

Brooklands Church Update

Sunday#19 December

Dear Friends

*"Love shall be our token,
love be yours and love be mine;
love to God and neighbour,
love for prayer and gift and sign."*

So writes Christina Rossetti in the famous Christmas Carol, 'Love Came down at Christmas.' If a single word manages to capture ALL of the Christmas story, ALL of the Scriptural narrative, ALL of the Gospel, and ALL of the ways we are to live as Christians it is this: Love. May people know that we fully believe what we say we believe by the way we live lives of love.

I am sure you will agree, we had a wonderful time in church last week, celebrating the nativity with our children. Thank you to everyone who worked so hard to make this happen. Gilly Parish has captured the essence of the children's nativity service with a piece of artwork, which we have included below. Thank you Gilly for this work.

Today we light the fourth candle of Advent, the candle of Love. Of course, lighting the fourth candle of Advent means that the waiting is almost over. This is the last Sunday we gather before Christmas day itself! But there remains much excitement before then...

Tonight is our Christmas banquet which is by pre-booking only. The food has been purchased and the preparations are well underway. We are to be seated for 5pm to enjoy a lovely meal and seasonal fun and fellowship together.

On Tuesday we will meet in the church car park at 7.30pm to sing some carols in the local community. This will take us approximately 30 mins before we return to the church for a cuppa. Please do wrap up warm and join us as we seek to bless our neighbours.

A reminder that we will gather on Christmas morning for a short time of worship. It will be family orientated and include all-age participation. In fact, if children could come with their favourite toy there will be an opportunity to show it to everyone. Christmas day service starts at 10am. We'll also gather on Boxing Day for worship. This too will be a family service. All of these events will be broadcast on our church YouTube so that you can also join in from your home or watch them back later.

We want to say a huge thank you to Erica Thompson and her team for running a very successful Santa's grotto for the Brooklands community on Thursday. Erica heads up the local Tenants and Residents Association and has partnered with us on a number of occasions for the benefit of the local community. The responses on social media to this event were great to see.

Peace,

Mick

ADVENT

May the Lord make your

love

increase and overflow
for each other

1 Thessalonians 3:12



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THE IMPOSSIBLE PROMISE

OUT OF NOWHERE,
BOOM! AN ANGEL APPEARED!
 "YOU ARE CHOSEN & SPECIAL!"
 "YOU ARE CARRYING THE SON OF GOD."
 "THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!" SAID MARY. "NOT FOR GOD!"
 THE ANGEL REPLIED - THEN **BOOM!** HE VANISHED.
 JOSEPH WAS NOT IMPRESSED. JUST AS HE WAS ABOUT
 TO CALL THE WHOLE THING OFF **BOOM!** AN ANGEL
 APPEARED. "IT'S OK JOSEPH! THE BABY BELONGS TO
 GOD - WE NEED YOU TO HELP LOOK AFTER HIM."
 SO THEY GOT MARRIED & HEADED SOUTH ON A LOOONG
 JOURNEY... AND WHEN THEY ARRIVED, TIRED & HUNGRY,
 THERE WAS NOWHERE TO STAY, ONLY A STABLE.
 NEARBY, THE SHEPHERDS IN THE FIELDS SAW AN ANGEL
 (THOSE ANGELS ARE BUSY!) FOLLOWED BY LOTS MORE.
 "JESUS IS HERE" THEY SAID, "HE'S UNDER A STAR - GO &
 FIND HIM", & OFF THEY WENT. WISE MEN FROM AFAR
 FOUND OUT ABOUT THE BABY TOO, & WENT OFF IN
 SEARCH OF HIM. THE JOURNEY WAS LONG,
 FOR ALL OF THEM - MARY, JOSEPH, SHEPHERDS,
 WISE MEN, BUT GOD HAD PROMISED, &
 HOWEVER IMPOSSIBLE IT ALL SEEMED,
 THEY TRUSTED HIM. AND SOON
 ENOUGH, THEY FOUND HIM.

LIGHT THE JOY WITHIN
 ME LORD

HAVE YOU?

3RD SUNDAY

OF ADVENT

Important Church News about COVID-19

COVID-19: Guidance for the safe use of Places of Worship

The government has announced that England will move to Plan B in response to the risks of the Omicron variant.

What this means for places of worship

Face coverings

Face coverings are required by law in most indoor public places, including places of worship, and on public transport. Face coverings are not be required in hospitality settings such as cafes, restaurants and pubs. This is because it is not practical for customers to keep removing their face coverings to eat or drink. This means that in a café within a place of worship, face coverings are not required, but they are mandatory in the rest of the premises.

Steps everyone can take to reduce the risk of transmission

- *Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19, should not attend church. They should self-isolate immediately and get a PCR test.
- *If someone has been instructed by NHS Test and Trace to self-isolate because they have tested positive for COVID-19, or they are the close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, they must self-isolate and not attend.
- *Social distancing in a place of worship is now a personal choice. We ask you to respect other attendees and those working who may wish to adopt a more cautious approach.
- *Several simple and effective personal hygiene behaviours can also continue to reduce the risk of catching or spreading COVID-19. These include:
 - *washing your hands with soap and water or using hand sanitiser regularly throughout the day
 - *avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth, and washing your hands before and after if you do need to touch your face (for example to put on or take off your face covering)
 - *covering your mouth and nose with disposable tissues when you cough or sneeze, or sneezing into the crook of your elbow (not your hands) if you do not have a tissue

Social distancing and capacity

You do not need to implement social distancing. However, you may choose to limit the close contact you have with people you do not live with. This can help reduce your risk of catching or spreading COVID-19.

Singing

We would encourage everyone to continue to wear their face coverings while singing if they feel able to do so.

Other measures

The church will be ventilated where possible. Surfaces will be regularly disinfected. Face coverings will be available for those who do not have them, and hand sanitising gels will be readily available.

Please help us to protect those attending church from becoming infected with COVID-19.



Church Calendar



MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Date	Event
Sunday 19 December 2021	Fourth Sunday of Advent, 10:30 am
Sunday 19 December 2021	Church Christmas Banquet, 5:00 pm (pre-booking only)
Wednesday 22 December 2021	Toddle-In, 10:00 am CANCELLED
Wednesday 22 December 2021	Church Zoom Prayer Meeting , 10:30 am CANCELLED
Wednesday 22 December 2021	FoodCycle free community meal at church at 5:00pm CANCELLED
Tuesday 21 December 2021	Christmas Carols in the Community. Meet at church, 7:30pm
Thursday 23 December 2021	Community Café, 11:00 am to 2:00 pm
Saturday 25 December 2021	Christmas Morning celebration, 10:00 am to 10:30 am
Sunday 26 December 2021	Boxing Day service, 10:30 am
Sunday 2 January 2022	Sunday Worship, Lucy Frost is preaching
Sunday 9 January 2022	Sunday Worship, Rev. Dr Deirdre Brower-Latz is our speaker
11-13 February 2022	Ladies' Weekend - Created to Create



Church Prayer Requests



PRAYER REQUESTS

- 📖 Pray for our church as we continue in the season of Advent, with lots of important and exciting activities.
- 📖 Pray for all the children connected to Brooklands Church of the Nazarene. We also give thanks for the team who serve and lead them each week.
- 📖 We pray for Colin Dunbar who is very unwell.
- 📖 Pray for Bill and Sue Ellis who have both been ill recently.
- 📖 We continue to uphold John and Ann Beattie in prayer.
- 📖 Jon Fisher has completed his most recent cancer treatment. We continue to pray for him.
- 📖 Isobel's recent scan results have shown no significant changes in her cancer. We praise God for this and continue to pray for Isobel in these days.
- 📖 Pray for Ron and Jenny Hearne who have been poorly recently.
- 📖 Pray for Pastor Mick's dad, also called Mick, who needs a lot of prayer at this time.
- 📖 Continue to pray for Chris Hoolihan who has arrhythmia of the heart.
- 📖 Pray for David and Chris Hoolihan's son Philip, in Vietnam, who has been in hospital recently? Pray for his wife, Hua also.
- 📖 We pray for Marie Vickers, a family member of David and Chris Hoolihan. Marie has received sudden news that she has a serious illness.
- 📖 We continue to pray for Myra's nephew, Lee Hickman, for a full recovery following a stroke earlier this year.
- 📖 We continue to pray for Annette and Mike Jones and give thanks that Annette's condition is improving.
- 📖 Continue to pray for Brenda Cawley and family as her granddaughter's partner, Owen is very ill with cancer.
- 📖 We continue to remember Alan Roberts, son-in-law of Val Batty, who has cancer.
- 📖 We pray for others in our congregation who need healing.
- 📖 Pray for those we have recently come into contact with, and who are showing an interest in church.
- 📖 Pray for the continuing work of the church in the local community, and for the relationships that are being forged.
- 📖 Pray for wisdom for the church board as we consider the implications of Covid variants, and the need to protect our visitors.
- 📖 Pray for protection for all who enter Brooklands Church.



Sermon: The Forgotten Characters of Christmas

4: Anna and Simeon

Reading: Luke 2:22-40

22 When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord
23 (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord”),
24 and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: “a pair of doves or two young pigeons.”
25 Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him.
26 It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah.
27 Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required,
28 Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:
29 “Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. 30 For my eyes have seen your salvation, 31 which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: 32 a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel.”
33 The child’s father and mother marveled at what was said about him.
34 Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against,
35 so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.”
36 There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage,
37 and then was a widow until she was eighty-four.[e] She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying.
38 Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.
39 When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth.
40 And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.



O Come, O Come, Immanuel

A prayer journey
through Advent

Week Four Love

Sunday 19 December 2021

Advent Reading Psalm 80 verse 3—God is Love

Prayer (by Pastor Jenna Jones, Leeds South) Heavenly Father, You are the God of love and your love came down at Christmas, to stay with us forever. Thank you, Jesus, for your never-ending love.

We pray that this Christmas you would remind us of the love that is full of your peace, joy and hope, a love that is the greatest gift that we could ever receive.

May you pour out your saving love into our hearts and the hearts of our family and friends in a powerful way today.

Open our eyes, Lord, to see the things that you see and to have the courage to step out and demonstrate your love to others in our words and actions.

Bless your people we pray. Amen.

Collective Prayer Pray for the enabling to share the love of God with those who need Him, so that they may know what it means to be saved and loved by Him.

Church reading Revelation chapter 7 verse 1 to – chapter 8 verse 5

Church Prayer Nikki and Mathew Armett, Antony Jessica and family

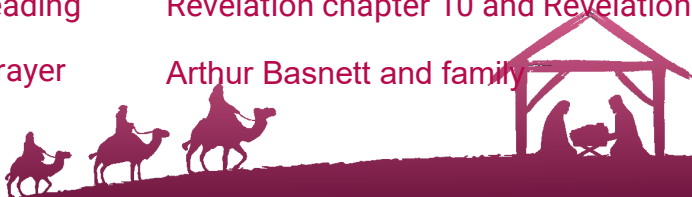


Monday 20 December 2021

Advent Reading	Colossians chapter 1 verse 15 to 20—The Image of God
Prayer (by David Gilmour, Llay)	<p>God of unending love and unfailing grace, We thank you that in Jesus Christ we see everything we need to know about who you are and what you're like; because we have seen Him, we have seen the perfect image of God.</p> <p>And we thank you that the life and death and resurrection of Christ prove that the most full and perfect way we can understand you is this: God is Love.</p> <p>You proved it through healing the sick and raising the dead; through feeding the hungry and liberating the oppressed. And you have proven it in our lives over and over again.</p> <p>Thank you, Lord, for your incredible, immeasurable love for us. Amen.</p>
Collective Prayer	Pray that God would grant you an ever greater awareness of how deeply loved you are.
Church reading	Revelation chapter 8 verse 6 to – chapter 9 verse 21
Church Prayer	Maud Batchelor

Tuesday 21 December 2021

Advent Reading	Psalm 23 verse 4—The Light Shines
Prayer (by Rev. Stephen Morley, Ashton)	<p>Dear Heavenly Father, On this the longest night of the year, on this dark night, we light a candle and watch as its light reaches into our darkness, as you have, in Christ, reached out to us.</p> <p>We recognise that, while many anticipate this season with joy, others lament loss, an empty chair. And so we pray that in grief and loss; in longing and loneliness, that You would illuminate our lives with your loving presence. As your Word proclaims, "The light shines in the darkness and the darkness doesn't extinguish the light."</p> <p>So may your light enter into our heartbreak and our loss, so we in this season might know Immanuel, God with us. And in turn, may we bring your light into the dark corners of our world; a light of hope, healing and love! Amen.</p>
Collective Prayer	Light a candle at a meal, and name before God those who have experienced loss this year. Pray that they might know His presence breaking in. Then reach out to them.
Church reading	Revelation chapter 10 and Revelation chapter 11
Church Prayer	Arthur Basnett and family



Wednesday 22 December 2021

Advent Reading

Ephesians chapter 2 verses 19 to 22—Loving the unloving

Prayer (by David Gilmour, Llay)

God our Lord, We thank you for the incredible love which has reached even us. But we confess that at so many times and in so many ways, we have failed to love our neighbour as we ought, and as you've commanded us to.

Forgive us, Lord, when we've failed to love our enemies, our opposites, and our irritants. Forgive us when we've chosen to forget that you have built and are building for yourself one household, a single holy temple in your Son.

And enable us to love with the same love you have for us and for our neighbours – loving the unlovely, the unlovable, and the unloving.

We pray in the name of Christ, the Love of God made flesh and blood. Amen.

Collective Prayer

Pray for those whom you struggle to love, that God would bless them richly and abundantly.

Church reading

Revelation chapter 12

Church Prayer

Theresa Baker and family

Thursday 23 December 2021

Advent Reading

Luke chapter 1 verses 46 to 50—He has done great things

Prayer (by David Gilmour, Llay)

Almighty God our Heavenly Father, We thank you that when we were in a humble state, you were mindful of us.

When there was nothing in us deserving of your care, Christ came for us; When we were helpless and hopeless, Christ died for us; When we could never earn it or be worthy of it, Christ rose for us.

You have done great things for us – may we never stop giving thanks; may we never stop being amazed; may we never stop being in awe.

With Mary, may we rejoice in God our Saviour, and do so in such a way that those around us call us blessed, and want to be a part of what you're doing in your world. Amen.

Collective Prayer

Thank God, as specifically as you can, for the many great things He has done for you and yours.

Church reading

Revelation chapter 13

Church Prayer

Val Batty and family



Friday 24 December 2021

Advent Reading	Isaiah chapter 9 verse 2, and verses 6 to 7—To us a Child is born
Prayer (by David Gil-mour, Llay)	<p>Sovereign Lord, Today we remember the night when the Child was born to us, when the Son was given to us. When you emptied yourself of all but love and stepped down into human flesh.</p> <p>We anticipate your coming Kingdom, but give you thanks for your impossible humility. We thank you that, in the words of one of your saints, a stable had Something inside it that was bigger than our whole world.</p> <p>May Christ be born anew in us today; may His rule and reign be evident in our lives; may the zeal of the Lord Almighty accomplish in us and through us everything you desire, and everything you're due.</p> <p>We pray in the Name of Christ our King, Amen.</p>
Collective Prayer	Thank God for His meekness and majesty, and invite the King to take His throne in your life.
Church reading	Revelation chapter 14
Church Prayer	John & Ann Beattie & family

Saturday 25 December 2021

Advent Reading	John chapter 1 verses 1 to 14—The Word became flesh
Prayer (by Rev. Carl McCann, British Isles South District)	<p>Holy God, we are in awe at Your might and majesty, and yet we marvel still more at Your humility.</p> <p>The Word through whom stars were formed and time itself set in motion, stooping to dwell amongst us... our minds cannot comprehend the profound mystery, nor can our hearts contain its richness, nor our words adequately express our gratitude.</p> <p>Thank You Jesus for putting flesh on love - empower us to tangibly love others; Thank You Jesus for dwelling amongst us - teach us to dwell amongst others; Thank You Jesus for bearing our pain - teach us to share the pain of others.</p> <p>Thank You, Praise You. Amen.</p>
Collective Prayer	Pray that God would enable you to be a blessing to all those you live amongst.
Church reading	Catch up
Church Prayer	Vivienne Best and family

