

Sunday 14th December 2025

Third Sunday of Advent

10.00 a.m. Church Family Communion with Children's Church
6.00 p.m. Nine Lessons & Carols

Collect for Today

God for whom we watch and wait, you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way of your Son: give us courage to speak the truth, to hunger for justice, and to suffer for the cause of right, with Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Service Readings

Isaiah 35:1-10 (*p.673*), James 5:7-10 (*p.228*) and Matthew 11:2-11 (*p.10*)

Please pray for

... Rebecca Brown, Mark & Jan Knott, Jenny Powell and Mike Woodcock.
... the family and friends of Eleanor Barnard and Audrey Tye whose anniversary of death is at this.
... those who live and work in Madrid Road and Manor Way.
... the Koens family in Papua New Guinea supporting the work of Bible translation through vehicle maintenance, teaching, missionary care.

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. **Amen.**

Financial Giving

We take a collection during our services. If you don't give regularly by standing order or the envelope scheme, please put your donation in the bag, tap the card reader on your way out, or use the QR code on the back of this news-sheet. Thank you.

Dear Friends

We've been watching Prisoner 951 documentary, the harrowing account of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe's false imprisonment in Iran. In today's passage from Matthew 11, John the Baptist's suffers a similar fate, sitting in prison with nothing but stone walls, stale air, and zero chance of an early release. He must have wondered whether he had even identified the right Messiah. So, he dispatched a couple of disciples to ask Jesus: "Are You the One, or should we keep looking?" J

Jesus didn't respond with a drumroll or a celestial spotlight. Instead, simply saying: the blind seeing, the lame leaping, lepers freshened up, the deaf tuning in, the dead returning from cancelled funerals, and the poor receiving VIP access to good news.

As the messengers left, Jesus turned to the crowd and gave them a reality check. "What did you go into the wilderness to see? A reed swaying in the wind?"

Then Jesus dropped a compliment: "Among those born of women, no one is greater than John." Imagine receiving that heavenly accolade. Then Jesus added a kingdom twist: "even the least in heaven is greater still - God's rankings are built on grace, not human achievement.

For us, John offers a comforting lesson: even the strongest believers have moments of doubt. But Faith isn't the absence of questions—it's bringing those questions to Jesus. And Jesus' answer reminds us to look for His work, not just His words: healed hearts, restored lives, hope where despair once lived.

And, like the crowd, we're not to chase spiritual gimmicks—no reeds in the wind, no glittering distractions. Instead, we look for the real thing: the Christ who heals, restores, forgives, and keeps proving Himself through the lives He changes. In a world full of noise, His miracles still speak louder than our questions.

Paul Fenner

Mission Focus for December: Mosaic Middle East (MME)

Our prayers are again requested for the Middle East, and, with the Gaza conflict in the forefront of our thoughts, it is easy to forget that Iraq still faces a veritable storm of trouble. MME's friend in Baghdad is the Rev'd Canon Faiz Jirjees MBE, from St. George's Anglican church there. His message is that tensions between the communities and recent regional conflict have sent shockwaves through Iraq, heightening insecurity, increasing instability and deepening fear. So, as Christmas approaches and is celebrated, let us remember the people of Iraq, of whatever religion or sect, and pray that peace will prevail and that tensions there will die down. Further information on the work of MME will be found in the December magazine.

Notices

Nine Lessons & Carols: TONIGHT at 6pm. Please join us for this very special service led by Jeremy and the choir. Jeremy has put together a beautiful programme. This service is always a special one, why not invite a friend or neighbour to come too?

OVRA Community Carol Singing and Mulled Wine: Friday 12th December, outside the village hall. Mulled wine from 5.45pm and carol singing from 6.15pm-6.45pm. Wear your best Christmas hat and remember to bring your mug for the mulled wine!

Dray Court Carol Service: Wednesday 17th December, 2.30pm. Do come and join the Dray Court residents for this special service of carols and readings, followed by refreshments.

Nativity! Next Sunday, 21st December at 10am, will be your first opportunity to see our Children's Church Nativity. This year the nativity play has been written by Gwen Jesson-Atkins, and it is not to be missed! The second opportunity will be at 4pm on Christmas Eve.

Christmas Crafting: Next Sunday, 21st December at 4pm, Jo Dwyer will be offering an hour of Christmas Crafting! This will be hosted by Tea Time Church and include refreshments. Do come along. Children welcome.

Midnight Mass at the Cathedral: This year, we'll be celebrating Midnight Mass with many other worshippers from across Guildford at the Cathedral. The service starts at 11.00pm.

Advent & Christmas Services:

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| 🕯 | Wednesday 17 th : | 2.30pm | <i>Carol Service at Dray Court</i> |
| 🕯 | Sunday 21 st : | 10am | <i>Morning Worship & Nativity</i> |
| | | 4pm | <i>Christmas Crafting in the Reading Room</i> |
| 🕯 | Wednesday 24 th : | 4pm | <i>Crib Service</i> |
| 🕯 | Christmas Day: | 8am | <i>BCP Communion</i> |
| | | 10am | <i>All-Age Communion</i> |

Diary for the Coming Week

Morning prayer Mon, Tues and Weds 9.15am in the Reading Room and on Zoom. Thurs Holy Communion at 9.30am in the Reading Room.

Mon 15 th	Finance Vision Group, Reading Room, 10.00am Women's Bible Study Group, 12.30pm Hard of Hearing Group, Reading Room, 2.00pm
Tues 16 th	Altogether Worship Planning, Vicarage, 7.30pm
Weds 17 th	Dray Court Carol Service, 2.30pm Sharing & Learning Group, 4 Windsor Close, 7.00pm
Thurs 18 th	Holy Communion, Reading Room, 9.30am, Choir Rehearsal, 8.00pm
Fri 19 th	Baby & Toddler Group, Church, 10.00am
Sun 21 st	BCP Communion, Reading Room, 8.00am Morning Worship & Nativity, 10.00am Tea Time Church, Reading Room, 6.00pm

Daily Readings for the coming week

Mon 15 th	Ps. 40, Isaiah 38:1-8, 21-22, Matthew 16:13-end
Tues 16 th	Ps. 70, Isaiah 38:9-20, Matthew 17:1-13
Weds 17 th	Ps. 75, Isaiah 39, Matthew 17:14-21
Thurs 18 th	Ps. 76, Zephaniah 1:1-2:3, Matthew 17:22-end
Fri 19 th	Ps. 146, Zephaniah 3:1-13, Matthew 18:1-20
Sat 20 th	Ps. 46, Zephaniah 3:14-end, Matthew 18:21-end

Service Readings for Sunday 21st December: Fourth Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 7:10-16, Romans 1:1-7 and Matthew 1:18-25

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