

Sunday 7th December 2025
2nd Sunday of Advent



Wanstead Parish
St Mary with Christ Church

www.wansteadparish.org

Services today:

8am Holy Communion BCP (CC)
9.30am Sung Eucharist with Junior Church (CC & Halls)
9.45am Nursery Church (Halls)
11am Morning Prayer CW (STM)
5.30pm A Place (CC Vestry)

Eucharist Readings & Hymns:

Psalm 72. 1-7, 18, 19
Romans 15. 4-13
Matthew 3. 1-12

46 – On Jordan's bank

38 – Hark, a thrilling voice is sounding

Sheet – This is my body

569 – The kingdom of God is justice and joy

The Collect for the Week:

O Lord, raise up, we pray, your power and come among us, and with great might succour us; that whereas, through our sins and wickedness we are grievously hindered in running the race that is set before us, your bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit, be honour and glory, now and for ever.

Prayers:

Those who are in need of prayer: Margaret Watts, Pam Messum, Kay Kingham, Kay Sheikh, Julie Black, Sally Hurd, Charlotte, Ann Cheetham, Chris Cummins, Patricia Head, Richard Francis, Barbara Ridley, Tina Veldi, Eli, Liz Hickson, Molly Liok, Divel Veldi, Jackie Wilkins, Janet Plastow, Wendy, Louisa Hepworth, Andrew Bass, Tricia Don, Jane Heath, Jennifer Hale, Michael

RIP: Philip Hale

Year's Mind: Anne Wiggins (7th, 14); Enid Taylor (8th, 08); Pauline Burgess (8th, 90); John Wise (10th, 84); Cynthia Bryant (10th, 03); Steve Alsop (11th, 08); David Hall (11th, 13); Fred Grant (12th, 98); Warwick Brooke (13th, 00)

Wanstead Prayer Diary: Eagle Lane, Beechwood Park, Avon Walk, Meadow Walk, Hermitage Court, Woodford Road, Snaresbrook Hall, Snaresbrook Primary School and Nursery, Deepdene Close, Falcon Way, Eagle Court

NOTICES

TOY SUNDAY GIFTS – A huge thank you for your great generosity last week with all the gifts that have been given for Hestia and Redbridge Young Carers. It is not too late to bring your gifts to church – new ladies scarves and gloves are particularly appreciated.

ADVENT STUDY COURSE – HYMNS OF HOPE AND PROMISE: Meet during Advent to pray the Magnificat and the Benedictus, and reflect on what these hymns of hope and promise mean for us today. December 5th, 12th & 19th in Christ Church Vestry 5-6pm. For further information, please speak to Fr David or email: wanstead.curate@gmail.com

MERRY QUIZMAS, Saturday 13th December, 7pm in the Parish Halls:

Merry Quizmas is back this year, with a fresh take on our annual Christmas quiz! This year, rounds will include an all-new "Aldi v Waitrose tasting round", a "guess that intro" '60s-'90s music round, a "back to school" round and a "guess the Farrow & Ball paint colour" round, along with the more usual quiz rounds to test your knowledge!

Tickets available from: <https://www.trybooking.com/uk/FOKM>

- Raffle and licenced bar (please be a good sport and don't bring your own).
- Max tables of 8 people.
- All of this, plus a burger (meat or veggie) included in the price, for just £12.

On your own Christmas Day? Why not come and be with friendly company at our **FREE CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH – 25th December, 1pm, The Parish Halls, Christ Church E11 2SW. Pre-booking is essential.** Please only book a ticket if you definitely intend to come. Thank you to The Duke for again generously supporting this event. Please see the weekly email to book online or please contact the parish office to book a place: office@parishofwanstead.org or Tel: 0208 530 8743 – leave a message with your name, telephone number, and how many places you would like.

TUESDAY PRAYER GROUP: The last meeting of the year will be on Tuesday 9th December – 10.30am at Christ Church. The group will then meet again in the new year on Tuesday 13th January.

COMPLINE: Please note there will be no Compline at St. Mary's on 24th December or 31st December. The last Compline of 2025 will be 17th December and the first one of the new year will be 7th January.

WEEKLY PRAYERS FOR THE SICK AND THOSE IN NEED: From January, we will begin a new system for including names for prayers on the pew sheet. After 3 months, a name will come off the list unless we are asked to include it again. We will be very happy to include names again, this is simply a way to reduce the list as we are not always asked to remove a name, and the list is getting very long. We welcome requests for prayer and see it as a very important aspect of our church family support and fellowship.

HOME AND HOSPITAL VISITS: Please let the Parish Office know if you would appreciate a visit by a member of the clergy, or if you know of someone who would. Mthr Anne can offer one-off visits for prayer and discussion (perhaps concerning a specific issue), in addition to on-going visits in the case of the elderly, sick and housebound. **SAFEGUARDING:** For safeguarding concerns please contact Avril Carnelley on 07905 764343 or at wansteadparishsafeguarding@gmail.com. In an emergency, contact the relevant authority such as the Police.

A reflection on this week's readings:

From the readings for Sunday 7 December

Matt 3:1-12

In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judæa... For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight... Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judæa... and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ... And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I... he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire.

AV (King James Bible)

In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea... For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea... and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ... Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I ... he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire."

RSV

Today's reading is in many ways classic Advent material: John the Baptist is represented by one of our four candles, while the quotation from Isaiah (40:3) features in practically every Advent liturgy and celebration. But the Advent message, as we saw last week, is complicated and there's more to this well-known story than meets the eye. The basic outline – the emergence of the shaggily-clad prophet calling all and sundry to a "baptism of repentance" – is to be found at the very beginning of Mark's gospel, but in both Matthew and Luke it's the beginning of chapter 3, following their (completely different) accounts of Jesus' birth. Matthew and Luke both weave into Mark's brief account a raft of additional material – all the words of anger and judgment starting with "brood of vipers". This material is almost (not completely) identical in the two gospels, suggesting that they are combining Mark's account with another, otherwise unknown, source. It's only Matthew who identifies the targets of John's wrath as "Pharisees and Sadducees"; Luke gives the impression that these words are addressed to the crowd in general. Also Luke, who shows a strong concern for social justice, incorporates this theme with John slating the soldiers and tax-collectors for oppressing the poor.

What is this other source? We can only get close to it by identifying all the material which is common to Matthew and Luke, but is not in Mark (assuming, as most Bible scholars do, that Mark is the earliest gospel). This otherwise unknown source is rather intriguingly known as Q, from the German word *Quelle*, "source" – related to the English word "well", which originally meant "spring". It seems to have been a book of the sayings or teachings of Jesus, with little or no narrative content; it's generally thought to be early, but all we can be sure of is that it's older than whichever is earlier of Matthew or Luke. It may have contained more material, now lost because not included in our gospels. It has given rise to some interesting theories about who Jesus originally was, and how the story developed, but ultimately this is just speculation and much of it depends on circular arguments.

We saw last week that Advent is a time for self-reflection, involving the idea of facing judgment. What the Q material adds to Mark's rather quick-fire account of John's baptism campaign is a sense of the seriousness of the need for repentance (*metanoia* or change of thinking). The call to judgment is ultimately a hopeful one, but it is not to be trivialised.

Lord, help us to use this Advent period to reflect on our need to see more clearly and live more truly the lives that you intend and desire for us.

REGULAR WEEKLY EVENTS:

Tuesdays:	9am	Morning Prayer (CC)
	10.30am	Prayer Group (CC)
Wednesdays:	9am	Morning Prayer (CC)
	8pm	Compline (St M's)
Thursdays:	9.45am	Morning Prayer (CC)
	10.30am	Holy Communion, coffee and chat (CC)
Fridays:	9am	Morning Prayer (St M's)
	10.30am	Forget-Me-Nots Choir (St M's)
	7pm	The Bridge Youth Club (Parish Halls) <i>Term time only</i>
	7pm	Parish Choir Practice (CC Vestry)

Bereavement Cafe: For all who have lost a loved one. Meets in CC vestry, 10.30 - 11.30am on the **third Tuesday** of the month.

A Place: A group for spiritual wellbeing. We warmly welcome you to join us in the Vestry at Christ Church at 5.30pm on the **first Sunday** of each month.

LOOKING AHEAD:

Sunday 14th December – 3rd Sunday of Advent

8am	Holy Communion BCP (CC)
9.30am	Sung Eucharist with Junior Church (CC & Halls)
9.45am	Nursery Church (Halls)
11am	Sung Eucharist (STM)
2pm	Baptism (CC)
3pm	Tea & Fellowship (CC Vestry)

PARISH OF WANSTEAD:

Rector: Revd James Gilder
jbgilder@hotmail.com / 07729 109638
(Day off: Mondays)

Assoc. Priest: Revd Charles Brown
(Works: Thurs, Fri, Sun)

Curate: Revd David Lappano

Assistant Priests:
Revd Olive Thursby (High Street Chaplain)
Revd Richard Wyber
Revd Chris Mackenna
Revd Anne Mackenna (Parish Deacon)
Revd Liz Horwell

Parish Office: 020 8530 8743
office@parishofwanstead.org
Tue-Thurs 9am-1pm

GIVING:

It costs £4,000 per week to keep our parish running. Please consider making a regular donation.

Online: www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/wanstead-london/

Phone: 0333 002 1260

Parish code: 080608162

Email: info@parishgiving.org.uk

Parish code: 080608162

Contact Jill Steggle for more details by email:
giving.wanstead@gmail.com