

<p>Welcome to St Dunstan's and Southville Churches</p> <p>Feltham Ecumenical Parish: Anglican and Methodist Churches in partnership</p>	<p>Sunday 13 December 2020</p> <p>Third in Advent</p>
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John the Baptist was a prophet. A prophet is a person who speaks God's messages to people. John lived in the desert, and crowds came to hear him speak. It was his task to prepare them for the coming Messiah (Jesus). John was not the light but we can say that he reflected the light, because he told people about Jesus. We can reflect God's light too, when we tell people about Jesus.

John was not a political leader but he was a powerful man, because many listened to his message when he told them to repent and receive baptism. They saw God had given authority to him. As a result of all he was doing, the Jewish authorities sent priests from the temple to question John as to his identity. He was quick to make it clear that he was not the Messiah or Elijah or the Prophet the Jews had heard about from Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15). The priests wanted to know who John was, but instead John emphasized why he had come. Speaking from Isaiah (40:3) he called himself merely 'someone who shouts in the desert'. He wanted people to concentrate on his message, not on himself. They wanted to know why John was baptizing his fellow-Jews. John used water to baptize people after they had repented; they washed their bodies to show that they wanted to be clean inside their hearts and minds. This did not mean that God had forgiven their sins, but the one who could forgive their sins was coming soon. Actually he was among them, in the crowd, but they did not recognize their Messiah.

Later, Jesus said that John the Baptist was the greatest of all the prophets (Luke 7:28), but John said that he was not good enough to be Jesus' slave! We should be humble like John the Baptist. Nobody is good enough to be Jesus' slave: Jesus is God's Son. We should always remember this when we serve him. We should never be proud, or think we are important. However, Jesus calls us his friends, not his servants! (See John 15:14-15). This is so wonderful.

Derek Perry, taken from easyenglish.bible

Church Notices: Southville Methodist

Today at 10.30am: **Morning Worship** in church, led by the Revd. Julie Underwood

Christmas Eve at 11.30pm: **Midnight Communion** led by the Revd. Juliet Ushewokunze

Sunday 27th December at 10.30am: **Holy Communion**, the Revd. Juliet Ushewokunze

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 every week:

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.

Christmas services:

NB Singing in church is not permitted, except by a very small group; however, singing (socially distanced) outside is allowed. We are therefore planning several short services in the churchyard, weather permitting.

Today at 2.30pm: **Christingle service in the churchyard.** Come and make your Christingle. If the weather is wet we invite you to collect your Christingle parts to make at home.

Sunday 20th December:

4pm **Carols and readings in the churchyard.** Come warmly dressed. You are invited to bring torches, and a thermos of coffee if you wish.

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 holy communion service in church.** Booking is essential.**

Christmas Day:

9.30am **Service on zoom** (ending 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.

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

Christmas cards: all cards for the church display board need to be sent to the Parish Office, by post, or through the letter-box, so that only one person touches them to prevent cross-infection. (Normally we have a board in the church porch where anyone can pin their Christmas card to everyone in the church.) We will be displaying the cards so that messages can be read without touching the cards. **All the cards received by Monday 22nd will be scanned and available to view on our website.** Otherwise, simple emails sending Christmas greetings can be sent to the Parish Office by Friday 18th and the stalwart Gary will attach them to our Newsletter. We are not able to forward or circulate e-cards or electronic Christmas cards.

Church Christmas tree: To support a local business we have bought 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. And many thanks to the Mockett family for decorating it for us!

Many thanks for the Angel Tree donations, the total was £206.

Thank you to everyone at Southville who organised last Sunday's jolly 'Mingle and Jingle' social on zoom. All the thought and organisation that went into it were much appreciated- including providing refreshments!

Helping those in need

Please continue to support the **Feltham Food Bank:** website <http://felthamfoodbank.org> to donate on line and find out more. Donations of sealed packaged and tinned food can be left at the back of the church on Sundays. (no Christmas foods please). Please contact the Foodbank on 07448831297 if you need to be referred for support. The Foodbank is part of the Covid 19 Response in Feltham.

The Bedfont Lane Community Centre, run by the Southern Avenue Residents Association, is distributing surplus food – '**bridging the gap between food waste and food poverty**' 12 – 2pm Monday - Friday. Please do check their Facebook site <https://www.facebook.com/SouthernAvenueResidentsAssociation2015/> to confirm times. They are asking that those taking food make a meaningful donation.

Christmas appeals: listed below are just some of the charities with online Christmas appeals who will be working to help those in need in our borough. Many will also take donations by phone or post...

Crisis – helping support the homeless in different ways this year

Met Office Tree Appeal closes on 16th December – donate on line, choosing a gift for a child aged up to 17 years.

St Martin's in the Fields Christmas Appeal – helping the homeless in London and across the county.

Salvation Army Christmas Appeal

AgeUK

Sharing the joy (or joke?)

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. **Pictures of your Christmas trees** are also welcomed – as not everyone has a nativity set.

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, Marys, Josephs, innkeepers, donkeys, 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

Tuesday 12th January 7pm-7.45pm: **Life in abundance: finding Jesus in the storm.** How can we take care of our mental and spiritual health, and live life faithfully and to the full, in the face of uncertainty, loss and change? John Swinton, in conversation with the Chancellor of St. Paul's Cathedral. Available on catch-up; see www.stpaulsresources.co.uk.

Other news

Warmest wishes to Barbara Meakin who has celebrated her 91st birthday! She is frail but well cared for in The Cloisters and enjoys singing hymns with the carers, we hear.

Next week's newsletter will cover a fortnight (weeks beginning 20th and 27th December).

Southville Methodist	Tachbrook Road, Feltham TW14 8NU Minister: Rev. Juliet Ushewokunze (020 8890 2783) Email: rev.ushewokunze@sfmc.org.uk Email address: southville@sfmc.org.uk
St. Dunstan (C of E)	St. Dunstan's Road, Feltham TW13 4JY Minister: Rev. Anne Dollery (020 8890 8347) Email: AnneDollery@yahoo.co.uk
C of E Parish office	39 St.Dunstan's Road, Feltham TW13 4JY Closed to visitors until further notice. Email: admin@stdunstansfeltham.org.uk Tel: 020 8890 2011 Website: www.stdunstansfeltham.org.uk