

ALL SAINTS'



This week's Newsbulletin

All Saints' Welcomes Everyone

Dear friends,

The newspapers have been full of headlines using Christmas songs, amended to suit the current situation. George Michael's "Lost Christmas" and Bing Crosby's "It's beginning to look a lot like lockdown". I fancy Chris Rea singing "Not driving home for Christmas". Elvis, of course, who began the rock and roll revolution had already recorded "Blue Christmas" long ago.

Christians, of course, have often lamented that the true meaning of the festival can be lost amidst the ever-increasing number of events and purchases attached to it. It brings no pleasure to suggest that this year the process has been reversed definitively. Even for the faithful, celebration is cut back to a minimum along with travel and family get-togethers.

There is a strong tradition in our carols of peace, and of silence. "Silent night" is perhaps the most obvious, and it is silent because it is a holy night, an exceptional time of remembering and valuing God's great, ultimate gift of his Son Jesus. Can we recognise the Holy in this world of confusion and uncertainty? Our true joy at this time is that "with the poor and mean and lowly, lived on earth our Saviour holy".

The birth of Jesus was a quiet event, hardly noticed by the people in the town. The visitors in the Bible are important, representing ordinary people and people across the world, but the event was very low-key. God's way is accomplished in ordinary, or reduced circumstances, integral with normal human life. The carol Once in royal David's city underlines this, perhaps using a deliberate contrast between the leaders of this world and the mass of people to whom Jesus came, and brings a hush with "How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given; So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven."

This Christmas almost all of us are in a position where our celebration is limited. For some people this will cause pain and anguish which no amount of reassurance will entirely mitigate, so I don't say this lightly. There is a peace in the Christmas story which says that God loves us so much that he sent his Son (John 3.16) and if we can find the way of refocussing we can locate within ourselves a fresh trust and hope in the God who comes to us in all our complexities and suffering. It doesn't need to

be a Lost Christmas, for the wonderful truth is that in all our need God has come and found us.

Love and blessings at this Christmas time,
Jo

Christmas Eve

16.30 Crib Service on Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85657093711?pwd=Znl4U3l4QUJRRUUVIwUkp1NEExZUTExdz09>

Meeting ID: 856 5709 3711 Passcode: 214270

Video Prayers and reflection for Christmas at
<https://www.allsaintshertford.org/worship.php>

Christmas Day

10.00 Communion in Church

10.00 Family Service on Zoom.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84643198778>

Meeting ID: 846 4319 8778

Sunday 27th

10.00 Morning Prayer on Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86171003223>

Meeting ID: 861 7100 3223

Tuesday 29th

11.00 Morning prayer on Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88015708219>

Meeting ID: 880 1570 8219

Thursday 31st

11.00 Church open for private prayer

Sunday 3rd Jan Epiphany

10.00 Eucharist in Church

10.00 Family Service on Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81903220728>

Meeting ID: 819 0322 0728

'Zoom'-ing by 'phone

Call 0203 051 2874, 0203 481 5237, 0203 481 5240 or 0131460 1196 and use meeting id followed by #

Contact information

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