

The Parish of Mill End and Heronsgate with West Hyde
Third Sunday of Advent: 14th December 2025

Welcome!

Hearing Loop - A hearing loop system is installed at St Thomas' and St Peter's Churches, please set your hearing aid to the 'T' setting. Large Print Service Booklets & pewsheets are also available – please ask the sidesperson if you would prefer one.

Gluten Free Wafers - Please let a sidesperson know if you require a Gluten Free communion wafer before the start of the service.

ENTRANCE HYMN: Ancient & Modern (A&M) 99 *omit vs 5

ADVENT WREATH:

We have this Advent Ring to remind us of the coming of Jesus, the light of the world.

All sing: The holly and the ivy
Are dancing in a ring,
Round the purple advent candles
And the white and shining King.

We light this candle to remind us of John the Baptist who passed on God's message: "Get ready for your King"

All sing: And three for John the Baptist
He calls on us to sing:
'O prepare the way for Jesus Christ.
He is coming, Christ the King'.

COLLECT: 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**

OLD TESTAMENT READING: *Isaiah 35:1-10*

¹The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus²it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God.

³Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.'

⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the

speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; ⁷the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

⁸A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveller, not even fools, shall go astray. ⁹No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. ¹⁰And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

This is the word of the Lord

GRADUAL HYMN: A&M 262

GOSPEL READING: *Matthew 11:2-11*

²When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to Jesus, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' ⁴Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.'

⁷As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you."

¹¹Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.'

OFFERTORY HYMN: A&M 654

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**

RECESSIONAL HYMN: A&M 394

A Prayer for Ukraine

God of peace and justice,
we pray for the people of Ukraine today.
We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.
We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow,
that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.
We pray for those with power over war or peace,
for wisdom, discernment and compassion to guide their decisions.
Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear,
that you would hold and protect them.
We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace. Amen.



Our churches have a candle lit, asking for the intercession of Blessed Mary for the people of Ukraine and all caught up in this conflict. The candles will remain lit and our prayers will continue whilst the war rages.

Diary for this week:

Mon 15th December

9.00am St Peter's School Christmas Service
8.00pm Symeons Christmas Party in the Parish Hall

Tue 16th December

9.30-11am St Peter's Toddlers meet in the Parish Hall
11.00am Care Home Christmas Service at Dapplemere

Wed 17th December

9.30am Said Eucharist at St Peter's

Sun 21st December

Fourth Sunday of Advent

9.30am No morning service at St Thomas'
9.30am Said Eucharist at St John's
11.00am Sung Eucharist with Holy Baptism at St Peter's followed by coffee in the Parish Hall
2.30pm Carols and Cakes at St Thomas'

All items for inclusion in the weekly pewsheets must be forwarded to the parish office by Thursday morning at the latest.

Toy Service - Thank you so much to everyone who generously gave toys at the Toy Services last week which filled my car! This year we have supported the Watford Salvation Army and the toys were delivered on Monday afternoon. They were so grateful to receive them. Thank you! Helen



Symeons Christmas Party – Monday 16th December, 8.15pm onwards. Join us for fun and games plus Christmas buffet. All most welcome

Carols and Cakes – Sing some favourite carols, accompanied by Chorleywood Music String Ensemble, hear the Christmas Story whilst enjoying afternoon tea and cake. Sunday 21st December, 2.30pm at St Thomas', West Hyde.

Parish Christmas Quiz – its back! Relax after your Christmas lunch with a quiz that the whole family can enjoy. You may win a bottle of Champagne (not Prosecco!), and you have until Monday 19th January to find any missing answers. **Money raised goes towards the whole parish** and we hope that you will buy a few and send to family and friends who like quizzes. Copies, £5 each available from the Parish Office, St Thomas', St John's and George Hart at St Peter's.

Come and sing with the choir this Christmas! We are currently planning this year's Christmas music and are looking for extra singers for the carol service on Christmas Eve at 6pm. Rehearsals will be on Thursdays in December at 8pm (4th, 11th, 18th) and at 4.30pm before the 6pm service. Please talk to/email Richard:

millendmusic@gmail.com

Junior Church - the next meeting will be Sunday 4th January, during the 11am All Age & Band Service at St Peter's; please invite any families with children to join us.

The Why? Group – We meet fortnightly on a Wednesday, 12.30pm for a simple lunch, bible study and discussion. Our next meeting will be Wed 7th January. Enquiries via the Parish Office. All welcome, always

Snowdrop Garden – Possibly for the Last Time: The Bishop of St Albans' Garden will open for what may be **the final time** this February, with thousands of snowdrops and early bulbs in bloom. All proceeds support the **Beds & Herts Historic Churches Trust**.

Dates: 14 & 15 Feb; 21 & 22 Feb; **Time:** 2–4pm; **Location:** Abbey Gate House, Abbey Mill Lane, AL3 4HD; **Entry:** £5 per adult. A warm invitation to enjoy the garden's early spring beauty and help care for our historic churches.

Thank you – Michelle Barrett would like to thank everyone for all the love, prayers and kind thoughts over the past year. She is now cancer free and on the road to recovery.

Prayers: For **Zack** and **Florence** being christened next Sunday.

For the **sick at home or in hospital**, especially those on our sick list – *Johanne Watson, David Gasper, Nigel Bunce, Raymond Williamson, Sylvia Ball, Michael Ansell, Val Fear, Alison Sealy, Rose Fulker, Lynsey Austin, Ben Austin, Alan Wills, Duncan Woods*.

For the **repose of the souls of:** *Marlene Tweedy and those whose anniversaries fall at this time: John Jefferies, Cynthia Slater, Wilfred Broughton, Alan King, Donald Laver, Valerie Newberry, Leonard Scamp, Albert Robinson, Maureen Marks, Grace Vollam, Shirley Burchell*.

Please let us know if anyone is sick, in hospital, bereaved or in need of a visit: Mark Harris, vicar marknzharris@gmail.com or Elaine, Parish Office ☎01923 772785, office.parish@btinternet.com (office open – Mon-Fri 9am-12pm) Web site: <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/benefice/32-180BX/>

Do You Need Help? If you need help of any sort, no matter how small, please contact your Pastoral Care co-ordinators and they will put you in touch with someone who will do what they can to help you.

St. Peter's: Dianne Harris 01923 283600(h) 07887 387222(m)

dianneharris@live.co.uk

St. Thomas's: Elizabeth Woods 01923 462618(h) 07752 416434(m)

elizabethannwoods37@gmail.com