

**St Arvans Church Mid-Week Bulletin - Wednesday 23rd December 2020**

**Christmas 2020**

**Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> December:** Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, by Candlelight. 6pm in St Arvans Church.

*Please check with Father Michael if you wish to come – there are only possibly a couple of spaces left.*

**Evening Prayer:** Tonight at 8pm

[https://www.facebook.com/pg/vicaragecello1/videos/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/vicaragecello1/videos/?ref=page_internal)

**Christmas Eve: Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> December:** Midnight Mass at 10pm in St Arvans Church (Please book asap with Maureen)

**Christmas Day: Friday 25<sup>th</sup> December:** Christmas Morning Eucharist 10am in St Arvans. (Please book asap with Maureen)

**St Arvans online**

Live service stream : [https://www.facebook.com/pg/vicaragecello1/videos/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/vicaragecello1/videos/?ref=page_internal)

Facebook : St Arvan's Parish group – please like us and become a follower

Webpage at: [www.starvanschurch.org.uk](http://www.starvanschurch.org.uk)

Instagram: starvanschurch

Twitter: St Arvans Church @Arvanschurch

*Please send any contributions to this bulletin to [starvanschurchnews@btinternet.com](mailto:starvanschurchnews@btinternet.com)*

*Please share it with others whom you think be interested, and invite them to contact us if they want to go on the mailing list at: [starvanschurchnews@btinternet.com](mailto:starvanschurchnews@btinternet.com)*

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This is going to be a very strange, and perhaps solitary Christmas for many of us. Father Michael, Kate and I wish you all a Christmas filled with Joy, Peace and Hope.

Stay safe,

Hilary

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*Once in our world a stable had something in it that was bigger than our whole world. C S Lewis*

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### **Joseph's dream**

*Joseph:* I've had enough! This would try the patience of a saint; and I don't think I'm a saint, just a man of principle. Just an ordinary mortal minding my own business - Joiner and General Household Repairs - trying to do my best with the gifts God gives me. Behold! The Handyman of the Lord!

Folk appreciate good workmanship. On the whole they respect me: a solid member of the community. I never set out to be clever but I want to do what's right. And now this - what will people say?

Mary - my intended - she's going to have a baby. It's not mine. It can't be mine. What will people say? Nazareth is a small town. Everyone knows everyone else's business. This isn't going to be good for trade: I'll be a laughing stock. I'll call the wedding off, quietly of course, that must be the best thing to do.

*Angel:* Joseph!

*Joseph:* That's me. Joinery and General Household Repairs, prompt service and cash terms. Who called?

*Angel:* I did.

*Joseph:* And who are you?

*Angel:* An Angel of the Lord.

*Joseph:* Pull the other one!

*Angel:* No, it's true, I'm an Angel.

*Joseph:* I must be dreaming!

*Angel:* You are.

*Joseph:* I must be getting back to work.

*Angel:* Joseph, will you listen! You're as thick as 2 short planks!

*Joseph:* Not surprising, given my line of work. Well, what do you want?

*Angel:* You are a descendant of David?

*Joseph:* Yes. You see, David begat Solomon and Solomon, Rehoboam, who begat Abijah, who begat Asa, who begat Jehoshaphat.....

*Angel:* Yes, yes, thank you. Do not be afraid to take Mary to be your wife.

*Joseph:* But....

*Angel:* For it is by the Holy Spirit that she has conceived.

*Joseph:* Well *I* never .....

*Angel:* I know. It was an Immaculate Conception. She will give birth to a son and you shall name him.....

*Joseph:* Jehoshaphat!

*Angel:* No. Jesus.

*Joseph:* What kind of name is *that*?

*Angel:* Jesus - for he will save his people from their sins.

*Joseph:* What, all our family? All the people in Nazareth? All God's people? All the people in Saint Arvans and Chepstow? One little baby?

*Angel:* Yes, and so will come true what the Lord said through the Prophet: a Virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and he will be called Emmanuel.

*Joseph:* But you just told me to call him Jesus. I can't understand all this. I'm good with my hands not with words - just a manual worker

*Angel:* Emmanuel is a special name; it means 'God with us'.

*Joseph:* What, with the workers? With the people of Nazareth? With the people of Saint Arvans and Chepstow? With ordinary folk like me?

Mary! *Mary!* We're going to have a baby !

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### **The Gospel Tree**

There was a shining Christmas tree  
 Standing out where all could see.  
 Its brilliance captured every eye,  
 And seemed to cheer each passerby.

"The lights are so bright," they would say  
 And hesitate to walk away.  
 The tree stood proud ablaze with light  
 For every light was burning bright.

Then one bulb was heard to say,  
 "I'm tired of burning night and day;

I think I'll just go out and take a rest,  
For I'm too tired to do my best;

Besides I am so very small  
I doubt if I'd be missed at all."  
Then a child lovingly touched the light,  
"Look mother, this one shines so very bright.

I think of all the lights up on the tree  
This one looks the best to me."  
"Oh my goodness!" said the light  
"I almost dimmed right out of sight.

I thought perhaps no one would care  
If I failed to shine my share."  
With that, a glorious brilliance came,  
For every light had felt the same.

Our gospel, like this Christmas tree,  
With little lights which are you and me,  
We each have a space that we must fill  
With love and lessons and goodwill.

Let's keep our tree ablaze with light,  
With testimonies burning bright.  
For our gospel is a living tree  
That lights the way to eternity.

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## Music

There is such a huge repertoire of music for this Christmas season. Here is a selection I hope you will enjoy.

Posted only a couple of days ago: Andrea Bocelli singing O Holy Night for Songs of Praise – The UK's Favourite Carol: [O Holy Night - Andrea Bocelli - Songs of Praise - YouTube](#)

This is so wonderfully over-the-top, that I couldn't resist! The Mormon Tabernacle Choir, with supporting guests. I'm afraid the "angels" made me giggle! [Angels, from the Realms of Glory - David Archuleta and the Mormon Tabernacle Choir - YouTube](#)

My personal favourite carol : O Come all ye faithful

[O Come, All Ye Faithful \(Adeste Fideles\) at Westminster Abbey - YouTube](#)

This is a little known, very old carol about St Joseph, with a rather haunting melody:

[O Joseph being an old man truly - YouTube](#)

The Cambridge Singers with John Rutter's Nativity Carol, and Candlelight Carol

[Nativity Carol - John Rutter, The Cambridge Singers, City of London Sinfonia - YouTube](#)

[Candlelight Carol - John Rutter, The Cambridge Singers, City of London Sinfonia - YouTube](#)

Away in a Manger: this is the lovely David Willcocks arrangement, sung by the choir of King's College, Cambridge. [Away in a Manger \(Willcocks\) \[King's - 2012, No 9\] - YouTube](#)

Boys' choir Libera sing Silent Night

[Libera - Silent Night \(BBC Songs of Praise Big Sing Carols 2013\) - YouTube](#)

The Wexford Carol (Good People all, this Christmastide); from the US Navy Band and singers [The Wexford Carol - YouTube](#)

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