

TEAM NOTICES

Carols in Studland - 6.30pm on Tuesday 10th December in St Nicholas Church. This will be a traditional carol service, with readings and Christmas music. Do join us for a wonderful evening of festive words and music with refreshments afterwards.

Belvedere Singers Christmas Concert at St Mary's on Saturday 14th December, 7.30pm. Tickets £9, under 18's free.

St Nicholas Crib Service in the Farmyard. will be held at 3.30pm on Sunday 15th December at the Manor Farm in Studland. All are welcome to join us for Carols in the Barn and short nativity outside for all the family.

Community Carols at All Saints, Monday 16th December at 6pm. an informal evening of carols, readings and drama, with mulled wine and mince pies.

Christmas Cards with a nativity theme are for sale at St Mary's and St Mark's at £2 for a pack of five cards.

Christmas Services – you can now find our Christmas Services leaflet, detailing all services across our 4 churches, at the back of each church.

All Things Bright and Beautiful takes place in St Mary's Church each Tuesday from 2.30pm – 3.30pm. A short service, which includes well known hymns, is followed by tea and cake. All Things Bright and Beautiful is particularly suitable for carers and those for whom they care and is dementia friendly. Is there someone who you could bring along or encourage to come? All are welcome.

T-Pot is held every Wednesday from 10am to 12.30pm in the Rectory Classroom. Come along for a cuppa and a chat. Everyone welcome!



Dates for your Diary:

Swanage Town Carol Service is to be held on Sunday 22nd December at 6.30pm in St Mary's Church.

REFLECTION

Readings from Malachi 3:1-4, Philippians 1: 3-11, Luke 3: 1-6

Today we light our second Advent Candle. These candles are a constant reminder of the season we celebrate, and the journey we are undertaking. It is truly a time of reflection. We are taken back to some time in the 5th century BC, a time of the prophet Malachi. It sits as the last contribution to the Old Testament. There has been laxity and corruption in life and worship. Priests and people are cheating God by not giving him the offerings rightly due to him, nor living according to his teaching. Malachi prophesies that the Lord will come to judge and purify his people and send before him a messenger to prepare his way. But he doesn't say when.

So 500 years later (and what must have passed by in that time?) Another prophet, John, emerges onto the scene, this time preaching from Isaiah, but with the same message as Malachi. This small world has a firebrand, who calls his would be followers snakes, seeking to find an easy way out by seeking his baptism. John's answer is simple, turn away from your sins, turn your life upside down, run the risk of persecution, perhaps death with the current regime of priests and governors and follow me; but only because I will lead you to the Messiah that really brings good news of the Kingdom of God.

His Advent was 500 years and still counting, and we have just 25 days to recall all that has been done by Jesus on our behalf! Most people I know, religious or not seem to be carrying a burden of despair. The news is scattered with falsehoods. Integrity seems a rarity not an expectation. Many of the ideals we hold dear are threatened. Gloomy stuff indeed! Perhaps these remaining days of Advent can be our opportunity to make some small differences our selves? Dare we speak out in the face of wrong, dare we declare our faith more openly, not necessarily to convert but to inspire by our actions?

I haven't forgotten about Philippians! Paul is thanking his congregation for their love and support. He is confident that God who began His work in them will continue to bless it. This passage is a wonderful reminder of God's presence and constancy. In this Advent time let us place our hope in Him who gives us strength and resilience in difficult times.

With Advent blessings
John Cooper

Team Contact details

Team Rector

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Parish Office

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Visit our Team website swanageteam.com