

St Benedict's CENTRE

St Benedict's Centre Newsletter

December 2020

We come to the end of another calendar year. The season of Advent and the expectation of Christmas. How different it all is this year. As I write this I am aware of so many of us considering our Christmas plans and balancing the desire of our hearts with the wisdom of our minds.



(moon rise and Gundulf Tower St Benedict's Centre)

Advent reminds us that Christ's light shines in the darkness be that real night-time or in our decision making. Christ's light brings peace.

St Benedict's Centre will be closed over Christmas from 21st December opening again on 4th January.

Latest News

During the past months we have continued to welcome guests using the individual study rooms. People come for a variety of reasons. For quiet days, for days of study and learning, for days to catch up with admin, for days of just space and time to be with God. Everyone who comes is welcome.

Our individual rooms now have facilities for making hot drinks which guests appreciate. The hot chocolate is particularly popular!

Our risk plans are working well. Guests often comment on how safe they feel.



On the first floor landing we now have a small bookcase with books guests are welcome to use during their visit.



Future Events

We are hoping we might be able to run some quiet days in Lent. Guests will have their own room for the day and be able to join others in a main teaching room for some short Lenten reflections. Numbers will be limited to ensure that social distancing can be maintained. We will let you know more about this in the new year.

We are hopeful that we will be able to open more fully after Easter offering a wider programme of events. More information will come in the new year, all Covid dependent of course.



(Primroses spotted earlier this month at the Centre)

An Advent Offering

During these last few days of Advent the church remembers seven biblical characteristics of Jesus through the Great O Antiphons used to introduce the Magnificat at Evening Prayer.

It's not the same as a quiet day but you might like to use these antiphon titles to reflect on the coming of Christ to us and our world now, and to pray during these seven days as part of your preparation for Christmas.

Here are the titles with some prayer suggestions:

O wisdom: Pray God's wisdom, justice and compassion in all our decision making and our actions.

O Adonai: Pray God's salvation for all humanity, that Jesus may be Lord in every aspect of our lives.

O Root of Jesse: Pray God will bring healing to the nations, from Covid, from war, from famine, from poverty, from environmental mismanagement.

O key of David: Pray for those who are locked in unhealthy practices, locked in past memories, for prisoners of conscience and those who are victimised because of race, religion, sexuality or gender.

O Morning Star: Pray for those in darkness of any kind and particularly those who are facing death.

O King of the nations: Pray for all nations, for world leaders, for our own nation. Pray God's saving love for all humanity.

O Emmanuel: Pray God with us in every situation showing us love through Jesus and encouraging us to share that love with others.

The antiphon is followed by the **Magnificat:**

1. Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel, who has come to his people and set them free.
2. He has raised up for us a mighty Saviour, born of the house of his servant David.
3. Through his holy prophets God promised of old to save us from our enemies, from the hands of all that hate us,
4. To show mercy to our ancestors, and to remember his holy covenant.
5. This was the oath God swore to our father Abraham: to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
6. Free to worship him without fear, holy and righteous in his sight all the days of our life.
7. And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,
8. To give his people knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of all their sins.
9. In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

10. To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

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May these short biddings guide us all in our preparations for receiving a fresh the Good News that Christ is born – Emmanuel God with us.

Day Guests



Clergy and lay leaders have particularly appreciated the opportunity for a day apart in the current challenges of ministry.

You can book an individual study/retreat room for £10. This includes the use of the beautiful grounds and the opportunity for private prayer in the pilgrim chapel.

To book your day of rest and retreat contact: bookings@stbenedictscentre.org.

Don't forget you can find us on:
www.stbenedictscentre.org twitter: @stBenedictsCtr
Facebook: @StBenedictsCentre