

Getting out of ruts is a difficult and dangerous business, but it is only by doing so that we as people, and as churches, can allow God to speak clearly of His plan for our lives.

One change that I know will take place next year is that Bob will be leaving us to take up a post as Team Rector of Kippax, Allerton Bywater and Swillington. This will be a great change for both Bob, his family and the benefice. We bless him on his way and pray that God is able to speak to him, and to us, of his vision in each situation.

When discomfort and uncertainty come our way, the best we can respond is to say, with Mary, 'I am the servant of the Lord, let it be to me as you say'.

Blessings, Andy

#### TOY APPEAL and SUPERMARKET VOUCHERS

Once again the people of Barwick have been very generous.

Major Joy of the Salvation Army was delighted to receive a van load of toys collected by Barwick School, All Saints' and Barwick Methodist Church.

All Saints' collected over £200 worth of supermarket vouchers too.

The Salvation Army will use the vouchers to buy the food/other provisions that people really need.

THANK YOU

## *Community Carol Singing*

6pm outside All Saints'

Saturday 19th December

(weather dependent)

Wrap up warm and bring a torch or lantern.

Contact the church wardens

Leslye 0113 281 2488 and Carole - 0113 281 2149

There will not be a notice sheet next week.



**All Saints'**  
at the heart of the  
community

ADVENT 4  
Sunday 20<sup>th</sup>  
December 2020



*Wishing everyone a Merry and safe  
Christmas and New Year*

#### Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December 2020

11am - Morning Prayer with John Crouch

#### Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> December

11am - Holy Communion with Revd Andy Nicholson

#### Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> December

10pm - Christmas Eve Mass with Revd Bob Bailey  
(tickets still available)

#### Friday 25<sup>th</sup> December

11am - Communion by Extension with Keith Langley  
(tickets still available)

#### A MESSAGE FROM BOB

Hopefully by now you will know that I have been appointed Team Rector at Allerton Bywater, Kippax and Swillington working alongside Diane Flynn and Gordon Cooper, who many of you will know.

All being well I will be with them by Easter.

I just wanted to say a big thank you for all the kind and encouraging messages we have received over the last week. There will be a time for goodbyes in the New Year but for now many thanks for your continued prayers and kindness as we prepare for this next step.

Blessings, Bob

## Some interesting facts

### Monday 21st - Winter Solstice

The winter solstice, also known as midwinter, occurs when one of the Earth's poles has its maximum tilt away from the Sun. It happens twice yearly, once in each hemisphere. For that hemisphere, the winter solstice is the day with the shortest period of daylight and longest night of the year, when the Sun is at its lowest daily maximum elevation in the sky.

This is also **St Thomas the Apostle's feast day**. It is said that a cold St Thomas foretells a hard winter.

### Saturday 26th - St Stephen's feast day.

Saint Stephen was one of the first deacons of the Christian Church. He was the first Christian martyr.

Stephen is believed to have been a Greek Jew who converted to Christianity. When the number of disciples increased, there was much confusion over the distribution of alms and the serving of the poor.

Stephen's trustworthy character marked him out, and he was chosen as one of the seven deacons who would perform this task.

The **Boxing Day Bank Holiday** has been transferred to 28 December

## Christmas Cards for Terry Lister

A big thank you to everyone who wrote a Christmas card to Terry, they went in the post on Monday.

Thank you to everyone who also wrote a card for one of the other 34 residents.

We have made sure that everyone in the care home will receive at least one card this Christmas.

Dear all

Tomorrow's reading tells of the 'Annunciation' when an angel tells Mary that she is to give birth to the Christ child.

Beyond the great miracle of God incarnate born on earth is the lesser, but no less wonderful, miracle of Mary's response to the angel. 'I am the servant of the Lord, let it be to me as you say'. Did ever so few words convey such deep meaning and hold such world-shattering implications?

With these 15 words, Mary's life, and the whole world, is turned upside down.

It's hard to contemplate how confusing and disorientating the situation must have been. A young lady with an ordinary life planned out in front of her – marry the local carpenter, settle down to a life of unremarkable hardship and contentment – is suddenly thrown into sharp relief by a visit from a celestial being.

Covid-19 may feel more demonic than celestial, but it has had an equally disorientating and confusing effect on many people across the globe. As I reflect on both the Annunciation and Covid-19, a number of lessons to learn occur to me.

The first is that what appears to be a curse may be turned into a blessing with a little of God's grace. Once it became known that she was pregnant, and not by Joseph, Mary would be in a world of trouble with the potential for societal rejection and destitution. That it didn't happen was down to Joseph listening to God in his dream and to his generous nature.

Covid-19 has been a curse for many, but through the work of people like Marcus Rashford and thousands of local volunteers in groups like ThornerCares, BarwickCares and Your Scholes, much good has come from it.

The second lesson is that it's OK to be in an uncomfortable place. The whole world is in a strange, uncomfortable and uncertain place, but that discomfort opens up the opportunity to step back and re-assess what we do, why we do it and what vision God has for us. I believe that over the next year many people will change their jobs and lifestyles. Some will have this forced on them through redundancy and necessity, but others will do so simply because this time has shown the emptiness of previous ruts that people had got themselves into.