

## News for the Pews

**Date: 18<sup>th</sup> December 2022**

**Sunday: 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent**



### News and Views

I think we can safely say that Christmas preparations are in full swing! My desk is covered in little piles of stuff for events happening every day between now and Christmas Day, including lots of chocolate for my Christmas chocolate sermon! I hope everyone else is well prepared and not struggling too much with this very cold weather. (Looking out of my study window, it does look very beautiful!)

### Events for the week

Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> December – Carol service with the Young Farmers at 7.30pm at St. Peter's, Wormleighton

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> December – Christmas Lunch at 12noon in Stockton Church

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> December – Celtic Winter Solstice at 7pm at St. Lawrence's Church, Napton

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> December – Carol service at 6.30pm at St. Lawrence's Church, Napton

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> December – Crib service at 4pm at St. Michael's Church, Stockton

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> December – Carol service at 4pm at St. John the Baptist's Church, Lower Shuckburgh

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> December – Carol service at 6pm at St. Mary's Church, Priors Hardwick

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> December – Midnight Communion at 11.15pm at St. Lawrence's Church Napton with Rev. Canon Kathryn Fleming

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> December – Midnight Communion at 11.15pm at St. Michael's Church, Stockton

### Services on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Day:

9.00am – BCP Holy Communion at St. Peter's, Wormleighton

10.30am – Family Communion at St. Lawrence's, Napton

10.30am – Family Christmas Worship at St. Leonard's, Priors Marston

Bible readings for the week are to be confirmed

### And finally

The 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent is one of my favourite Sundays of the church calendar when we focus on the Virgin Mary. This year the Gospel reading is more about Joseph as we think about his reaction when he finds out that his young fiancée is already pregnant. The response of both Mary and Joseph to the news from the angel always astounds me. They both risked so much because of their obedience to God's call on their lives. And just think about what could have gone wrong with God's plan - Mary and Joseph could have said no, the politics and power struggles could have destroyed the baby, people's indifference to the event could have undermined it all! God risked everything in reaching out to us, in coming as a helpless child into the mess and muddle of our world and our lives. And God invites us to do the same – to risk everything for love.

Let us pray: "God our redeemer, who prepared the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of your Son: grant that, as she looked for his coming as our saviour, so we may be ready to greet him when he comes again as our judge; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen."

God bless,  
Gillian

(For more details of events and diary dates, see our website: [www.thebridgesgroup.org.uk](http://www.thebridgesgroup.org.uk) or the parish magazines)