

## Services & Diary Dates

Monday	18 <sup>th</sup>	
Tuesday	19 <sup>th</sup>	1930 Said Eucharist
Wednesday	20 <sup>th</sup>	1030 Said Eucharist 1100 Coffee for All 2000 Zoom Prayer Meeting
Thursday	21 <sup>st</sup>	
Friday	22 <sup>nd</sup>	1900 Choir Practice
Saturday	23 <sup>rd</sup>	
Christmas Eve	24 <sup>th</sup>	0800 Said Eucharist 0915 Parish Communion 1700 Crib / Christingle 2300 Midnight Mass

## REMINDERS:

**24<sup>th</sup> Dec: Sunday / Christmas Eve!**  
The usual 8am & 9:15am Sunday services take place as usual in the morning, then later on .....

**@5pm Christingle / Crib is at this new time (only one service) followed by Midnight Mass @11pm**

**Christmas Day (25<sup>th</sup> Dec) is on Monday and is a single service@ 10am - Family Communion Service for all ages.**

## News

**The Flower Team urgently needs help with the cost of flowers for Christmas and donations will be warmly welcomed.** Contributions, marked 'Flowers', may be left with the Parish Office and may be Gift Aided. Thank you very much.

If you have brought in mince pies now for this evening's 6pm Nine Lessons & Carols service — please take them directly to the Hall Kitchen. THANK YOU to all who have donated. *Do join us in the Hall for mulled wine & lovely warm pies after the end of the 6pm service.*

**A huge THANK YOU** to all who have given so generously both in gifts and labour, and so making it so successful. We are very appreciative greatly thank organiser, Graham Bloye and his team leaders for organising this year's Silver Jubilee CTF!

## **£10 Gift Card Appeal 2023**

Last chance today, to hand in your card gifts! **THANK YOU to all** who have donated so generously and answered our Christmas Appeal for £10 supermarket gift cards in aid of 'Herts Welcomes Refugees' charity.

## Welcome

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2023

## THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

## Services Today

**8am SAID EUCHARIST**

**9:15am PARISH COMMUNION WITH NATIVITY PLAY**

Followed by Parish Coffee in the Hall - All are welcome.

Youth & Children's Church *YACC sessions do not take place today as we can enjoy the Nativity Play together instead.*

Congregational Setting: None

**Hymns: 457 (no gradual) 242 267**

Music  
Oldroyd Missa Ave Jesu  
Manz E'en so Lord Jesus

## **NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS SERVICE**

**6pm** *(Mulled wine and mince pies in the Hall afterwards)*

This week we pray for all who live and work in Howardsgate, Howard Centre, Howard House, Denmark House and Windsor House.

St Francis of Assisi, CoE  
Church Road, WGC, AL8 6QJ  
Church open (M-F): 0930 - 1200

Charity No: 1129849

Vicar: The Revd. Canon  
Jenny Fennell

01707 320960

vicar@stfranciswgc.org.uk

## **OPENING HOURS (0930 - 1200):**

Parish Office: Wednesday to Friday  
01707 694191 admin@stfranciswgc.org.uk

www.stfranciswgc.org.uk

www.facebook.com/stfranciswgc/

www.instagram.com/stfrancischurchwgc/

www.twitter.com/stfranciswgc/



**17<sup>th</sup> December 2023**  
**Third Sunday of Advent**

### **Collect**

O Lord Jesus Christ, who at your first coming sent your messenger to prepare your way before you: grant that the ministers and stewards of your mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready your way by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at your second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in your sight; for you are alive and reign with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

### **Isaiah 61: 1-4, 8-11**

The servant of the Lord said:

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion - to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory.

They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

For I the Lord love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed.

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

### **1 Thessalonians 5: 16-24**

My brothers and sisters, Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Do not quench the Spirit.

Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

### **John 1: 6-8,19-28**

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him.

He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?'

He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, 'I am not the Messiah.' And they asked him, 'What then? Are you Elijah?' He said, 'I am not.' 'Are you the prophet?' He answered, 'No.' Then they said to him, 'Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?'

He said, '*I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord,*' as the prophet Isaiah said.

Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, 'Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?'

John answered them, 'I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.'

This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

**Next Readings: 2 Samuel 7: 1-11, 16; Romans 16: 25-27;**

**Luke 1: 26-38**

**Next Readings (Midnight Mass): Isaiah 52: 7-10; Hebrews: 1-4, 5-12; John 1: 1-14**