



The Benefice of St Mary's Bocking & Panfield Church



Sunday 17th December 2023
The Third Sunday of Advent
Staying in Contact

The Very Revd Rod Reid - Incumbent (*usual rest day Monday*)

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or on Facebook, search for 'St Mary's Church, Bocking', or 'Panfield Church'

Forthcoming Services

St Mary's, Bocking

Sunday 17th December	8am	Said Mass
	10am	Nativity with Carols
	6pm	Carols by Candlelight
Wednesday 20th December	9.30am	Said Mass
Sunday 24th December	8am	Said Mass
	10am	Sung Mass
	5pm	Christingle
	11.30pm	Midnight Mass
Monday 25th December	10am	Christmas Day Mass

Panfield Church

Sunday 17th December	3pm	Carol Service
Tuesday 19th December	5pm	Evening Prayer/Office Hour
Sunday 24th December	3pm	Crib Service
Monday 25th December	10.30am	Christmas Day Communion

NOTICES

Christmas Tree Festival - A huge thanks to every single person who has worked so hard in the lead up to and across the Christmas Tree Festival. With some final monies still to come in we know that we have raised at least £2,100. We really are extremely grateful to those who volunteered and took part. A big team effort, which is very much appreciated.

Christmas Postcards - There are still a few postcards left. Please check the list at the back and if you spot a local road that has not been delivered to, and you can do it, then please take cards. Thank you.

Eco Church - Well done St Mary's! After the further hard work, we have been awarded an Eco Church, Silver Certificate! This is a brilliant and deserved reward, but the work goes on!

Christingle Making - We would love your help to make our 120 Christingles this year. All volunteers are welcome to join us in the Church Hall on Saturday 23rd December at 9.30am. Many hands make light work as they say! Please let Fr Rod or Irene know if you are able to assist, thank you.

Fellowship - Thursday Dec 21st at 12.30pm in the Church Hall it will be the last Fellowship meeting of the year. It is a Christmas themed lunch, with some entertainment and carol-singing. All welcome.

The Retreat, Bocking & The Bell, Panfield - We will be carol singing in The Retreat on Wednesday 20th Dec from 7.30pm, and at The Bell, Panfield on Thursday Dec 21st also at 7.30pm. Come and join us!

Messy Christmas - On Thurs 21st Dec from 10-11.30am, St Mary's are having a craft morning in church with activities, refreshments and carols. If you are around to help please let Fr Rod know. Thanks.

Prayers - We keep in our prayers Barry and Janice Goody, Jean Goodwin, Sue, Roger, Frances, Jo Meech, Tony & Ann and Margaret Everitt. We remember our care homes Millard House, Fern Lodge, Aspen Grange, Larchwood, The New Deanery & St Mary's Court. In our Years Mind, we pray for the families of Margery Francis, Mary Parkinson, Rita Ellis, Stanley Kent, Valerie Debbage, Geoffrey Sheppard, Eileen Mortimer, Michael Berry, Frank Skeet, Louisa Phillips, Ken Chapman, Ray Debbage, Enid Thomas, Peggy Kenyon, Margaret Cooper, Fred Trott, Vilma Ward, Ruth Warren and Gerald How.

The Collect for The Third Sunday of Advent

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. Amen.

Epistle Reading - 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

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.

Gospel Reading - 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. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. 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.

Post Communion Prayer

We give you thanks, O Lord, for these heavenly gifts;
kindle in us the fire of your Spirit
that when your Christ comes again
we may shine as lights before his face;
who is alive and reigns now and for ever. Amen.