

Saturday, 17 December 2022

Dear Parishioner,

This comes with my every good wish for a very happy, peaceful, holy and safe Christmas.

The Christmas services in both centres are as follows:

Saturday, December 24th – Christmas Eve:

St Leonard's Denmark:

5 pm Children's Nativity Service
7 pm Lessons and Carols (which includes Holy Communion)

Sunday, December 25th – Christmas Day

St Leonard's Denmark:

9.30 am Holy Communion

St George's Walpole

10 am Communion by Extension

I hope you will be able to make one or other of the services, if you are at home this year.

While on the subject of worship, I want to let you know that there will not be an Evening Prayer service on Christmas night at St Leonard's nor will there be a Taize Evening Prayer at Walpole on January 1st.

The next dates for the extra services are:

Mid-week Eucharist at St Leonard's – Thursday, January 5th at 2 pm - Epiphany

Twilight Meditations at St Leonard's – Friday, January 20th at 5 pm for 5.30 start

Evening Prayer at St Leonard's – Sunday, January 29th at 7 pm.

Taize Evening Prayer at St George's – Sunday February 5th at 5 pm.

We have been given leave by the bishop to hold our Annual Meeting of Parishioners on Sunday, March 12. Normally this would be held on the last Sunday of February, but as last year, this falls in the extremely busy week at the beginning of Lent, it was agreed by Parish Council to hold the annual meeting in March.

I would encourage you to pray and think about whether you would like to put your name forward for this very important ministry, in service to the parish. If you are interested, or would like to know more about it, please contact either me or Sally Prickett [our *Safe Church* rep.] to know what you would need to do. [There are a number of checks and awareness courses which will need to be completed!]

In recent times, I know that a number of parishioners have moved or changed phone numbers or email addresses. If you have had any changes to your contact details, could you please let me or our Parish Secretary, Marion Jamison, know, so that we can update our parish records.

Parish Council has requested that the two regular newsletters which come from the Diocesan Office: the Bishop's *To the People* and the *Vision and Strategy Newsletter*, be disseminated to everyone when they arrive. For those on email, this is a little easier than the old 'snail mail' route. However, if you do not wish to receive them, could you please let me know. I would rather spend time sending out information which I know will be read, than have you annoyed with me for clogging up your "in box"!

Likewise, those who do not have emails, while I am happy to hand deliver those closer to town, I would rather not add to what you may consider "junk mail" while totting up expenses for the parish in buying stamps!

I am hoping to attach with this letter an updated Parish Prayer Diary for 2023. I hope that this is something that you will consider using. To know that many in the parish are using it to pray for the same thing each day is very powerful.

As many of you may be travelling over the coming weeks, I share with you the prayer I used recently in Walpole at the Blessing of the Emergency Fleet and blessing of the roads.

Please, stay safe, travel carefully and have a blessed and holy Christmas, and may 2023 bring you peace and joy.

God of boundless love,
in the beginning you created all that is,
bless this land and ocean that we know as home.
We know that all people are precious in your sight,

and we thank you for those who use their time and their gifts to serve this community in their work in these emergency services.

We ask your blessing on them,

be with them and keep them safe and ever vigilant in their care of us.

Be with their families who support and love them.

We seek your blessings on all who use our roads,
and those who have fun on our surrounding waters,

especially this Christmas holiday.

Where there is disaster, accident and trauma

we ask for your blessings upon those who rescue and treat,

on those injured, and all affected family and friends.

We ask that in your mercy, you would hear our prayer. **Amen.**

May you find a deeper revelation of God's grace this Christmas as we celebrate again the gift of the Christ-child.

Peace and every good wish,

Sally

Revd Sally Buckley tssf