

BUS STOP ADVERTISING - Christmas begins with Christ

Thank you to all those who have given money to pay for a bus shelter advertisement. Unfortunately Churchads were not able to book any of the bus shelters in Highworth itself, but there are five shelters booked in Swindon - two in Fleming Way, one at Regent Circus, one in Cheney Manor Road and one in Queen's Drive. There are also a number of high visibility sites in town and city centres - the full list of nearly 600 sites is on the chest. It is estimated that together with the radio campaign almost 15million people will be reached with the message that 'Christmas starts with Christ'.

If we want to sponsor our own bus shelter in Highworth we need to start earlier next year! Yes, the campaign is planned to run over five years so we will have the opportunity. But please pray for all who see the bus shelter posters, that they might give people something to think about in the bustle of the lead-up to Christmas. So take a look at the list, choose a site and pray for those that may be affected by it this Advent,

Lesley Uzzell



Week beginning Sunday 13th December 2009

Today we can look at two myths concerning the character of God.

1. A God of love. This stresses the forgiveness of God, so that salvation will be applied universally, because how can a God of love be involved with judgement.
2. A God of judgement. This stresses the inapproachability of God, his holiness; with therefore no expectation of receiving anything from him.

The Biblical position is of course that neither of these extremes reflects accurately the character of God, whose judgement is perfectly fulfilled in his love.

God's relationship with his people was to be characterised by an allegiance to him alone. In chapter 1:4-6, we can see the prophet Zephaniah passing on God's judgement for a failure to do so, a failure we first see in the Garden of Eden. But having created humankind to be in relationship with him, God was desperately sad at the broken relationship, and has been applying mercy and love ever since. We can see this in Chapter 3:14-17.

The nature of God's character is: we have no need to fear, we can face him in judgement, because of his love, in Christ taking the punishment from us. 'What will happen when we die?' 'I'll be with God, not because I deserve it, but because Christ has taken my punishment.'

For reflection.

1. Do you want justice to ultimately be applied for our world and therefore do you accept a God of judgement, with all its implications for ourselves and those we love?
2. Is that judgement met perfectly in the Cross and therefore do you have assurance for salvation?

Geoff Sowden

Our readings today are:

Zephaniah 1:1-6, 3:14-20 (pew bible page 944/947) Luke 3:7-18 (pew bible page 1029)

Please join us for refreshments after our 10am and 4pm services today

If you prefer not to take alcohol, alcohol-free wine is available at our communion services - please take a pink card from a steward and ensure it is visible as you come for communion

PRAYING FOR THE BENEFICE

This week we pray for those who live in Islay Crescent, Kilda Road, Kings Avenue, Knowlands, Lechlade Road and Lismore Road



PRAYER

God of eternity,
When the voice of the prophet was silent
and the faith of your people low;
When darkness had obscured light and
indifference displaced zeal;
You saw that the time was right, and
prepared to send your Son.
Set us free from fear and faithlessness
that we may be ready to welcome him who
comes as Saviour and Lord

Amen

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER...

...all those who are sick or troubled,
praying especially for
Val Cox, Andrew Crowley, Peggy Dobson,
Gwen Drew, Hilary Fortnam,
Peter Gibbs, Syd Huband, Janet Livall,
Carole Richmond, Julia Riggs, Rick Steed,
Betty Taber

...all those who are recently bereaved,
praying especially for those who love and
miss
Lorna Bowie

Parish of Highworth with Sevenhampton & Inglesham - who to contact

All Ministry Enquiries - Rev Geoff Sowden (day off Friday) telephone 01793-765554

Church Office (Administration/General Enquiries) - Rosie Castle, tel 01793-762702 or
email to stmichaelshighworth@offices.orangehome.co.uk

www.stmichaelshighworth.co.uk

SERVICES TODAY, Sunday 13th December 2009, Advent 3

Highworth	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP, Geoff Sowden
	10.00am	Family Communion with children's activities, Geoff Sowden
	4.00pm	T Time Gift Service & children's groups, Arthur Woo/Katie James
	7.00pm	Informal Worship, Arthur Woo
Inglesham	3.00pm	Carol Service, Geoff Sowden
Hannington	10.30am	Morning Worship, Janet Done
Blunsdon	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP, Rev Dr Richard Armitage
	10.00am	Family Worship, Jane Ockwell
	6.30pm	Evensong, Kathryn Dack
Grove Hill	7.30pm	Evening Service, Helen Weaver

**SERVICES NEXT WEEK, Sunday 20th December 2009, Advent 4**

Highworth	8.00am	Holy Communion CW, Arthur Woo
	10.00am	Morning Praise Gift Service with children's activities, Arthur Woo/Lesley Page
	6.00pm	Carol Service, Geoff Sowden/Arthur Woo Starting in church and on the Podium
Hannington	4.00pm	Carol Service, Geoff Sowden/Arthur Woo
Blunsdon	10.00am	Family Communion and baptism, John Rees
	6.30pm	Carol Service, John Rees



Sevenhampton Wednesday 16th December 7.00pm - Carol Service, Geoff Sowden

ADVENT PRAYERS**MONDAY 14th DECEMBER**

This week's Advent Prayers will be based on the carol 'O Little Town of Bethlehem'. Please join us as we continue with our focus of bringing Jesus into the heart of Christmas:

Monday morning in Church

9.30am-10.00am Morning Prayer
10.00am-10.45am Prayer Stations
10.45am-11.00am Closing prayers

Monday evening in Church

7.00pm-7.45pm Prayer Stations
7.45pm-8.15pm Corporate Prayer

Lesley Page and Lynn Woo

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Mon 14 th	9.30am	Advent Prayers in Church (see left)
	7.00pm	Advent Prayers, Church Room (see below)
	7.45pm	Ministry team Meeting, Cullerne Room
Tue 15 th	9.30am	Pilates in the Church Room
Wed 16 th	9.30am	Music Bugs in the Church Room
	9.30am	Little Fishes in the Chancel
	1.00pm	Funeral of Lorna Bowie in Church
	7.00pm	Sevenhampton Carols
	7.00pm	Pilates in the Church Room
	8.00pm	Wednesday Fellowship, 26 Priory Green (Wendy)
Thu 17 th	7.30pm	Bellringing practice, Bell Tower
Fri 18 th	10.00am	Eastrop School Carols in Church
	7.00pm	Choir Practice
Sat 19 th	10.00am	Coffee Morning and bulletin folding, Church Room
	10.30am	Podium Carols, led by Roman Catholic Church
Sun 20 th	4.00pm	T-Time workshops and tea

IN LOVING MEMORY

Once again St Michael's Flower Guild would be delighted to welcome donations for Christmas flowers in memory of a loved one,

The church is open on the three days leading up to Christmas, and provides a haven of peace and beauty in the bustle and busy-ness that we all experience coming up to Christmas. So take some time out to sit with a coffee and mince pie, or to quietly wander around our lovely building, viewing the floral decorations in our decorated church - so especially lovely after the advent period of no decoration.

Please contact **Julia Bishop** for further information on how to sponsor a decoration.

HOLY COMMUNION

The Archbishop has now advised us that, with the swine flu danger receding, it will now be acceptable to return to normal. Normal distribution will therefore resume as from today.

Geoff

From the Revd Alan & Mrs Jean Homer

Firstly, many thanks to the vast numbers of wonderful folk who have sent cards etc., with the assurance of prayer, concerning Alan's recent op. and, secondly, please accept this method of assuring you all of our love and best wishes for Christmas and throughout AD 2010. May the good Lord bless you all richly.

AFH & JMH

CHRISTMAS OPEN DAYS

If you can help for the open days (Tuesday 22nd and Wednesday 23rd 10am-2pm, and Christmas Eve 10am-12noon) please sign up on the list on the chest.

Promises of mince pies would also be appreciated please.

Any queries to **Hilary**

CHRISTMAS STAMPS

The Children's Society can use your Christmas stamps. The container is under the table near the main door. Please tear them with a good margin of envelope!

THE SALES TABLE

...has stocks of St Michael's notelets for your Christmas thank-yous, plus other things which may do as stocking fillers.

TUESDAY EVENING FELLOWSHIP will now take a break for December resuming on 12th January at 8.00pm at 5 The Willows. **Allan**

DOUBLE ISSUE BULLETIN Next week's bulletin will be for the two weeks 19 and 26 December, so anything for both weeks needs to be with me next Thursday please! **Lesley**