



**24 December
2023**

Advent 4



Welcome to St Barnabas' in Pound Hill and St Nicholas' in Worth

This sheet details the readings in today's services as well as notices for everyone.

SERVICES TODAY

Certain services will still be available online (live or recorded)

08:15 Said Eucharist (BCP) St Nicholas'
Celebrant & Preacher Revd Gordon Parry

10:00 Child Friendly Eucharist St Barnabas'
Celebrant & Preacher Revd Sarah Upchurch

10:00 Sung Eucharist
Celebrant & Preacher

23:30 Midnight Mass Both Churches

Please try our QR code to donate to Worth Parish. Scan this code with a smartphone to take you straight to a giving page.



In my Bible this section is entitled 'The Birth of Jesus Foretold', it could be 'When Mary met Archangel Gabriel' although how about 'Angel Visitations-how to respond!' The scripture tells us that Mary was perplexed but she held her mind open and pondered upon the Archangel's words.

It must be interesting being God's messenger, experiencing the reactions of humans. Just six months beforehand Archangel Gabriel encountered a completely different response from John the Baptist's Dad. Zechariah hadn't handled the situation well and ended up being struck dumb until his little son was born.

(Lesson learned, don't laugh. Don't underestimate angels, or their words because their words are from God!!)

Let's look more closely at Mary's response, she was perplexed by the greeting of being favoured - she wondered what she had done to deserve this. Therefore, I deduce that Mary was a humble person. Why else would she have been chosen by God? Do you think it was because she was pliant and obedient; No!!

Mary was open and receptive to heavenly concepts, she was strong and courageous to say yes, as it brought her into immediate mortal danger and disrepute. She was resilient and determined, very sure of herself, not risk averse; qualities that Mary would need before, during and especially after the birth of her baby son Jesus. Mary provides a masterclass in how to respond when visited by an angel.

Angels are at the heart of the Christmas Story asking, telling, offering, guiding, bringing hope, love and glory to the 'heaven meets earth' event!

May you be blessed this Christmas with fresh insight into the wonder of the birth of the Christ Child and believe, with Mary, that nothing is impossible with God.

Amen.

Revd Sarah

Collect

Eternal God, as Mary waited for the birth of your Son, so we wait for his coming in glory; bring us through the birth pangs of this present age to see, with her, our great salvation in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Reading 2 Samuel 7.1-11,16

Now when the king was settled in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, 'See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a



tent.' Nathan said to the king, 'Go, do all that you have in mind; for the Lord is with you.'

But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the Lord: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not built me a house of cedar?' Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the Lord of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house.

Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure for ever before me; your throne shall be established for ever.

Reading Romans 16.25-27

Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith - to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory for ever! Amen.

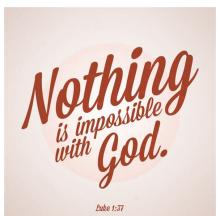
TO GOD ONLY WISE, BE GLORY THROUGH JESUS CHRIST FOR EVER. AMEN.

- ROMANS 16:27 (KJV) -



Gospel Luke 1.26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.' Then



Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

Post Communion

Heavenly Father, who chose the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of the promised saviour: fill us your servants with your grace, that in all things we may embrace your holy will and with her rejoice in your salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Festivals this week	
Mon 25 Dec	Christmas Day (F)
Tues 26 Dec	Stephen, Deacon, First Martyr (F)
Wed 27 Dec	John, Apostle and Evangelist (F)
Thur 28 Dec	The Holy Innocents (F)
Fri 29 Dec	Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martyr 1170 (LF)

(F) Festival; (LF) Lesser Festival; (C) Commemoration

SERVICES THIS WEEK		
Mon 25 Dec	8:15 Eucharist (BCP) 10:00 Child Friendly Eucharist 10:00 Said Eucharist	St Nicholas' St Barnabas' St Nicholas'
Tues 26 Dec	10:30 Said Eucharist	St Barnabas'
Thur 28 Dec	10:30 Said Eucharist	St Nicholas'
Sun 31 Dec	8:15 Eucharist (BCP) 10:00 Sung Eucharist 10:00 Sung Eucharist 11:45 Baptism	St Nicholas' St Barnabas' St Nicholas' St Nicholas'
Sunday 31 December 2023 Christmas I Isaiah 61.10-62.3 Galatians 4.4-7 Luke 2.15-21		

Come and see, a song and a prayer, followed by pizza and lollies.

In January Messy Church

will be on **Sat 13 Jan 15:00-16:30 (note new time)** and on **Wed 17 Jan 15:00-16:30** at St Barnabas'. Everyone welcome - mums, dads, grandparents, carers - come and have fun!



DIARY NOTES & NOTICES

Toddlers Group meets on **Tues 13:00-15:00 and Thurs 9:00-11:00 during term time** in St Barnabas' Hall.

No meetings until 9 January

Friday Lunches

NO Friday lunch on **29 Dec** in The Café at 12:30. **Lunches resume on 5 Jan.**

The lunches are not exclusively for the elderly, why not bring a friend and give us a try. All welcome.

The Hangout

Youth Club at St Barnabas' on **Fri 19:00-20:30**

For Year Groups 7-11. Entry free.

Weekly during term time.

Next meeting 5 January

Parish Prayer Group

will NOT meet in December.

Payments to the Parish

If you possibly can, please transfer the money by electronic payment to: Worth PCC, sort code 40-18-22, account 61223372.

If you need help, call the Office.

Noreen is now home from hospital, taking it easy and is well on the mend. She wishes to thank everyone for their prayers and good wishes. They are much appreciated. She wishes everyone a Happy Christmas and looks forward to catching up with everyone in the New Year.



CONTACTS

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HYPOTHETICAL QUESTION:
WHAT IF MARY HADN'T
BELIEVED GABRIEL'S
MESSAGE?



GOOD THING
SHE DID.)



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