

Welcome to St Dunstan's and Southville Churches

Feltham Ecumenical Parish:
Anglican and Methodist Churches in
partnership

Sunday 6
December
2020

**Second in
Advent**

We find ourselves in the season of Advent, a time of hope and anticipation for Christians as we prepare for Christmas. Just as I was beginning to wonder what I should write, in a year scarred by COVID and its impact on all of us in one way or another, some news came on the radio that made my spirits soar. The first vaccine against this disease has been cleared for use and will be rolled out to the most vulnerable in society within days. If we hold our nerve and continue to observe the advice on social distancing and face coverings we can hope for a return to something like normality within months.

There is no room for complacency however and Christmas presents challenges around infection that should not be underestimated. Nevertheless I think we can be permitted a brief opportunity to give thanks for the work of the scientific community across the world. The work they do can be difficult and challenging, as I know from the experiences of my own family. My younger daughter is undertaking research into antibiotic resistance in strains of e-coli. For months she has conducted experiments late into the evening in the laboratory without success. Just last night she messaged that she and her supervisor had made a small but important breakthrough.

Pandemics and antibiotic resistance present a huge challenge for humanity and we pray that scientists and academics, whether in our universities or within the private sector, continue their work to keep disease at bay through the development of vaccines and medicines. We have genuine reason for hope at this time and I hope and pray we can all continue to be as safe as possible until the vaccines have been rolled out and we can resume our lives thanks to the brilliant work of the men and women in white coats in laboratories throughout the world.

Duncan Forsyth

Church Notices: Southville Methodist

There will be no services in church until Sunday 13th December. Meanwhile the Staines **Zoom Service** continues each Sunday at 10.30am. Contact Matt Sendorek (matt.sendorek@btinternet.com) for an email invitation, or Roz Sendorek on 01784 459984 or 07712 816163.

Circuit Bible Study by zoom on Thursdays starting at 9.30am studying Matthew. Please contact Jonathan Griffiths for details to join – you can join by phone. Email contact: jonathan.griffiths@sfmtc.org.uk

Church Notices: St. Dunstan

Services in church from today:

Sunday 9.30am: **Holy Communion** (said). Please book by Saturday lunchtime.

Wednesday 10.00am: **Morning Prayer**. No need to book.

The **Sunday Zoom service** takes place every Sunday at 10.30am. All are welcome; phone or email the parish office for details of how to connect from computer, smartphone or tablet.

Bible Study by zoom: 8pm Monday 14th December, currently studying Philipians. Please contact Anne Dollery for details of how to take part (remotely).

Church Christmas tree – To support a local business we will be buying a Christmas tree for the church. Donations are invited towards the cost of £130. Please use 'tree' as the reference in any donations sent online or by cheque.

Change of plan: the Ashford Christmas Trail has been expanded to a full jumble trail this year. Nicola has therefore cancelled her plan to sell craft items in aid of church funds.

Stewardship envelopes: please continue to use the envelopes you have, changing the date as appropriate. If they are running short, let Nicola Whate know (or the Parish Office). Many thanks for your support for St. Dunstan's!

Calling **online Christmas shoppers:** don't forget to use the Easy Fundraising website when you're buying your Christmas gifts online this year. It is really easy to use and St Dunstan's stands to gain financially at absolutely no extra cost to you. Simply go to www.easyfundraising.org.uk and navigate from there to John Lewis, Argos, Amazon, EBay, Next, M&S, booking.com and the list goes on, with over 2,700 companies included.

Many thanks for the Angel Tree donations which had reached £157 when this was written.

Special services for Christmas (our Sunday morning services in church will continue at 9.30am and on zoom at 10.30am)

Our services will be joyfully celebrating the good news of Christ's birth differently this year. The timing of our services is limited by the need to leave 48 hours between services in church (the time required has been reduced from 72 hours). Otherwise special cleaning in the church has to take place to prevent the spread of Covid 19. This cleaning will exceptionally take place before the 6.30pm service on 20th to enable us to have a service of music and reading in the church on a Sunday. We are still not permitted to sing in church, but we can sing outside, socially distanced.

Sunday 13th December

2.30pm outdoor **Christingle service (weather permitting)** in church yard. Come and make your Christingle. If the weather is wet we invite you to come and collect your Christingle parts to make at home.

Sunday 20th December

4pm **A (short) Service of Carols and Readings in churchyard** (weather permitting). Come warmly dressed. You are invited to bring torches and a thermos of coffee!

6.30pm **Readings, reflections and music** for Christmas in church. Booking is essential.*

Christmas Eve Thursday 24th December

3.30 pm **Crib service in churchyard.** Weather permitting. Dress warmly.

11.30pm **Midnight service in church.** Booking is essential.*

Christmas Day

9.30am **service on zoom** (This service will end before the service begins on BBC 1) There will also be a separate recorded service on our website.

* booking for these services needs to be a very firm commitment to attend please. Bookings can now be taken.

Would you like to share a picture of your nativity set? We invite you to email us pictures of your sets. These will be attached to this Newsletter and put on the churches websites. Please email to admin@stdunstansfeltham.org.uk

We also invite you to dress up as a character from the story of Jesus birth and again send us a picture only if you are happy for it to be shared online. Are there some Kings, angels, Mary's,

Joseph's, innkeepers, donkeys, and camels – maybe even a Herod or two? Head and shoulders or full length photos. Please email to admin@stdunstansfeltham.org.uk

Dates for your diary

Monday (tomorrow), 7pm to 8.30pm: **Bishop of Kensington's teaching evening**. Subject this year is 'What is true freedom?', examining the differences between secular and Christian ideas of freedom. The Bishop is known as a lively and accessible speaker who encourages interaction. Book at and the Zoom link will be emailed to you.

Tuesday 8th December 7pm-7.45pm: **Life in abundance: alive in God** with Timothy Radcliffe (former head of the Dominican Order in England). First in a series of online conversations with the Chancellor of St. Paul's Cathedral. Available on catch-up; see www.stpaulsresources.co.uk. Next one is 12th January.

Other news

We are delighted that Eddie Menday is home from hospital and we send him our best wishes for his continual recovery.

We are proud to learn that St. Dunstons' Churchwarden, Duncan Forsyth, has been invited by Brentford Football Club to be its poster boy for 2021 – and that this choice has been influenced less by his well-known loyalty to the team and more by his admirable physique! Well done Duncan, we are all basking in reflected glory. (You read it here first, folks.)

Fake news, do I hear you say? Not so! But as so often, the story gets more interesting when you delve behind the sensational headlines. Friends and well-wishers will know that for the past year, Duncan has been following a demanding Health and Fitness Programme, with a special focus on Men's Weight Management, offered by Brentford FC Community Sports Trust. Thanks to Duncan's determination (and, we understand, the valuable encouragement of Mrs. F), a visible transformation has been the result! And if the proud team coaches wish to publicise this outstanding success story, who can blame them?



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