

Prayer Matters

Advent

In this time of waiting may we make ourselves ready to receive Christ; that in a season of commercial bustle we may open our hearts to stillness; that Advent may be a period of prayer and reflection, and also of practical help and support for those who find this time of year difficult, including refugees and homeless people, isolated carers and people living alone.

NHS staff

As they face a winter of Covid cases and a backlog of patients whose treatment has been suspended because of the virus. We pray for the many hospitals who are suffering from serious staff shortages and from the pressures caused by the crisis in social care.

World hunger

For more than 41 million people in 43 countries who are living on the brink of famine, including in South Sudan, Ethiopia and Afghanistan, where the combination of conflict, pandemic and drought threatens to turn a crisis into a catastrophe. We pray for the work of Christian Aid to supply food and clean water to people threatened by famine.

Commemorated on 4 December:

Nicholas Ferrar, Deacon, founder of the Little Gidding Community

Born in London in 1592, Nicholas Ferrar was educated at Clare Hall, Cambridge and elected a Fellow there in 1610. From 1613, he travelled extensively on the continent for five years, trying his hand as a businessman and then as a parliamentarian on his return. In 1625, he moved to Little Gidding in Huntingdonshire, then a derelict manor-house with a chapel which was being used as a hay barn. He was joined by his brother and sister and their families and by his mother, and they established together a community life of prayer, using The Book of Common Prayer, and a life of charitable works in the locality. He wrote to his niece in 1631, "I purpose and hope by God's grace to be to you not as a master but as a partner and fellow student." After the death of Nicholas on this day in 1637, the community was broken up in 1646 by the Puritans.

Charity of the week:

Lambeth Refugees Welcome

We give thanks for the responses to appeals for items needed by the newly settled Afghan families. We pray: that the families may settle into their communities and be supported by

friendship, especially during the cold winter months; that the many valuable initiatives, including individual casework, a men's group and help with English may be resourced by donations and volunteers; that terrorist acts by individuals may not distort the public's perception of refugees, and that we may be welcoming and generous to those who have suffered violence and displacement.

Those who are sick or in need

Paula, Simon Cooke; any known to us personally.

Those with longer term needs

Lisadore Klenck, Ruth Kirk Wilson, Robert Shafto, Margaret Legg, Simon Berlyn, Rosemary Cave, Lorraine Falzon Gaughan, Hyacinth Brown, Wisdom Kari Kari, Anthony Backs, Isabelle Backs, Do Jones, Chris Worden, and Gina Vaughan; all who support and care for them.

Those who have died recently

Philippe Fraser (Robin Yates' nephew) and all who mourn.

Those whose Year's Mind falls at this time

Joyce Shirley Davis, Peter Ansdell Evans (priest).

Thought for the week

In the silence of a midwinter dusk, there is a sound so faint that for all you can tell it may be only the sound of the silence itself. You hold your breath to listen. You are aware of the beating of your heart. The extraordinary thing that is about to happen is matched only by the extraordinary moment just before it happens. Advent is the name of that moment.

Frederick Buechner

If you would like prayer for yourself or another, please contact Mark Stevens on 020 8670 8105 or mark.stevens2@hotmail.co.uk, or ring the Parish Office on 020 8676 4550.