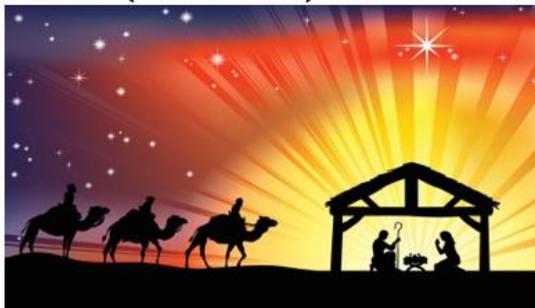
St Mary's 9 Lessons and Carols: Open Air Service of
carols and readings. 20th December (details later)

Midnight Communion:

24th December 11.30 p.m. at
St Mary's

*Please support your village
church*

Look out for further details.



Hymns, Readings and Prayers

SUNDAY 22 NOVEMBER: CHRIST THE KING

Hymn for the week



Barbara Foster has offered this hymn for this coming Sunday. It's number 484 from Hymns Old and New:

The king of love my shepherd is

Barbara says:

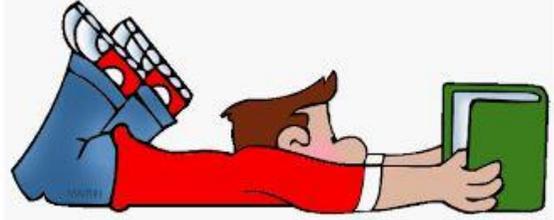
“Our reading today from Ezekiel, talks of God's care for us being like that of a shepherd for his sheep. Psalm 23 takes up this idea and in this hymn the same words are echoed about God's unfailing love for his flock.”

If you would like to listen and maybe sing along, just click on the blue link below or copy and paste it into your internet browser (eg Google).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MwqahDvURsQ>

Thank you Barbara

Reading for the week



Reading: Ezekiel 34:11 – 16, 20 - 24

Sheep and Shepherds

Sheep and shepherds crop up quite often in the Bible. It's probably not surprising as sheep played such a large role in people's lives. They provided not only meat and clothing but also milk, butter, cheese, floor coverings, soap, candles and even musical instruments!

Sheep need someone to care for them and some of the great Bible characters we read about in the Old Testament were shepherds: Abraham, Jacob, Moses and of course David. David, Jacob's youngest son, was actually looking after his father's flock when he was called back home to be anointed as king by Samuel.

God often compares his people to sheep and in this reading from Ezekiel God is telling the Israelites that he himself will be their shepherd and take care of them. What lovely words God spoke through Ezekiel: 'I will let them graze in safety; find them a place to rest; look for those that wander off; bandage those who are hurt; heal those who are sick. I will rescue my sheep and not let them be ill-treated.'

In our country we see quad bikes and dogs helping to round up the sheep but this wasn't so in Israel. There shepherds didn't drive the sheep but led them and the sheep followed. David says in his beautiful and familiar psalm 23: 'The Lord is my shepherd; I have everything I need he leads me to quiet pools of fresh water. he guides me in the right paths.' An interesting fact I found out was that sheep are frightened of fast running water and can't drink from it which explains why the 'quiet pools' or 'still waters' were important. A good shepherd knows just what his sheep need.

In the New Testament Jesus described himself as the Good Shepherd. How interesting then that when he called his disciples he didn't say come and learn from me or come and help me – he said, 'Follow me' and amazingly they did!

Psalm 95, reminds us that 'we are the people he cares for, the flock for which he provides'. Isn't it great to know we are God's people, his sheep and so we can say like David, 'The Lord is my shepherd?'

Anne Hudson



Prayers for the week

COLLECT

God the Father,
help us to hear the call of Christ the King
and to follow in his service,
whose kingdom has no end;
for he reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, one glory. Amen

**Please join us in saying the Collect at
12 noon every day.**

Zoom on Sunday at 11

I know that many say the Collect at 11am on a Sunday in the knowledge that their friends are doing the same thing. You may like to join me on Sunday for an informal Zoom meeting to sing Barbara's hymn, hear the reading and say the prayers together.

The information for this meeting is:

Topic: Sunday at 11

Time: Nov 22, 2020 11:00 AM London

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84543615940>

Meeting ID: 845 4361 5940



If you need some help getting started with Zoom, click this link for a useful YouTube video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qsy2Ph6kSf8&list=PLKpRxBfeD1kEM_I1Ild3N_XI77fKDzSXe

Prayers

We give thanks to God, our good shepherd.

Loving Father,

We thank you for the support and strength you give to our small community.

Thank you for the friends who are leading us through this time of challenges and worry, who have found new ways of drawing us together to praise you.

Thank you for the continuing beauty of the world around us which brings us a sense peace and joy even at difficult times.

Thank you for the warmth and comfort which spreads through and beyond the village, because of the efforts of those who are guided by your call to Love one another.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for national and world leaders

Oh God our guide and shepherd,

You taught us that all who would seek to be first would be last,

And all who would lead should serve responsibly.

We lift to you today all who have the responsibility of leadership, influence and power.

We ask you to give strength when decisions are difficult.

We ask you to give wisdom to discern the best way forward.

We ask you to give courage in balancing risk and safety.

Bring strong and truthful people to aid our leaders in their work,

And bless every act of selfless leadership.

We ask this in the name Jesus, our shepherd and our leader.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for guidance to aid us in spreading the Gospel of Love.

O God, Shepherd of all your people,

Your Son taught us to love one another.

Help us to spread compassion to those who are suffering in mind, body or spirit.

Help us to speak for those who are voiceless.

Help us to defend those who are oppressed and abused.

Help us to work for justice for those who are exploited.

Help us to bring peace to those who suffer violence.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, the good shepherd.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

And now we join together in saying the Lord's Prayer.

Barbara Foster

A prayer during vacancy

God our Father, at this time of change, send your Holy Spirit to fill us with vision, energy and faithfulness in prayer, that we may be true to our calling to bring new life to our community. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

PRAYER REQUESTS

Named requests for prayer will be included on the notice sheet for at least one month. If you would like a name to be included for our intercessions, please contact the Parish Office ubbw@hotmail.co.uk or 07407 630159 or Maggie Hawkins (359500) for Walkern or Rita Plumb (869731) for Benington. (Names from the prayer board in St Mary's Church will also be included in the intercessions in that church.) Prayer is regularly offered for all the sick and needy in our community.

FOR OUR PRAYERS THIS WEEK

Those who live in our villages: This week we pray for all who live in Beecroft Lane, Walkern and Hebing End, Benington.

We pray for those in our parishes or friends and family members who are housebound, unwell, receiving treatment or recovering from operations:
Bruce Standing and David de Boenville.

We also remember those who have died and their families and friends, especially Roger Wallace and Terence Young.

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN BENINGTON & WALKERN: CONTACT NUMBERS

MEMBERS OF ECUMENICAL MINISTRY TEAM

Methodist: Revd Malcolm Peacock (01462 646562), Mr Brian Burgess (237748),
Mrs Brenda Davies (227293);

URC: Revd John Walker (01462-895481), Mrs Mary Miller (861289),
Mrs Olga Ginn (861754);

Roman Catholic: Mrs Rita Healy (861098);

St Peter and St Mary: Revd Norman Plumb (869731),
Mr Paul Cobb, *Reader* (869348), Mr Laurie Hawkins, *Reader* (359500),
Mr Steve Mason, *Reader* (360847),
Mrs Jenny Cobb (869348), Mrs Rita Plumb (869731).

TO ARRANGE BAPTISMS, WEDDINGS OR FUNERALS, CONTACT:

Church clergy: United Reformed Church: Revd John Walker (01462 895481)
Benington Methodist Church: Revd Malcolm Peacock (01462 646562)
St Mary's and St Peter's: Benefice Administrator ubbw@hotmail.co.uk

FOR OTHER PASTORAL HELP, CONTACT:

Benington Pastoral visiting team c/o Mrs Rita Plumb (869731)
Walkern Pastoral visiting team c/o Mrs Maggie Hawkins (359500)
St Peter's, Benington Churchwardens:
Mrs Christine Brown (869468) & Mrs Clare Wood (869674)

St Mary's, Walkern Churchwardens:
Mrs Beverley Harlow (225365) & Mrs Maggie Hawkins (359500)

FOR ADMINISTRATIVE ENQUIRIES, CONTACT:
Benington Methodist Steward: Mr Brian Burgess (237748)
Walkern URC Secretary: Mrs Olga Ginn (861754)

Funnies



Wrong turn Driver fails to follow the sign

The driver of this Vauxhall Corsa made a mockery of the sign outside the village of Wickwar, near Bristol. Fortunately, nobody was believed to have been injured in the incident last week.



**The amount of jokes
about coronavirus
virus has reached
worrying numbers.
Scientists claim we
are in the middle of a
pundemic**