



PARISH OF LUTON

ST ANNE WITH ST CHRISTOPHER

Registered Charity number: 1134772

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The Vicarage, 33 Felix Avenue, Luton, LU2 7LE



November 2020

Hello from Revd Anne

Worshipping Together

As a parish we continue to think, pray and explore ways in which we can be enabled to go deeper into God. To deepen our relationship with the God who loves and cares for each and every person.

We endeavour in all we do to be inclusive, enabling everyone to find a service where they feel at home.

From 1 November the worship at St Anne's and St Christopher's Churches will change.

At St Anne's the service time will change to 10.30am.

On the first and fourth Sundays of the month the service will be Holy Eucharist with incense. On the second Sunday and fifth Sunday of the month it will be a service of Holy Eucharist without incense. On the third Sunday of the month there will be service of the word. In November that will include a baptism, while in December we will have our annual Christingle service.

At St Christopher's Church the service of the Holy Eucharist will continue on Wednesdays, with the exception of the first Wednesday when there will be a service of Morning Worship. Incense will be used on Wednesday mornings on the third, fourth and fifth Wednesdays.

At St Christopher's there will be a new service time on Sundays. 4pm during the winter months. In this time slot there will be an opportunity to discover different ways of praying.

On the first Sunday of the month there will be a time of Adoration. A time to come and pray quietly, to listen to music and sit with the Body of Christ as incense gently burns.

On the second Sunday of the month there will be a time for Contemplative Prayer. Here there will be a place of stillness enabling you to draw yourself into the presence of the God. It may be that stilling your soul, and slowing down your breathing may be helpful for you and your relationship with God.

On the third Sunday of the month there will be a service of Holy Eucharist with incense.

On the fourth Sunday you are invited to join together to pray using a rosary. If you don't have one, you can use your fingers. Praying with a rosary is scriptural and prayerful. It doesn't require you to have a book as

the prayers can be learnt and counted. Or if you need something in your hands this could be the prayer for you.

On the fifth Sunday of the month there will be prayer stations enabling you to pray with different objects and images. As your senses are engaged the opportunity is provided for you to encounter God in different ways.

I have not yet mentioned the All Souls Service. This will be held on Sunday 1 November at 4pm in St Christopher's instead of the service of Adoration. It is a service that is designed for people who have been bereaved, although everyone is welcome. If you would like to attend this service, please contact the parish office to book your place, on either Thursday 29 or Friday 30 November. Another opportunity to do something to prayerfully remember your loved one will be on that weekend of 1 November when you are invited to tie a ribbon, maybe including your loved one's name, onto the railings at St Anne's or on the fence at St Christopher's

Covid-19, the pandemic, has been and is awful. But it has given us and many other churches the opportunity to rethink how we do church.

As you have read, there are many things which you are familiar with, but there are also some new things. This is an opportunity for the church to gather for worship, and in doing so to be fed by God. So that as we leave the church buildings we are ready to go out and live lives that show the difference having God in our lives makes to our attitudes and the way in which we behave.

Why incense?

The burning of incense was very common in the days before air fresheners and scented candles. People would burn incense as a way of preparing for a special guest.

Incense has traditionally been burned in temples and places of public and private worship in honour of the God who was to visit the temple. It purified the place in anticipation of His visit. I could choose many readings from the Holy Bible which speak of the place of incense in worship, but I have chosen Malachi 1:11 (NRSV) "For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name is great among the nations, and in every place incense is offered to my name, and a pure offering; for my name is great among the nations, says the Lord of hosts." The burning of incense was an important part of the Jewish worship. It is one of the many things that Christians have continued.

The church burns incense as an offering to God. It is one of the ways in which we are able to give God, all honour, praise and adoration. We come to church to worship God, we sing praises to God, as and when we are allowed. We can't sing at the moment. I know that many of you find this difficult, difficult because it was one of the ways in which you are able to make your offering to God, in praise and thanksgiving. Incense serves the same purpose.

Learning Together

The Start Course

Through this variety of opportunities for you to gather for worship it is prayed that the prayer life of this parish and the people who worship in these buildings will deepen and broaden. That through different experiences God may be encountered in ways that stimulate a desire to get to know more. A course with a tag line - A new start, a restart, a deeper start.

With this in mind at St Anne's from Wednesday 21 October, at 4pm, the parish is offering the opportunity to join with other people for 'The Start Course'. This is a six week interactive course, with DVD's to watch and with no assumption being made about the previous Christian experience of the people who attend.

This course will be held again after Christmas, so please do look out for the dates of the next course, and please do come along, inviting anyone you know to be curious about God and what it is to be a Christian.

House Group

A weekly Zoom gathering of people who are exploring the previous Sunday's readings and thinking more deeply about what they mean to them as well as thinking again about the sermon for the previous Sunday. The House Group has met in this way since Easter and will continue until Advent Sunday, 29 November. It is not too late to come along and give it a go. All are welcome. No experience necessary. Please contact Revd Anne requesting the Zoom codes - revdanneluton@gmail.com or ring me on 01582 850125

The House Group will then take a break until Epiphany.

Advent 2020 - The Advent Course

Thursday 3, 10 and 17 December 2020 at 7.30pm on Zoom

An opportunity for you to prepare for and journey towards Christmas. As has been said by many people, Christmas won't be the same this year. This course will help you to prepare for Christmas with your eyes fixed on the Christ Child, on the incarnation of God. Christians this year have been given the gift of showing to others the Christ-mas. Jesus at the centre of the celebrations. Let us this year celebrate without the distraction of the mass consumerism, thinking instead about the reason for the family gatherings. For the birth of Jesus is the reason to celebrate.

Serving Together

Luton Foodbank Collection

A collection of food will be taken for the Luton Foodbank on the first Saturday of each month. The collection at St Anne's will be from 11am until 1pm, while at St Christopher's it will be from 12noon until 2pm.

If you are able to offer your time to help collect the food please contact Ann Moore on 01582 512219 or Michelle Reeves on 07999 780385. You will need to wear a mask and gloves.

Please come along, bring some food to add to the collection, and let your friends and families know about the collection, encouraging them to support those of our town who are struggling to feed themselves and their families.

Giving Together

Thank you for all that you are giving financially to this parish. Thank you for your generosity.

The parish continues to look for ways to overcome the loss of revenue from the hire of the Church Halls and our fundraising events. If you have any creative ideas please do share them with Revd Anne and the ministry team, Dianne, Ann and Michelle.

If your finances are such that you are able to give a little more to the work of God - thank you

Here are our Nat West Bank Account details

- Account Name: Parish of Luton, St Anne with St Christopher
- Sort Code: 60-18-11
- Account Number 17134048

With this information you can make a one off payment or set up a standing order for the parish. You also have the name of the account if you wish to send a cheque to the parish.

If your finances are such that you are unable to give a little more to the work of God in this place - please pray for your own circumstances and for the parish.

if you are unable to make freewill offering electronically and therefore need to continue with cash and envelopes or cash on the collection plate, please can I encourage you, as it is safe for you to do so, to do two things. If you are able, please could you put it in your freewill offering envelopes, and place it on the offertory plate in church or deliver it to The Vicarage, 33 Felix Avenue, Luton, LU2 7LE.

Praying Together

Prayers for the sick

The parish has a list of people who are sick in mind, body or spirit who are prayed for every day. From time to time we place their names on the altar before taking their names off the list. A new list is then begun.

On Advent Sunday, 29 November, the names of the people on the current sick list will be laid on the altar. A new list will then be started. Anyone who wishes their name to be added to the daily prayer list needs to contact me, revdanneluton@gmail.com or ring me on 01582 850125 to request their name is added.

WhatsApp Prayer, prayer is requested and prayer is given. Please let me know if you would like to be included in the WhatsApp prayer group so that I can add you. Contact me on revdanneluton@gmail.com or ring me on 01582 850125.

Let's pray together

As a parish we have recognised the we need to pray more. Many of you will have heard of the Taize Community in France. Brother Roger the founder of this community said " When the church becomes a house of prayer the people will come running". People are at this time of pandemic looking for something to give them hope - the church can offer this in and through the love of Jesus Christ. And as part of our ongoing initiative to support you all in praying more regularly, each newsletter will include prayers for you to use. I am encouraging the whole parish to pray each Saturday morning at some time around 9am until 10am or thereabouts, the prayers included at the end of this newsletter. There will be a prayer for the month, the Parish Prayer for Mission and another prayer. You can add your own prayers and are invited to conclude with the Lord's Prayer. Praying at same time while in different places can create a tangible sense of praying with others.

Prayer for November

God of holiness,
your glory is proclaimed in every age:
as we rejoice in the faith of your saints,
inspire us to follow their example
with boldness and joy;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Jesus our Master

You meet us while we walk in the way and long to reach the heavenly country:
that, following Your light, we may keep the way of righteousness
and never wander away with the horrible darkness of this world's night,
while You, who are the way, the truth and the life, are shining within us.

Wherever Your glory is best served, wherever and however, there and then and in that state,
let us Your children be; only hide not from us Your sweet mercy and love,
and teach us to trust You to the uttermost, for Your love and mercy's sake, and I come.

(F.de. Chantal)

Let us ask for the presence of the Holy Spirit within us in our prayer,
in our work, in our whole lives to bring strength to the weak,
peace to the troubled, light to our darkness, warmth to our coldness.

(Extract from Evelyn Underhill's Prayer Book)

Parish Prayer for Mission

Heavenly Father,
we thank you for the love and gifts you have poured upon us.
Be among us today as we seek to serve you.
Give us confidence and encouragement in all we do to share your love.
May we walk always in the steps of Jesus.
Help us to provide a warm welcome to all who long to know you.
We pray that we may respond with a desire to share more of the love of Christ.
Amen