

ST MARY'S GAMLINGAY, HATLEY ST GEORGE & ST MARY'S EVERTON



Weekly newsletter 10 December 2021



From Hilary

Advent seems to be flying by - I'm glad it's a long one this year, though I still don't see that Christmas cards will get sent by me. May God bless us as we seek to grow in the weekly Advent themes of Hope, Peace and now, this week, Joy.

Carol Services - what we will be doing?

We are still planning for traditional lessons and carols with congregational and small group singing (all singers testing on the day) both at Everton for the Benefice and at Hatley for the Hatley community. Continue to watch this space and social media as we cannot guarantee how Covid may affect what we do, not least because of the risk of losing key personnel due to needing to isolate if they pick up Covid. A reminder that we are asking people NOT to plan to go to Hatley if they would not normally have done so. For those who will be there, we are still offering refreshments after the service, but at the parish hall as we don't feel this could be done safely in church.

Apologies again - the time of the Hatley service is 7.00pm, confusion is all my fault.

Advent 2 look-back

Everton children made angels, remembering those that interacted with prophets - particularly Elijah this Sunday. The template used was from Roderick - thank you to him. The products are to be put in the working churches for this week. We lit the second Advent candle on our Advent wreath (this picture from Hatley) as we look for the Peace of Advent - God to be found in the silence and waiting.



Advent Angels - Advent 3

The angel themed studies continue this next week in the context of John the Baptist - 'that prophet' and Joy. John's task was to 'prepare the way of the Lord'. We meet the angel who comes to Zechariah, John's father, promising John's conception and telling of the task John will have. Zechariah's joyful song in response at John's birth, the Benedictus, is used as a canticle at morning prayer. The 'starter' material for the session is available from Hilary, Chris or Valerie. Those attending in person are invited to take a lateral flow test on the day - as Hilary will have done.

Tuesday 14th Dec

8.00pm on Zoom only, led by Chris Miller

Wednesday 15th Dec

10.30am at the Rectory face to face and on Zoom led by Hilary

Gamlingay Church Attempted Break-in

Many readers will know that there was criminal damage done to the reinforced steel padlock at the base of one of the scaffolding towers securing access to the roof at St Mary's last Friday night. Nothing was taken (apart from the cut link from the chain) but it is a reminder to continue to be vigilant as the site is vulnerable, though well guarded by monitored security cameras. THANK YOU to those who are keeping watch for us. Our prayers continue for protection - the delay caused by a theft could be disastrous to the timing of the project, on which the funding depends.



Gamlingay Switch-On

A huge THANK YOU to everyone who contributed to making this a much-appreciated community event. Sandra for Gamlingay St Mary and Adrian and team for GBC worked with the Council planning group to get trees (generously donated by 'All Growth') put up and to make all the other arrangements. Thank you to Nick and Greg for help with the lights at St Mary's and the Alms House Chapel and to the school children for their decorations. Also, a big thank you to local businesses who contributed delicious edibles - the CoOp, AJs, the Wheatsheaf and GBC. Well done all, including a big thank you to Cyndy and family for enabling Father Christmas to be with us by horse-drawn transport and to accompany the group round the village. A collection was made for next year's effort, the lights came on, on cue, at The Jannah, with 'snow' and canon-powered snow flakes - a good time was had by all. Well done.



Gamlingay Christmas Fair

This weekend sees a great deal of effort and planning, all done at short notice, come together. 'Thank you' and 'well done' to everyone who has worked so hard, we hope and pray this will raise the needed funds for this parish. There is still time to contribute to the draw - there will be tickets on sale at the event on Saturday, but they can also be obtained from Alec Hissett. Donations for the stalls, as in last week's Newsletter, can still be offered too.

Treasurer's Report

2021 has been another challenging year for most of us, in one way or another. At the time of writing, I'm at home self-isolating after having tested positive for Covid, with mild symptoms yet unable to do many of the things I would have liked to have been doing in the following 10 days. The PCC finances started the year under Covid restrictions, limiting our ability to hold fund raising activities. Yet, as the year progressed and the restrictions were lifted and thanks to the efforts of the organisers and all those involved, the PCC income through fundraising reached over £4,300 to date, with our biggest yet fund raiser on the horizon for this weekend.

Our greatest challenge, however, was meeting the Ministry Share Contributions for 2021. Whilst in previous years the PCC has always managed to fulfil its contributions, this time we had to reach for most of our reserves in order to do so. This leaves the PCC accounts in a rather delicate position as it relies on the generous donations from individuals and fund-raising fruits from the Xmas fair, to rebuild reserves for 2022. Hilary and Chris Miller are circulating a letter to our PCC electorate with reference to our finances in the new year, in an effort to raise the awareness and encouraging those who can give to do so generously.

As for the roof works, I wanted to mention the enormous efforts of Friends of St Mary's who managed to raise £85,000, which is made up of generous donations from local benefactors. This will accommodate for any cash flow issues at this early stage whilst we make our initial fund submission to the National Churches Trust, from who we will receive a grant of over £200K. Our first monitoring report from the surveyors has shown no unexpected costs at this early stage, in line with schedule. We are however duly reminded that it is still early days.

Nick Ingles

This Week

Sunday 12th December Advent 3

- 9.30am Eucharist at Gamlingay EcoHub - Kingspan hall, followed by refreshments and Grand Draw.
4.00pm Evensong with optional communion following, at Everton Church

Wednesday 15th December

- 9.30am Midweek Communion at the Rectory in Gamlingay and on Zoom
Meeting ID: 857 7959 5724. Passcode: 958554

Next Week

Sunday 19th December Advent 4

- 9.30am Eucharist Hatley or Ecohub Kingspan hall, TBC
4.00pm Benefice Carol Service at Everton Church

Monday 20th December

- 7.00pm Christmas Carol Service at Hatley St George (**not** 6.30 as on the Christmas Card)

Friday 24th December – Christmas Eve

- 4pm Christingle at Everton Church
4.30pm Christingle at Gamlingay EcoHub with nativity walk from 4pm in Church Street
11.30pm First Communion of Christmas (Midnight Mass) at Everton Church

Christmas Day

- 10.00am Family Communion at Hatley St George
10.00am Carols and Readings at Everton Church

Sunday 26th December

- 10.00am Family Communion for St. Stephen's Day at Everton Church



CHRISTMAS SOCIAL

Friday 17th December, 7.30pm in Gamlingay Church Hall

As usual the programme will consist of Christmas Carols interspersed with items performed by members of the audience. If you would like to offer something (reading, playlet, song...) please let Chris Miller know by Wednesday 15th December. Nibbles will be provided – please bring your own drink.



THIS SATURDAY!

St. Mary's Gamlingay

CHRISTMAS FAIR



Don't forget to come along to the Eco Hub between 1 and 5 pm to support this important and highly enjoyable fundraising event. There will be stalls, refreshments, mulled wine, Santa's Grotto, music and entertainment including the Alice Lucas School of Dance and the last chance to buy more tickets for the Grand Draw to take place the following day.

NB : Valerie is still open to the offer of cakes which may be delivered to 11 Bunyan Close on Friday or to the Eco Hub on Saturday morning - after 11 am both days. ***SEE YOU THERE.....***

CHRISTMAS WREATH MAKING WORKSHOP

On Monday the Guild of St. Mary held an extra afternoon meeting when Sarah Titmus gave a demonstration and workshop on Christmas wreath making. Six brave souls practiced their skills while the rest of us thoroughly enjoyed sitting back and watching them work! As you can see they achieved some very pleasing results. Maybe you will spot the wreaths hanging on front doors as you walk round the village!



Hard at work!.....



Some end results.....



And of course there was tea!



THANK YOU SARAH – it was a lovely afternoon.

A reminder of church opening times and some key contact details:

Everton church open Friday- Sunday, and on Bank Holiday Mondays 10am-4pm.
Hatley church can be opened on request.
Gamlingay church closed to the public at present.

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