

The Church of St Mary the Virgin, Great Brickhill

Sunday 23rd November 2025 – the Sunday next before Advent

Welcome to our Family Service this morning, led by the Rector. Thank you to Andrew and Margretta for providing the music, and to Sophia who will be leading our singing.

The service will have an Advent theme, exploring the meaning behind the four Advent candles in the Advent Wreath. There will be four readings looking at:- The Patriarchs - Exodus 3: 1-6a;

The Prophets - Isaiah 11: 1-4a; John the Baptist - Mark 1: 4-8;

The Virgin Mary - Luke 1: 26-33, 38

The collection plate will be passed round during the final hymn. If you prefer to give your collection via our **debit/credit card device**, please see **Phillipa after the service**.

Everyone is invited to stay after the service for coffee and a chat.

RECTOR'S NOVEMBER MESSAGE:

Dear Friends,

The Greatest Gift

As I think about the Christmas presents I have received over the years, the ones that are the most memorable, and that are the most precious to me, have nothing to do with the amount of money that was spent on them.

I remember some presents from my family and from friends, and I remember presents that were modest, simple, and sometimes homemade. The most significant presents that I have received are ones that showed somebody knew me well, and that were in some way an expression of love. I hope that I have sometimes given presents like that as well.

The best and most important presents are those that tell us that we are loved. And the greatest present of all, and the greatest expression of love, is the gift that is at the heart of our celebration of Christmas. That is the gift of God himself - in the birth and life, and the death and resurrection of Jesus, to be with us always.

May I wish you a joyful Christmas, and a peaceful New Year.

Revd. John Waller

A personal note: I have recently announced to our churches that I will be retiring from full time ministry at the end of April next year. After that I will be moving to Worcester to live closer to my family and friends.

RETIREMENT OF BISHOP OF OXFORD:

The Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft has announced his retirement, having served as Bishop of Oxford for exactly a decade - his last service will be on 31st May in Christ Church Cathedral.

HIGH ASH VISIT:

On Wednesday we welcomed Years 3&4 pupils to the church as part of their project looking at what symbols are important for Christians during the season of Advent/Christmas.

DECEMBER ROTA:

The rota of volunteers for December has been circulated. If you are on any of the rotas, please check and let Phillipa know if you are now unable to do any of the tasks listed.

POETRY EVENING, 27th NOVEMBER:

A reminder that the Rector is hosting a Poetry Evening at Bow Brickhill Community Hall this Thursday, 27th November from 7-9pm. Refreshments available - all welcome.

CHRISTMAS COFFEE MORNING, SATURDAY 29th NOVEMBER:

Next Saturday in the church from 10.30am to 1pm. Please leave contributions for the tombola, cakes, preserves, plants, Christmas decorations, toys & books, bric-a-brac (not jumble-sale items) in the refreshment area during the week, or at 9.30am on Saturday.

ADVENT WINDOWS:

Claire Pincott is again coordinating the windows. Claire has a few spaces left to fill - if you would like to decorate one of the windows, please get in touch with her:- 07870 583182 clairepincott@me.com

THE VILLAGE NATIVITY, SUNDAY 21st DECEMBER:

At the Cricket Club at 11am. If anyone would like to volunteer to play any of the characters, please get in touch with Phillipa - this year we would like some children to accompany the adults.

SERVICES NEXT WEEK:

On Sunday 30th November, just one service in the Benefice:-

4.00pm at Bow Brickhill, Advent Carols Benefice Service

Next Services here:- 7th December, 9.30am Holy Communion
14th December, 10.00am Family Service

Phillipa Cook - Warden/Secretary (07788 740969) pjcook6@gmail.com

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To contact the Rector, Revd John Waller: rector@brickhillschurches.org.uk

The address of the Benefice website: www.brickhillschurches.org.uk