

South Cotswold Team Ministry

St. Mary's Church Fairford – Newsletter



It's thought that snowdrops may have been grown as an ornamental garden plant as early as the 16th century, but were not recorded in the wild until the late 18th century. The snowdrop's native range is mainland Europe. As they flower so early, snowdrops do not rely on pollinators to reproduce. Instead, they spread via bulb division.

Sunday 16th January – Second Sunday of Epiphany

10.00 am Common Worship Holy Communion

Sidesperson: Jilli Connell

Readings: Sally Salter

Intercessions: Janet Edwards

Coffee: Doug and Jean Crowley

Thursday 20th January – 10.30 am Holy Communion

Sunday 23rd January -Third Sunday of Epiphany

10.00 am Common Worship Holy Communion

Sidesperson: Andy Wilkinson

Readings: Mike Godsal

Intercessions: Jane Kidd

Coffee: Carol and Richard Thompson

Please note that following the announcement of COVID Plan B, masks are now required to be worn during services.

Online worship: Rev Caroline broadcasts 9am Morning Prayer Monday-Thursday and Saturday) on Facebook

From Caroline

01285 712467 / carolinesymcox@googlemail.com

Sunday's readings: Isaiah 62.1-5; 1 Corinthians 12.1-11; John 2.1-11

Here on the second Sunday in Epiphany we come to another of the great milestone readings in the Epiphany period. As we've reflected over the past couple of weeks, the ongoing theme of this season is the twofold movement of Jesus showing that he is the incarnate Son of God, and then the human response to that moment. Epiphany leads us to think about how we ourselves are moved by seeing and recognising God's power in the world, and most especially in the person of Jesus.

This Sunday we see the moment in John's gospel when Jesus first reveals the power he has been given by God – in the first of his 'signs', as John calls them. Here he turns water into wine at the Wedding at Cana. It is a strangely incongruous moment, from whichever angle you come at this. For people who are very familiar with the Bible and with Jesus' other miracles, it seems like the odd one out. Why is Jesus messing around with wine, when he could be healing the sick? For those of us who are new to Jesus and the stories of his life, it's no less strange. Surely Jesus had better things to do than bartending a wedding? Even for those around him at the time, this must have been an 'out of the blue' moment. Jesus has never before done anything like this, and suddenly, this happens. All of a sudden, Jesus has shown a side of himself that no one had ever seen before.

When we had this reading at my wedding, the reader made the congregation laugh. And well they might! Mary's long-suffering 'do whatever he tells you' speaks of a mother-son experience we can all identify with.

But crucially, that is where this story, the sign itself, meets us. This too is Jesus showing something about himself, and about God, in the circumstances of this sign, and not just the raw power on display. Jesus has chosen to do it here – a human gathering, a human celebration. He is a guest. He is partying right alongside everyone else. And when he extends God's power, he does so to bless that gathering. We see here a God's power expressed in abundance, in celebration. It says, 'human beings like to eat and drink and celebrate and be close to each other, and that is Good'. It is a timely reminder, at the start of his ministry, that Jesus is fully human, and that these fully human activities too are blessed in him. And the human response from the disciples when they saw this sign? '[They] believed in him.' May that be our response too.

Rev'd Caroline

From Heather:

Telephone: 01285 712428

Email address: fairfordpcc@gmail.com or heathergorton31@gmail.com.

My office hours are 10.00 to 1.00 Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday
I am also continuing to work from home so you can contact me at either
the office (712611) or home (712428). The office is closed on Mondays
and Michelle will be in on Fridays at 10.00 to 12.00.

Flower Team request see below

We have had a clear out of some Christmas decorations that we no
longer use. Amongst these were **10 small artificial Christmas Trees
about 18" tall**. If anyone would like them do please contact me.
These were the ones that were used on the font for several years.

Do please keep sending in your articles, photos and amusing stories!
Favourite recipes or garden tips welcome - do need your input!

Contacts

Rev'd Caroline 01285 712467

Rev'd Canon Denise Hyde 01285 713285

Mike Godsal 01285 713101

Christine Benzie 01285 713395

Wendy Graham 01285 711765

Please remember the following in your prayers:

Those that are ill: Rev'd David Gray, Grace Slack,
Jane Read is now starting a long period of convalescence and rehab at
home.

Those that have died: Olivia Bovill

NOTICES

We continue to extend our activities as we gauge what is safely possible
to include within our worship at the present time.

**We have now returned to a pre-Covid level of singing within the
church: 4 hymns and responses now to be sung at 10am Eucharist
services.**

Working for wellbeing



We are delighted to say we've had a huge success with our Talking Café held at Fairford community centre every Wednesday 1030am to 12pm. The Community Wellbeing coordinator is here to signpost and support you with any issues you may be experiencing within the community. We have a dedicated helpline Monday to Friday with limited hours but you will always receive a call back if you leave a message. Please contact Mary Ann on 07555738138 or email on coordinator@working4wellbeing.org.uk

Thank you to everyone for their support. As the days get colder and wetter we are moving the café inside and we are aware not everyone will be comfortable with this. If you are anxious and worried please contact Mary Ann and she can inform you of alternative ways of keeping in contact with the community.

Looking forward to the future we have talkers from charities and organisations attending the talking café to give out information. We have been fortunate to have AGE UK, Bromford Housing and People for you attend already.

We are also looking at digital inclusion and if this is something that would be of interest to you please get in touch.

'Men's Sheds' is starting to take shape and Fairford Crafters are looking for sponsorship to get this off the ground. Please get in touch if you need signposting and support or if you would like to join our team of Volunteers.

Please contact the Wellbeing Coordinator (see contact info above) to book a space on any of our FREE Working for Wellbeing projects.

Prayer Requests

Our Prayer Team is still fully active, praying for the needs of individuals and our wider community. If you have a prayer request for the team, please either fill in a prayer request slip and put it in the prayer box or email Rev Denise on denisehyde15@gmail.com.

ONLINE PRAYER AND WORSHIP

Suggestion from Rev'd Denise to help you in your prayer life.

Over the past weeks I have found the 'Lectio 365' App (which is available to be downloaded for free on both Android and Apple platforms) helpful in my prayer times. It was devised by Pete Grieg (of 24/7 prayer) and focuses on the pattern of P.R.A.Y. (Pause, Reflect/Rejoice, Ask, Yield) as a way of entering into God's presence. Each day's devotion is about 10 minutes long and can be either read or listened to and is a great way to start or end the day.

Prayers from St Mary's

Caroline's Morning Prayer every day except Friday and Sunday from 9.00 am - www.facebook.com/stmarysfairford

Daily Hope from the Church of England

A good option for worship if you can't access the internet. It is a free phone number where you have the option of the prayer for today, hymn for today and reflections. Telephone 0800 804 8044 Sent by Andrena Miles.

Prayer Ministry Team

We have sadly for some time been unable to offer prayer ministry during our Sunday, 10am service due to Covid. Because this is such an important part of the ministry at St Mary's we as a team have decided to make ourselves available at an alternative time for anyone who would like someone to pray with them. Please do contact one of us to make arrangements, and anything shared is totally confidential. God loves us to share our concerns and burdens, wanting to carry them for us. He also loves to hear our thanks.

Christian healing is God meeting us at our point of need. (Bishop Morris Maddocks)

Mary Mawle 01285 712174

Ann Nicholls 01285 713063

Rev'd Denise 01285 713285. denisehyde15@gmail.com

Prayer Walks

These will take place every Wednesday at 2.30pm in or around Fairford. People from any church, or none, are invited to join the walks. If you want to take part, meet at the start/finish point just before 2.30. Weather permitting we will go for a circular walk of 45 mins to 1 hour offering to God the houses and businesses we walk past. We pause for prayer for particular aspects of Fairford life at appropriate points. For those who have time we have refreshments at the start/finish point.

If the weather is too bad to walk, we will stay at the start/finish point and pray indoors. If you don't want to walk but would like to be involved, you could offer to be a start/finish point and offer refreshments at the end (or at 3pm if the weather is too bad for walking). If this is the case, please contact Barbara Bridges (01285 712204 or arbarajbridges@talktalk.net)
Dates and start points can be found on the United Church's website (www.fairfordunitedchurch.org) or by contacting Barbara (details above).

The Friends of Fairford Church

The AGM will take place at 5.30 on Sunday 6 February before Evensong at 6 pm. Do come along and support the Friends.

Messy Church

Messy Church will be based at home this month. We will be thinking about the parable of the lost coin and will be reflecting on how God welcomes all those who have lost their way and been 'found'. We will also be encouraging further entries to a poster competition. For more details contact Sarah Bottomley on 01285712074 or stmaryslmt@gmail.com

St. Mary's Flower Team

If you would like to join the flower team helping with the flower arrangements in the church then do please contact me. A knowledge of arranging flowers is not essential but enthusiasm is! Each arranger does two weeks twice a year either the arrangement by the hymn board and the high altar or porch. We are a jolly bunch and get together for Easter, Harvest and Christmas. We do need people. Three have left Fairford and one has retired. Thank you. Heather 712428

From Ann Nicholls

My life flows on in endless song above Earth's lamentation, I catch the sweet thought far off hymn that hails a new creation.

No storm can shake my inmost calm while to that rock I'm clinging, Since love is Lord of Heaven and earth, how can I keep from singing.

Robert Lowery 1826-99

We are Gods handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Help us to do that work Lord and to lift our voices in singing your praise and glory, we pray in Jesus name.

Fairford Weather in December 2021

Rainfall (Local Recording)
Monthly Total **83mm (3.27")**

22 days with some rain
Wettest days **12th, 27th**

15.5mm (0.61" each day)
Sunshine (Met Office website)
29hrs (54%) anomaly
2 days >5hrs, 24 days < 1hr
(5hrs 20min. each day)

12 days with **no sun**
Sunniest days **2nd, 4th**

Temperature (Latton website)
Mean temp. **7°C (1.8°C)** anom
13 days >10°C, 9days <5°C - 5 frosts.

Warmest day **30th (14.4°C)**
Coldest Day **22nd (-2.8°C)**

December was essentially a mild and very cloudy month with average temperatures in the south of England around **2°C** above the long-term average of **5.2°C (1991 – 2020)**. More locally the mean monthly temperature was **7°C** which is **1.8°C** higher than this long-term average.. There were only **5** nights of frost, one less than in November, with the coldest falling on the **22nd** when temperatures fell to **-2.8°C**.

For much of the middle of the month the air pressure was **high**, exceeding **1040 millibars** on the **17th**. The **anticyclone** controlling the weather was centred to the west of the UK and feeding cool moist air from the Norwegian Sea across most of Britain. This moist air was quite shallow, which meant that while much of the country was under cloud giving dull conditions the highest parts of Scotland, the Lakes, the Pennines, and Snowdonia, were in bright sunshine. This situation, known as a **temperature inversion**, occurs when heavy cold air in valleys, beneath the cloud cover, is actually cooler than the lighter warmer air on the sunny hilltops above. Furthermore, it is not uncommon in winter for highpoints, even places like **Birdlip** and the **Malvern Hills**, to provide clear views over a cloud filled Vale of Gloucester.

This situation continued up until the Christmas period when warmer more unsettled conditions prevailed. Towards the end of the month temperatures rose, locally peaking at **14.4°C** on the **30th**. On New Year's Eve temperatures reached **16.5°C** in Bala (Gwynedd), making it the

warmest ever New Year's Eve in the UK. This however is not the UK record for December which was broken just two years ago in **2019** with a figure of **18.7°C** in the hamlet of Achfary in the far north of Scotland. Surprisingly, **almost all the warm winter records**, from December – February, occur in sheltered places to the lee of mountains in North and North east Scotland and in North Wales, and not as might be expected in west Cornwall or the Scilly Isles.

The cause is known as the Fohn effect in the Alps or the snow-eater in the Rockies, whereby warm moist southerly winds are compressed as they cross mountains, to warm even more. (**Think the way a bicycle pump gets warm when used**).

This moderate December rain is helping the Coln to recover.

Best wishes in the New Year. Clive Watson

Today in History – 16th January

1995 The first episode of Star Trek: Voyager airs

1412 The Medici Family are made official bankers of the Papacy

1547 Ivan the Terrible becomes Tsar of Russia

1556 Philip II becomes King of Spain

1581 English Parliament outlaws Roman Catholicism

1909 The magnetic South Pole is found

1919 The 18th amendment (prohibition) is passed.

Sent in by a reader

The computer swallowed grandma,
Yes, honestly it's true.
She pressed "control" and "enter"
And disappeared from view.

It devoured her completely,
The thought just makes me squirm.
She must have caught a virus
Or been eaten by a worm.

I've searched through the recycle bin
and files of every kind:
I've even used the Internet,
but nothing did I find.

In desperation, I asked Jeeves
My searches to refine.
The reply from him was negative,
Not a thing was found "online".

So, if inside your "Inbox",
My Grandma you should see,
Please "Copy", "Scan" and "Paste" her
And send her back to me!

Author: unknown

Some Jokes from Christmas Crackers!

Why is Parliament like ancient Bethlehem?
It takes a miracle to find 3 wise men

How can you tell if you're at a Brexit party this Christmas?
Because everyone wants to leave

Why does Donald Trump have his Christmas dinner on a plastic plate?
He doesn't get on with China

Why has Santa been banned from sooty chimneys?
Carbon Footprints

What do you get if you eat Christmas decorations?
Tinselitis

Why is Christmas dinner vegan this year?
Because Turkey is on the red list, but vegetables are all green.

(More next week!)