



NEWSLETTER

Sunday 20 December, Christmas & Epiphany



Sunday 20 December - Advent 4

2 Samuel 7.1-11, 16; Romans 16.25-end; Luke 1.26-38

- Online** [Benefice Carol Service](#) (YouTube)
Phone 899433 to listen to the audio
- 11.30am [Post-service coffee & chat via Zoom](#)
- 1—4pm Holy Trinity Holtby open for private prayer
- 1—4pm St Mary Warthill open for private prayer
- 1—4pm Holy Trinity Stockton open for private prayer
- 2—4pm St Nicholas open for private prayer
- 4.00pm Family Carol Service : Holy Trinity, Stockton*
- 6.00pm Carol Service : Holy Trinity, Stockton*

During the week

Monday 21 December

- 9.00am Morning Prayer : Holy Trinity, Holtby
- 4.00pm Carol singing : Glebe Carpark, Dunnington

Tuesday 22 December

- 9.00am Morning Prayer : St Mary, Warthill

Wednesday 23 December

- 9.00am Morning Prayer : Holy Trinity, Stockton
- 1—4pm Holy Trinity Stockton open for private prayer
- 6.00pm Carol singing : The Green, near Greenside, Dunn

Thursday 24 December - Christmas Eve

Hebrews 1.1-4; John 1.1-14

- Online** [Crib Service](#) (YouTube)
Phone 899433 to listen to the audio
- 9.00am Morning Prayer : St Nicholas, Dunnington
- 10.00am St Nicholas Dunnington open for private prayer
- 6.00pm stand on your doorstep and ring bells or sing a carol together to share the joy of Christmas!
- 7.00pm Christmas Eve Communion : St Nicholas†
- 1—4pm Holy Trinity Holtby open for private prayer
- 1—4pm St Mary Warthill open for private prayer

Friday 25 December - Christmas Day

Titus 3.4-7; Luke 2.8-20

- Online** [Christmas Day Service](#) (YouTube)
Phone 899433 to listen to the audio
- 9.30am Christmas Day Communion : St Nicholas†
- 10.30am Christmas Day Communion : St Nicholas†
- 10.30am Christmas Day Communion : Holy Trinity, Stockton*
- 1-4pm St Mary Warthill open for private prayer

Sunday 27 December

No services. Church buildings closed.

† Places must be reserved by calling Nick Bird 489349 or emailing Nick revnickbird@gmail.com

* Places must be reserved by contacting Ennis Tweddle 400364 or emailing Nick revnickbird@gmail.com

For all services in the church buildings, please wear a face covering, sanitise your hands, sit in designated seats only, and take your service sheet home afterwards.

Sunday 3 January - Epiphany

Isaiah 60.1-6; Ephesians 3.1-12; Matthew 2.1-12

- Online** [Covenant Service](#) (YouTube)
Phone 899433 to listen to the audio
- 10.30am Morning Worship : Holy Trinity, Stockton*
- 11.30am [Post-service coffee & chat via Zoom](#)
- 1—4pm Holy Trinity Holtby open for private prayer
- 1—4pm St Mary Warthill open for private prayer
- 1—4pm Holy Trinity Stockton open for private prayer
- 2—4pm St Nicholas open for private prayer

Watching and waiting

a reflection by Revd Nick Bird

Patience is a virtue, but not a gift received by all. Patience was once the fruit of boredom, however boredom is rare these days. TV is available 24/7 (even though for 20 of those it will be absolute cobblers), films can be streamed, books downloaded, and mobile phones make everyone contactable at any time in any place. So to have to wait for anything at all is a diminishing experience and decreasing skill.

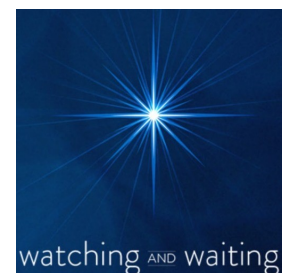
Christmas brings the potential for such a gift. Advent is a season of watching and waiting. Presents under the tree (or on top of the wardrobe) act like putting a treat in front of a puppy, as a child is told, 'You'll just have to wait until Christmas'. This waiting, although difficult, especially if it for the gift of long-missed family to arrive and celebrate, is always an opportunity, and a surprisingly good training in prayer.

We watch and wait for the gift of the Christ-child, but his coming is not related to our worthiness to receive him, our joy is not made greater by our goodness. In the same way that the Santa-myth of naughty-or-nice separates the deserving from the undeserving, God does not come to us in our prayers consummate with the degree of our purity or the fervour of our entreaties, but rather our capacity to receive him. If we are full, then there is no space, and if we are full of our own worthiness, then we will have no room in our inn.

There is a chasm of difference between purity and holiness. Purity is about being separated from that which is considered unclean – money, sex and power, the fun things mostly. Holiness is about being connected to – to each other and to the Divine. Sadly, we often prioritise purity and so suffer sterility of religious experience. So the watching and waiting, even in prayer, is never about making us worthy, but rather making us empty, and when empty, ready to receive the priceless gift that was first given at Christmas. Cleanliness might not be next to godliness, but boredom might just be next to holiness. Watch and wait and receive.

A very happy (and holy) Christmas to one and all.

Revd Nick Bird



Parish Churches News & Events

Christmas Services in our church buildings

All services are listed overleaf. You are very welcome, but booking is essential. Contact Nick Bird revnickbird@gmail.com or 489349 or (Stockton only) Ennis Tweddle 400364.

St Nicholas Church Christmas Experience

The Nativity figures have begun their journey to Bethlehem. Do visit the church and come and find them! The church is open Thursdays 9.30am—12.00 and Sundays 2.00—4.00pm, and will also be open after the Christmas morning services (at 9.30am and 10.30am) until mid-afternoon. The Christmas Tree is up, the church decorated with Christmas lights, and there will be carols playing. There will be a one-way system and people to direct you and manage numbers, to help ensure safety. Please wear a mask (unless you are exempt) and sanitise your hands.



Carol Singing in Dunnington.

We will be singing Christmas carols in

- The Glebe car park on Monday 21st December at 4.00pm
- The Green, near Greenside, on Wednesday 23rd December 6.00pm



Please keep in groups of 6 and 2 metres apart. Carol sheets will be provided, or download one to your phone from stnicholasdunnington.org.uk. Do check the website for any last minute changes, or contact Judith judithmhewitt@btinternet.com. We are not going house to house Carol Singing as we want to keep those we visit safe.

Nativity Trail. A Nativity Trail is in place in each of the four villages until 4 January. [Nativity Trail maps and details.](#)

Thank you. About £400 was safely delivered to the IDAS office on Tuesday. Thank you to all who donated to this appeal.

Christingle and Children's Society. It's not too late to enjoy our online [Christingle service](#) or donate to The Children's Society, either via our [Christingle fundraising page](#), or by leaving a donation at The Rectory in Dunnington or with Ennis Tweddle in Stockton in a marked envelope.



School Chaplain. Our curate, Revd Mark Poole, has been invited by Bishop John to take up a part-time role as the ordained Chaplain to the students and staff of Archbishop Holgate's school. Mark will aim to offer the school an equivalent of about half a day a week out of his time as curate with us. Our rector, Revd Nick Bird is delighted that Mark has been asked to take up this role and has given it his full blessing. Mark says, *'My priority of course, will be serving my curacy in this benefice that I love. Offering some chaplaincy at the school will be good experience, and an appropriate extension to my work given that a number of adults and young people from our benefice are involved with the school.'*



Scam emails

Please note that there are a number of scam emails being sent at the moment which purport to come from clergy, often asking

for a response quickly or asking people to buy Amazon vouchers for them. If you receive an email like this please do not respond to it or buy anything. Usually the scam emails do not actually come from that person's address, so you can tell it is fake by looking at the sender's address.

Dunnington Methodist Church

Dear Friends, I hope you are all safe and well. It was lovely to see many of you last Sunday. We will not be meeting as a group over the Christmas period, but there are many services that you can join on zoom or via YouTube. Please contact Keith Albans if you need any further details, but you should be able to find most of what you need on the website.

News from the Methodist Circuit

Worship resources

We have a new website page with a summary of online worship around the Circuit: find a service at www.yorkmethodist.org.uk/coronavirus-information/online-services.html. Services can be viewed on the [Circuit YouTube channel](#).

Donations for asylum seekers

A few items still needed - Wheelie suitcases, Jogging trousers in small and medium sizes, Trainers, Warm winter coats in small and medium sizes. We are also hoping to give the men a small gift at Christmas to let them know that the people in York are thinking of them and want to make them feel welcome, so we'd be grateful for: Boxes of chocolates, Toiletry sets. Drop off at 46 Eastfield Avenue, Haxby, YO32 3EZ (there is a large waterproof plastic box by our garage door if we aren't in) or contact Steph Cooper on stephcooper46@outlook.com or 761605. Monetary donations to purchase items are also welcome.



Praying for our Circuit

This week we pray for those for whom this Christmas will not be a happy one; the lonely and bereaved, the anxious and afraid, those who are ill, those who are hungry, homeless, or dealing with broken relationships. We pray for God's love to be made known to all at this time, and for the wisdom and courage to do what we can to help all who need it.



Please note that Lois and Angie will not be working from Christmas Eve until 4th January 2021. Please check www.yorkmethodist.org.uk for information on services and Covid guidance or contact Revd Keith Albans.

Lectionary Corner

- 25 December: Christmas Day
- 26 December: Stephen, Deacon, First Martyr
- 27 December: John, Apostle and Evangelist
- 28 December: The Holy Innocents
- 29 December: Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martyr, 1170
- 1 January: The Naming and Circumcision of Jesus
- 2 January: Basil the Great and Gregory of Nazianzus, Bishops and Teachers of the Faith, 379 and 389

[This week's full lectionary info and prayers.](#)



If you need help/support but don't know who your local Community Support Group volunteers are, please email covid19eastyork@gmail.com, or call Rev Nick Bird on 01904 489349 and we will link you up.

To receive this newsletter by email, [email Victoria](#). It is also available to download from the [St Nicholas Church website](#). To receive the Methodist Circuit News, please [email the Circuit office](#) or phone 07984 019995.

Next newsletter on **Sunday 3 January**. Email items to grapevine.rev@gmail.com by **9.00 am on Thursday 31 December**.