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17th November 2023

Dear all,

This morning, although it was cold, I just had to sit out in the sunshine – what a glorious morning with the colours of autumn so vibrant. But I recognise that I so often don't make myself look up and enjoy those colours. There are always reasons to be looking down at our feet. Some very practical reasons – the pavements contain many trip hazards! The piles of slippy leaves are treacherous! We simply don't want to walk into someone coming the other way! So, yes walking around gazing up isn't always practical. But it is important then to make the space which is not afforded by our day to day walking around, to perhaps stop. And then look up. Or to recognise that these bright sunny days are precious gifts as winter steadily approaches, and to grab hold of them.

Last Sunday we began our service with these words from Psalm 121:

*I lift up my eyes to the mountains –
where does my help come from?
My help comes from the Lord,
The maker of heaven and earth.*

(Psalm 121.1-2)

We use them on Remembrance Sunday as a cry for help – where does help come from in difficult times – reminding us that God will always be faithful. But these words come from a Psalm which is part of a collection of Psalms called Songs of Ascent (you'll see it as a little subheading in your bibles). These Psalms, it is commonly believed, were used by worshipers as they made their pilgrimage up to Jerusalem for certain festivals. They are psalms that remind us of God's character and God's faithfulness. This one in particular inviting the singer (or reader) to lift up their eyes – to look up – to change their focus.

Sometimes physically looking up enables us to spiritually look up too - from the mundane of our daily lives to the glory of God. From the pile of slippy leaves which could be a threat to our safety, to the glorious golden orange of the tree from which they fell. We need to take time to lift our eyes to the (metaphorical) hills to find a moment of different perspective and allow God to speak to us in the wider vista.

News and Upcoming Events

Sunday 19th November - 6.30pm – Baby Loss Remembrance and Support Service @ Ely Cathedral, Saying Goodbye is an organisation supporting those who have lost babies. These church services are for anyone who has either personally lost a baby at any stage of pregnancy, at birth, or in early years, or who has been affected by family members' or friends' loss. Whether the loss was recent or 80 years ago, everyone is welcome to attend. Those grieving the fact that they haven't had children are also gladly welcomed. Find out more here:

<https://www.sayinggoodbye.org/services/>

Sunday 26th November – after church – Christmas Decorating! It sounds early but is the best time before Mill Road Winter Fair. If you are able to stay for 30mins after church and help it would be greatly appreciated.

Sunday 26th November – 3pm - Romsey Music Project afternoon concert Stapleford Choral society and players from the academy of Gt. St. Mary's will present a programme including Vivaldi Gloria. Free admission, retiring collection.

Saturday 2nd December - Mill Road Winter Fair please let me know if you are able to be at church for an hour to help host or to hand out hot drinks any time between 10am-4pm. And if you would like to just come along, why not factor

in our Community Carols at 3pm – it's not a service (that will be later in December!) it's just a good-old sing song of your favorite hymns.

Wednesday 6th & 13th December – 7pm - Advent Reflection Evenings If you would like to take some time this Advent to sit with part of the narrative of Christmas then do join us in church for these two evenings where we will be delving deeper into those 9 months of waiting immediately prior to Jesus' birth. We will also be zooming both evenings.

Saturday 16th December – 2.30pm – Brook House Carols Come and join us as we go sing carols with the residents of Brook House, no singing expertise required but enthusiasm strongly encouraged. Please let Ruth know if you are planning on joining us.

Wednesday 20th December – 6.30pm - Cambridge United Carols Under the Abbey Lights – CU players, staff, sponsors and a great number of supporters will be attending. There will be street food and drinks available, as well as a Christmas market before and after the Carol Service. (Market opening at 5.30pm) Tickets are £5 for over 16s and £1 for under 16s. You can buy your tickets here: [CU Carols](#)

Vacancies:

St Philip's School are looking for – Cleaners, Midday Assistants and a Site and Premises Manager

You can find more details on their website: [St Philips School Vacancies](#)

If this is not for you please do consider passing on the information to someone who is either looking for some part-time term-time work or who has a passion for site management in an education setting!

Eco-Bite – our new green “nugget” each week:

If anyone has a square composting bin which you would be willing to donate to our church garden we would be very grateful.

Last Week's sermon

In case you missed it and want to catch up: [sermon 12.11.23.mp3](#) (sorry the first 5mins are missing)

If you want to catch up on any other sermons: [sermons.stphilipchurch.org.uk](#)

This Sunday 19th November

8.30am – Reflective Holy Communion

10.30am – All Age Worship – We will be looking at Matthew 25:14-30 and Barbara will also be bringing us an update on our November Mission Partner - Langham Partnership. If you are interested they have created another Advent Reflection book – this time an ebook. If you'd like it to focus your Advent preparations you can download it here: <https://uk.langham.org/ebook-who-is-jesus/>

7.30pm – The Chosen – We are onto episode 4 of season 1 for those of you who would like to catch up and then join us this week at the Vicarage to watch and chat about it.

If you can't attend church in person you can always use this Zoom link:

meeting ID: 976 3739 9129 and Passcode: 330714

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/97637399129?pwd=TGhKWwXOcWF1S242aVhrWDIjUkxZz09>

Regular Weekly events to join:

Friday 12noon Lunchtime Bible Club A relaxed look at the bible passage/s for the upcoming Sunday. Bring along a packed lunch and explore scripture whilst eating lunch together.

Wednesday 12noon Reflective Holy Communion. A quiet time to help find space and peace in the middle of the week.

*** note we are up in the Stott Room at the moment whilst Panto rehearsals are going on!***

Monday & Friday 8.30pm – Compline on zoom

Meeting ID: 836 5965 9953

Passcode: 749968

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83659659953?pwd=btP5AjGMu1s-dE_2W9T0MMFqnnPKSS.1

Wednesday 10.30-12noon & Friday 1.30-3.00 – Wednesday & Friday Friends

Both are “Warm Spaces” with Tea/coffee, cake/biscuits and chat Just turn up if you’d like to join us for a cuppa/read the paper/do some of the jigsaw/knit/colour/sit quietly watching the world go by.

Wednesdays 7.00-7.30pm - Weekly Prayers on zoom:

Meeting ID: 852 1105 2733 Password: 397987

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85211052733?pwd=OE52bm9NS1RtQVQ0ZytTc0xBZnVsUT09>

Saturdays 8.15am - Morning Bible Discussion and Prayer on zoom:

Meeting ID: 143 338 655 Password: 824271

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/143338655?pwd=L1JJTFZJNU9EaFZjaUFjQzVlalpMZz09>

Prayers

If any of you have specific prayers you would like us to include in this newsletter do please get in touch.

The family of Victor Selmes who has sadly died. Please pray for them as they prepare for his funeral on 6th December

Hilary Jolly is coming home from hospital today, please pray for Hilary’s continued recovery so that she manages longer than a week at home this time!

Rebecca Lawes please pray for Rebecca’s return home after another stay in hospital, particularly that she will have the best care package in place and that it will be organised quickly.

Tracee Giddings is awaiting surgery, please continue to pray for her particularly that this will happen soon.

Please also pray for our Mission Partner this month:



FOUNDED BY JOHN STOTT
Langham
PARTNERSHIP

Langham Partnership - 80% of pastors in the Majority World lack any formal training. Langham Partnership, founded by John Stott equip pastors around the world to preach God's Word.

With love and prayers

Ruth

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