



**UNITED BENEFICE OF CORLEY  
PARISH CHURCH & ST MARY & ALL  
SAINTS CHURCH, FILLONGLEY WITH  
FILLONGLEY METHODIST CHURCH**

*Anglicans and Methodists in Unity.*



Dear Friends,

As we draw near to the miraculous mystery that is Christmas, I was trying to think of wise words of comfort and joy to write to you when a friend forwarded a link to the Christmas message written by Bishop Michael Curry of the Episcopalian Church. You may remember that Bishop Michael preached so memorably at the Duke and Duchess of Sussex' wedding in 2018. His words had real resonance with me, so I share them here with you in the hope that you will too, will be blessed by his words.

*Joy to the world! The Lord is come: let earth receive her King; let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing.*

Perhaps like me, you've sung this hymn for years – in church, at home with your family, gathered with friends and neighbours. Perhaps you've sung it to yourself – in your car, on a walk, or quietly in the dark of night. *Joy to the world!*

While we may not feel joyful this year – as the pandemic of disease continues to bring sickness and death, when fear and mistrust – a darkness – threatens to overcome the light – we, as followers of Jesus Christ must bear joy to this aching world. We must shine light into the darkness. *Joy to the world!*

Like much in our lives, proclaiming joy is difficult work – also *good and essential* work – especially now. Though we mourn that which is lost in our lives, our families, and our communities – *Joy to the world!*

While we strive to pull up the twisted and thorny vines of hatred and bigotry and anger – *Joy to the world!*

Through streaming tears and gritted teeth – *Joy to the world!* – because God is breaking into our lives and into this world anew.

While this is a strange year, the ministry He gives us remains the same. We will prepare him room in our hearts by taking on the ministry Jesus demands of us: feed those who are hungry; welcome

***Stop press***

***Services at Christmas***

***Christmas Eve 11:30pm***

***Fillongley***

***Christmas Day 10:00 am***

***Corley***

***Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December***

***9:00 am Fillongley***

***10:30am Corley***

***Please bring and wear a face covering***



the stranger; clothe those who are naked; heal those who are sick; visit the prisoner. Love God. Love your neighbour. Sing joy into this old world. Prepare him room.

St. Luke writes of the first Christmas, “[Mary] gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.” There, in the simplest bed, in the cool of the night, in a trough, in bands of cloth, lies the One for whom no room was made. And yet strangely, there lies the One whom not even the universe can contain.

*Joy to the world! The Lord is come.* In your hearts, in your homes, in your lives, prepare him room.

God love you; God bless you; and may God hold us all in those almighty hands of love.

### **The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry. Presiding Bishop and Primate, The Episcopal Church**

So, my hope and prayer for us all this Christmas is that we open our hearts, minds, homes and lives to the incredible gift the God offers us all at Christmas. A real, transformational relationship with the God of love that sent God’s only Son to be Saviour of the World.

With love and prayers for you and yours this Christmas time and always

Ali

P.S. I am taking a short break after the Christmas Day service and will be back on duty on the 3<sup>rd</sup> January.



## **Readings and Prayers for Christmas Day and Sunday 27th December 2020**

### **The 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Christmas**

#### **Collects**

#### **Christmas Night**

Eternal God, who made this most holy night to shine with the brightness of your one true light: bring us, who have known the revelation of that light on earth, to see the radiance of your heavenly glory; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Eternal God, in the stillness of this night you sent your almighty Word to pierce the world’s darkness with the light of salvation: give to the earth the peace that we long for and fill our hearts with the joy of heaven through our Saviour, Jesus Christ. **Amen**

#### **Christmas Day**

Almighty God, you have given us your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin: grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; through Jesus Christ

your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Lord Jesus Christ, your birth at Bethlehem draws us to kneel in wonder at heaven touching earth: accept our heartfelt praise as we worship you, our Saviour and our eternal God. **Amen**

## **Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas 1**

Almighty God, who wonderfully created us in your own image and yet more wonderfully restored us through your Son Jesus Christ: grant that, as he came to share in our humanity, so we may share the life of his divinity; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

God in Trinity, eternal unity of perfect love: gather the nations to be one family, and draw us into your holy life through the birth of Emmanuel, our Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen**

### **Readings**

#### **Christmas Night**

Isaiah 9: vs 2 – 7 ~ Psalm 96

Titus 2: vs 11-14 ~ Luke 2: 1 – 20

#### **Christmas Day**

Isaiah 52: vs vs 7-10 ~ Psalm 98

Hebrews 1: vs 1-12

#### **First Sunday of Christmas**

Exodus 33: vs 7-11a ~ Psalm 117

1 John Chapter 1 ~ John 21: vs 19-end



### **Talk / Reflection**

Revd Ali's reflections for the Christmas celebrations are attached to this Bulletin

Revd Liz's reflection for the First Sunday of Christmas is also attached.

### **HYMNS & WORSHIP SONGS**

*Here are the Hymns that we would have been singing in Church during the Christmas Celebrations :-*

#### **Christmas Night**

Joy to the world, the Lord is come. (StF 330)

O Holy Night ~ sing along, if you dare, with Pavarotti, Domingo and chorus in Vienna. ☺

[\(2\) Luciano Pavarotti and Placido Domingo - O Holy Night / Cantique De Noel \(Christmas-Vienna 1999\) - YouTube](#)

In the bleak midwinter (StF 204)

O come, all ye faithful (StF 212)

### **Christmas Day**

O little town of Bethlehem (StF 213)

Born in the night, Mary's child (StF 193)

While shepherds watched their flocks (StF 221)

Hark! the herald angels sing (StF 202)

### **First Sunday of Christmas**

Hail to the Lord's Anointed (StF 228)

Love came down at Christmas (StF 210)

Of the Father's love begotten (StF 181)

Angels from the realms of glory (StF 190)

### **PRAYERS**

*We continue to pray throughout the Christmas season ~ for our world, our nation, our communities, our families and friends, and for ourselves.*



#### **A Prayer: Love's furnace in a little room**

May the trust of Mary troubled by her strange call  
and Joseph's encouragement beside her through all, be God's gift to us.  
May the radiant brightness and light of the Star,  
the hope and longing of searchers travelling from afar, be God's gift to us.  
May the wonder of shepherd's surprised by God's love,  
the joy of the angels who came from above, be God's gift to us all.  
May the peace of the Christ-child in carved trough of stone  
sounding the word 'Saviour' fashioned by Grace alone be God's give to us.  
*Crawford Murrey.*

## **In the bleak midwinter**

What can I give him, poor as I am ?

If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb ;

if I were a wise man I would do my part ;

yet what I can I give him — give my heart.

*Christina Georgina Rossetti (1830–1894)*

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## **The Bishop's Certificate in Discipleship (BCDM)**

The Bishop's Certificate in Discipleship is a modular course for lay people. It is designed for anyone who wants to explore their faith further with a group of others, and is designed to be flexible and suitable for anyone who is not an expert in Christian Faith.



Currently there are a number of BCDM modules available to book on to, all at the discounted rate of £10. There are a mix of daytime and evening modules available, so there should be something convenient for everyone. The reduced rate will end on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021. All of the modules are taking place via Zoom, so no travel or Covid risk is involved. We're getting great feedback from attendees from the move to Zoom, and there is a really great sense of community as participants from across the Diocese get to interact with each other. We'd be grateful if you could pass this along to folks in your congregations, so they know these modules are available. Current modules topics include:

- Discovering and using Your Spiritual Gifts
- Jesus and the Gospels
- The Book of Revelation

You can find further details, including how to book here:

<http://www.dioceseofcoventry.org/BCDM/modules>

## RESOURCES

Attached to this Bulletin are these items ~

- ✚ Service of Holy Communion for Christmas Eve at Fillongley
- ✚ Service of Holy Communion for Christmas Day at Corley
- ✚ Reflections from Revd Ali for our Christmas Services
- ✚ Service of Holy Communion for the Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December at Corley and Fillongley
- ✚ Reflection from Revd Liz Jones for Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December (*to follow.....*)
  
- ✚ Artist in Residence – City of Culture 2021



## AND FINALLY DON'T FORGET .....

If there is anything that you need or know of someone who would appreciate being contacted or added to the mailing list for this weekly e-bulletin, please do not hesitate to contact Revd Ali, Revd Jane or any of the Churchwardens and Church Stewards listed below. <sup>i</sup>

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