

Newsletter

25th October 2020

WELCOME TO OUR CHURCHES:

CONNECT WITH US ONLINE:

OUR CLERGY:



@ parishoflowerwharfe



@ stmarybostonspa

www.bramhambenefice.org

email:

bramhambenefice@outlook.com

Priest in Charge—Rev. Nick Morgan

revnjmorgan@gmail.com

Rev. Trish Anslow, Assistant Priest

Parish Office: 01937 844402

Mon-Thurs 9.30am-12.30pm

Fr. Ken Gabbadon Priest in Charge

St Luke's, Clifford e-mail: kqabba7036@aol.com

Wise words for our time by David Thomson, retired Bishop of Huntingdon

Saving Christmas

The Jeremiahs have it... The COVID statistics are making it perfectly clear that things are going to get worse before they get better, and I think the public mood is slowly trying to come to terms with that.

We were desperate that it should not be so. Desperate to get back to life as we liked it. Just life, not this dark pall of deathliness and depression. And I suspect we will also now start to be desperate again, this time to save Christmas.

Not Christmas as a theological purist would have it. That is all about Christmas saving us, not us saving it. That is about real light shining perilously in real darkness, not fairy lights on a tree. But the theologians have a point. Even if warm hearths and family togetherness are what we long for, they are powerful because they speak not just of a kiss under the mistletoe or a blow-out meal but of a deeper sense that winter will not have things all its own way, of unconquerable light. We've been celebrating it since Stonehenge, and we want and need to celebrate it now.

But just saying 'boo' to the darkness, or indeed the virus, and getting on with the party is going to end in tears. Let me put it starkly. It's three weeks before Christmas. Blow it, you say, we're going to have a party. It's two weeks before Christmas and, blow it you say, let's go shopping, but some of your friends cry off because they're feeling a bit poorly. It's one week before Christmas and you're feeling a bit poorly yourself; your best mate has just gone into hospital. It's Christmas, and ... well, the shine has well and truly gone off the gingerbread and no-one is feeling much like celebrating any more.

So? What can we do? Is there anything we can do? Let's go back to those theologians, those keepers of the Christian tradition that Christmas is perhaps all about anyway.

From ancient times Christians kept fasts before they dived into their feasts. They didn't take the waiting out of wanting: they knew that a bit of waiting, a bit of preparing, a bit of pondering, would make the feast all the more fun.

Cue Advent: not just the Advent of a boozy miniature a day in December, but the Advent that starts 4 Sundays before Christmas and takes us slowly and carefully through the Bible's story of how we got into this pickle we call life, and how God's plan to join us in it and raise us from it came to pass. It's all those readings you've heard at a traditional Carol Service, but old school, taken slowly, savoured for all they're worth. Then at Christmas the Great Twelve Days of Feasting can begin.

So, this year, how about Saving Christmas by Keeping Advent? Look for safe ways to buy the presents and order the food. Give some time to writing some personal cards or messages. Then dust down your Bible and look up the stories for yourself. Light a candle for each Sunday. And enjoy the peace. Peace now, as you give Christmas the best chance it can have of going off well; and the promise of a peace that passes our understanding that can surround us come what may.

Services across the Benefice

10.00am WEDNESDAYS

Holy Communion Service
at St. Mary's Church, Boston Spa

All Saints' Church, Thorp Arch

25.10.20	9.30am	Parish Worship at Walton
01.11.20	9.30am	Communion
08.11.20	11.00am	Act of Remembrance at The Memorial on the Green
15.11.20	9.30am	Parish Worship

St. Peter's Church, Walton

25.10.20	9.30am	Parish Worship
01.11.20	9.30am	Communion at Thorp Arch
08.11.20	9.30am	Communion
15.11.20	9.30am	Parish Worship at Thorp Arch

All Saints' Church, Bramham

25.10.20	10.00am	Parish Worship
01.11.20	10.00am	Communion
08.11.20	10.00am	Parish Worship with Act of Remembrance at 11am
15.11.20	10.00am	Parish Worship

St. Mary's Church, Boston Spa

25.10.20	10.00am	Communion
01.11.20	10.00am	All Together
08.11.20	10.00am	Communion with Act of Remembrance
15.11.20	10.00am	Communion

25th October

Leviticus 19.1-2,15-18
1 Thessalonians 2.1-8
Matthew 22.34-end

1st November

Revelation 7.9-end
1 John 3.1-3
Matthew 5.1-12

8th November

Wisdom of Solomon
6.12-16
1 Thessalonians 4.13-
end
Matthew 25.1-13

15th November

Zephaniah 1.7, 12-end
1 Thessalonians 5.1-11
Matthew 25.14-30

PLEASE HELP US PRAY FOR:

St. Mary's Email Prayer Group
If you would like to include someone
on the Prayer list please contact Niki on:
stmarysprayer18@gmail.com

THE RECENTLY DEPARTED:

Kathleen Gostray, Peter Churchill
and Jillian Richardson

OCCASIONAL OFFICES:

WEDDINGS:

Saturday 24th October
Alexander Palfreyman & Laura Abram
3.00pm at St. Mary's Church, Boston Spa

BAPTISMS:

FUNERALS:

CHILDREN & YOUTH:

We offer various activities for families,
children and young people. For more
information contact The Parish Office:
bramhambenefice@outlook.com

Visit our website for more details.

[St. Mary's Ark \(preschool\)](#)
[1.45pm—3.00pm at St Mary's Church](#)

[All Saints', Bramham Ark \(preschool\)](#)
[1.45pm—3.00pm at Bramham Church](#)

[Discoverers \(Reception to Year5\)](#)
[3.30pm—5.00pm at St. Mary's School](#)

[Young Life \(Years 7+\)](#)
[Contact Rev Nick for more information](#)

REGULAR ACTIVITIES:

**REGULAR ACTIVITIES WILL RESUME
AS SOON AS IT IS SAFE TO DO SO**

MON 12.00-1.00pm Yoga

MON 3.45-4.45 Meditation in the
Christian Tradition held at 197 High
Street, Boston Spa

2nd & 4th TUES 7.30pm Bell Ringing
at All Saints' Bramham

**All held at St Mary's Church, unless
otherwise stated.**

Lost Property at St. Mary's Church

Blue umbrella - Digital pocket scale -
3 pairs of ladies glasses - 2 sets of
door keys - Jabra Talk ear piece -
photo of Max - ladies black cardigan -
grey hoodie - scarf

Please collect before
the end of the month.
Any items left will be taken to
Martin House Charity shop



St. Mary's Email Prayer Group

If you would like to include
someone

on the Prayer list
please contact Niki on:
stmarysprayer18@gmail.com



GIFT COLLECTION

HELPING FAMILIES LOCALLY

There are so many families in need of support this year over the Christmas period. All gifts collected will be distributed by The Food Bank and The Salvation Army.

Gifts must be new and unwrapped

Who are the gifts for? Babies. Children. Teenagers. Parents. The Elderly

Example of gifts - games, toys, books, colouring sets, craft sets, vouchers, toiletry sets, slippers, luxury chocolates and biscuits, wrapping paper and sellotape etc.....

COLLECTION POINTS

BRAMHAM SURGERY CAR PARK

ST. MARY'S CHURCH, BOSTON SPA

NOVEMBER 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th 9.30am - 11.30am

Contact Emma for more details - 07740166706

This Advent, there will be video and written reflections, resource bags for children and their households to mark the season, and online services involving the wider community.

We shall be sharing the Advent Bible stories and the experiences of faith and hope amid adversity which we read of there. This may seem a premature article to share so many weeks before Advent begins, but our task is to pray and prepare now: how will you take the tidings of #ComfortAndJoy (as this year's Church of England hashtag puts it) to your friends, neighbours and colleagues this year?

Look out for news about how we aim to do this together, coming soon.

Rev.d Nick



Many thanks to all your knitters out there who have knitted 64 hats. These will be sent to support children in Albania who were left homeless by the 2019 earthquake in Durres.

Rev.d Trish

BRAMHAM BENEFICE

FOOD COLLECTION

foodbank SUPPORT WETHERBY FOOD BANK foodbank

Collection point 1
Bramham Church Porch
10am - 4pm 7 days a week

Collection point 2
St. Mary's Church, Boston Spa
9am - 3pm 7 days a week

ITEMS REQUIRED

RICE PUDDING - CUSTARD
SPONGE PUDDINGS
BISCUITS
TINNED MEAT - TINNED FISH
TOILETRIES - CLEANING PRODUCTS

**THE FOOD BANK CAN NOW
ACCEPT FRESH FRUIT AND
VEGETABLES. THE
COLLECTIONS ARE TAKEN TO
THE FOOD BANK ON A
MONDAY MORNING**

**NO FROZEN OR CHILLED
GOODS**

HELP US, HELP OTHERS



Remembrance Trail

We are entering a season of remembrance at the moment, and two of our churchyards will have trails which follow this theme (St Mary's, Boston Spa and All Saints', Bramham).

The trail begins in Bramham at the lych gate, and in the entrance to St Mary's Church and is suitable for children and adults alike.

This interactive trail helps us think about themes including What scares us? (for Halloween), People who have died (All Souls), People who can inspire us (All Saints) and national themes of Remembrance.

I hope you can take advantage of these trails which will be set up in time for Halloween, and will stay up until after Remembrance Day in November.



Welcome to YOUR churchyard

This space belongs to you. It belongs to all of us. Spend as much time here as you like. Please respect the plants and animals who make this space their home.

Feel free to take a stone that represents your feelings or your intentions for today. Carry it with you as you go. Return it to this basket or leave it somewhere in the churchyard.

All-Age Remembrance Trail: there will 4 special places to pray in the churchyard during this season of Remembrance. You can do these in any order you like, and do as many or as few as you want. Look for the poppy and the cross picture.



At each station, there's a way to pray with words and a way to pray with your senses. Children and adults may do whichever one they prefer.



PANDEMIC EXPERIENCE INSPIRES ART IN CHURCH

A new piece of art by Susannah Morgan, (daughter of Rev'd Nick and Kate Morgan) is currently being exhibited in St Mary's Church. "2 Metres Apart - Diptych" features two large, monochrome oil paintings on canvas together with social distancing hazard warning tape, and is a reflection on the experience of social distancing and the wearing of masks.

"In this diptych I wanted to show how hard it is to have any real human connection in the strange world we now live in." explains Susannah, an art student at Leeds Arts University whose painting portrays two young people in masks, separated by social distancing tape." "We can't physically touch and often we can't even read people's facial expressions due to the prevalence of face masks." says Susannah, "and although these measures are in place for our own health and public benefit, there is no denying that it creates additional barriers to try and make friendships and have meaningful conversations. The text on the tape then has a double meaning, not only showing our physical distance from one another, but also our emotional distance."

The piece is described by Rev'd Nick as a helpful addition to the church environment at St Mary's for those who visit to worship and pray. "The way the work cuts across the intimate "mother & son" windows in the south aisle, featuring Mary and Jesus, really does heighten the artistic theme of lack of intimacy and emotional distance which Susannah was dealing with in the work." says Nick. "Some people will find these large, impassive, monochrome, masked faces disturbing, but that isn't necessarily a bad thing. Art has an important role to play in helping us grapple with our own feelings about the ongoing challenge of living with emotional and physical distance from other people. It's something which churches everywhere are doing their best to help people to navigate for themselves already, so art like this is very welcome, and is another way the church can support the wider community. Alongside the piece, to help people in their reflections on the issues and challenges which the artwork raises, we have offered spiritual guidance using Bible verses and a prayer."

"2 Metres Apart - Diptych" is installed as a temporary exhibition in St Mary's Church until the end of November.

The following prayer, written by The Rev'd Morgan, accompanies the work:

Heavenly Father,
at this time of isolation, diminished human contact and lack of fellowship,
may we know your loving embrace and abiding presence with us.
We are not alone, for you are always with us.
Help us to draw near to you,
knowing that when we do,
you draw near to us.
In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

