



## The Third Sunday of Advent 11th December 2016



Welcome to our services at  
St Nicholas' in Worth and St  
Barnabas' in Pound Hill.

This sheet details the readings in today's services and notices about our community. Please do take it home. If you are here for the first time, please do introduce yourselves. We'd also love you to join us for refreshments after the service. Please feel free to use the soft toys and books at the back of the church for your children. At Communion, everyone is welcome to come up and receive a blessing or, if baptised, share the bread and wine.

### SERVICES TODAY

08.00 Holy Communion at St Nicholas'

09.45 Sung Eucharist at St. Nicholas'

10.00 Eucharist at St. Barnabas'  
then Open Meeting!

12.00 Baptism at St. Nicholas'

Please send pew sheet notices to  
[pewsheet@worthparish.org.uk](mailto:pewsheet@worthparish.org.uk) or  
phone 0300 111 8150

### What really happened at Christmas?

The trouble with Christmas is that we get caught up in the magic - if that is the right word - of carols, Nativity plays, in a kind of unreal Christmas bubble; a bubble that bears no relationship with the actual world which we live in of violence, cruelty, pain and questions about where God is in all this chaos.

We take the Christmas stories literally without really understanding *how* and *why* they came to be written!

The Gospels are not a press report of an actual account of events that happened. I have said this again and again in sermons. The Gospels were written long after the event of the Resurrection and the beginning of the Church. Time passed and the Church needed to give a picture of how it all began. Biblical scholarship over many years shows us that the Gospel writers thought very differently and spoke very differently from us. Reading the birth stories we ask '**Did it happen like that** - angels, a special star, shepherds and astrologers from the east?' What we should ask is '**What does this mean?**' - In other words, the birth of Jesus was an extraordinary event - full of wonder and promise of what his life and teaching would achieve.

Throughout the Gospels we have ideas, quotations - especially from the Psalms and Old Testament to re-inforce and give substance to the truth of the Incarnation - the coming of the Divine into our world in the person of Jesus Christ.

Leonard Hodgson, Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford said of the Gospels 'What must the Truth have **been** and **be**, if men who thought and spoke as they did, put it like that?'

Food of thought for all of us.

*Roger*

## Collect

O Lord Jesus Christ,  
who at your first coming sent your  
messenger  
to prepare your way before you:  
grant that the ministers and stewards of  
your mysteries  
may likewise so prepare and make ready  
your way  
by turning the hearts of the disobedient to  
the wisdom of the just,  
that at your second coming to judge the  
world  
we may be found an acceptable people in  
your sight;  
for you are alive and reign with the Father  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

## First Reading

*Isaiah 35.1-10*

### **The Return of the Redeemed to Zion**

The wilderness and the dry land shall be  
glad the desert shall rejoice and blossom;  
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,  
and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory  
of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty  
of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the  
glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God.  
Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm  
the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a  
fearful heart, 'Be strong, do not fear!  
Here is your God. He will come with  
vengeance, with terrible recompense.  
He will come and save you.' Then the eyes  
of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of  
the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap  
like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless  
sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in  
the wilderness, and streams in the desert;  
the burning sand shall become a pool, and  
the thirsty ground springs of water; the  
haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,  
the grass shall become reeds and rushes. A  
highway shall be there, and it shall be called  
the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel  
on it, but it shall be for God's people; no  
traveller, not even fools, shall go astray. No  
lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous

beast come up on it; they shall not be found  
there, but the redeemed shall walk there.  
And the ransomed of the Lord shall return,  
and come to Zion with singing; everlasting  
joy shall be upon their heads; they shall  
obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and  
sighing shall flee away.

## Psalm 146.4-10

## Second Reading

*James 5.7-10*

### **Patience in Suffering**

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the  
coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for  
the precious crop from the earth, being  
patient with it until it receives the early and  
the late rains. You also must be patient.  
Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of  
the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble  
against one another, so that you may not be  
judged. See, the Judge is standing at the  
doors! As an example of suffering and  
patience, beloved, take the prophets who  
spoke in the name of the Lord.

## Gospel

*Matthew 11.2-11*

### **Messengers from John the Baptist**

When John heard in prison what the  
Messiah was doing, he sent word by his  
disciples and said to him, 'Are you the one  
who is to come, or are we to wait for  
another?' Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell  
John what you hear and see: the blind  
receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers  
are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are  
raised, and the poor have good news  
brought to them. And blessed is anyone  
who takes no offence at me.'

### **Jesus Praises John the Baptist**

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to  
the crowds about John: 'What did you go  
out into the wilderness to look at? A reed  
shaken by the wind? What then did you go  
out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes?  
Look, those who wear soft robes are in  
royal palaces. What then did you go out to  
see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more

than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you." Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

### Post Communion Prayer

We give you thanks, O Lord, for these heavenly gifts; kindle in us the fire of your Spirit that when your Christ comes again we may shine as lights before his face; who is alive and reigns now and for ever.

### SERVICES THIS WEEK

Mon	11am Julian Group	St Barnabas'
Tues	10.30 Eucharist	St Barnabas'
Thurs	10.30 Eucharist	St Nicholas'
Sun 18th Dec	08.00 Holy Communion	St Nicholas'
	09.45 Sung Eucharist	St Nicholas'
	10.00 Eucharist	St Barnabas'
	11.30 Nic's – all age Worship	St Nicholas'
	16.30 Carols for All	St Barnabas'
	6.30 Nine lessons & Carols	St Nicholas'

### Readings for 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

**18 December**

**Isaiah 7.10-16**

**Psalms 80.1-8, 18-20\***

**Romans 1.1-7**

**Matthew 1.18-25**

**The Julian Group** (see above) meets for 30 minutes of contemplative prayer and meditation, All welcome!

**Parish Home Groups** will continue to meet every two weeks - if you are interested in joining a home group please contact either Dave Parker 884574 or Joan Tick 884695.

### DIARY NOTES & NOTICES

**The Christmas Card Boards** are now on display at both churches. Why not complete a greetings label for your church friends and donate what you would have spent on those cards to our Christmas Charities? Donations may be gift aided.

### Christmas Cards

Christmas cards featuring a painting of St Nicholas Church by Father Roger Brown. They come in packs of 5 cards priced at £2.50 per pack. See Joan Pallett please

### Christmas Services

Saturday 24 December:

4.00pm Crib Service & Nativity Play at

*St. Nicholas*

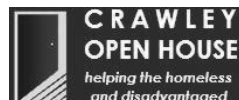
4.00pm Crib Service at *St. Barnabas*

11.30pm Midnight Mass at *St. Nicholas*

Sunday 25 December ~ Regular services

As in previous years we will be collecting gifts at both churches. These may be toys (new only please) for the Golden Lion Children's Trust or toiletries, packaged foods or new warm clothing for Open House. These may be brought to Carols for All or to the Crib Services. Thank you

**The Christmas Charities 2016** are:



**The Parish Prayer Group** will meet in St Barnabas Church on **Wednesday 21st December** at 7.30pm. If you would like to join us, you will be very welcome.

The Parish **Christingle** service on Dec 4th raised **£63.97** to support the invaluable work of the Children's Society, thank you.

It is with sadness that we announce the death of Fred Fudge on December 5th, who until recently attended St. Barnabas' church. Please hold Betty and her family in your prayers at this time, Also pray for Stuart and Mary Sharpe and family as Stuart's son Peter died on Saturday.

**Friday lunches** 12.30pm in the Pastoral Centre - 2 courses + tea / coffee - £5.50. Everyone welcome. Please order tickets by **14<sup>th</sup> Dec** (for catering) for 16<sup>th</sup> Dec. at the Centre or phone **0300 111 8150**.

**Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December 14.15**

Funeral Service for Phil Hodson will be held at the Surrey & Sussex Crematorium.

Wed 14 December 16  
St Barnabas' 15.00-4.45pm



Wed 11 January Dec 17  
Maidenbower Infants School 15.00-4.45pm

Old and new friends welcome!

**Our Book Club** will be meeting in the Pastoral Centre on the last Monday of January at 7.00 pm. If you are interested contact the Parish Office or just turn up!

**Safeguarding Training:** Sat 28th January 2017 at St Barnabas 09.30 – 12.00  
Anyone interested in attending please contact Noreen Oxlade by email only please ~ noxlade@hotmail.com

**The Pastoral Centre** always welcomes home-made cakes. If anyone is willing to bake any items for us these will be gratefully received. Reimbursement can be arranged for ingredients used. Enjoy the baking without gaining the calories!

**The Advent Fair** on 3 Dec raised £871.40 for the work of both Churches. Thank you to all our supporters.

The **UNICEF Jar of Grace** appeal this year, raised £219.78 Thank you to the congregations at St Nicholas for their generous donations.

**Toilet Cleaner required once a month** to complete the team of Volunteers who check and clean the Toilets at St. Nicholas' Church. Please contact Noreen Oxlade 884172

**Heat for Health** is a local partnership initiative designed to help people understand the link between a warm home and healthy living. They can be contacted on **01444 477191** or [heat@midsussex.gov.uk](mailto:heat@midsussex.gov.uk)

**Free room card thermometers** - which allow you to see what the temperature is where you sit in the evening and where you sleep

**Fun Mondays**

The Pastoral Centre Café is open on Monday afternoons from 14.00 – 16.00. A group of regulars are keen to play some card or board games. Come to play or just to chat. Tea/coffee and cake available.

**CONTACTS**

During the interregnum the Rural Dean, the Revd Canon Julia Peaty + Church Wardens, Phyl Pennell and David Parker, are the sequestrators (responsible for clergy cover).

Also Revd Gordon Parry has offered his number 07802 43 23 98 if anyone specifically needs to talk with a member of clergy

**Churchwardens**

Sheila Dring (St B)	01293 513496
David Parker (St N)	01293 884574
Phyl Pennell (St B)	01293 883362
Colin Smith (St N)	01293 889894

**Worth Parish Office**

0300 111 8150  
[office@worthparish.org.uk](mailto:office@worthparish.org.uk)