

Day	Date	We pray especially for...
Wednesday	25th	...our families and friends as we celebrate Christ coming into the world and all those who spend this day alone.
Thursday	26th	...all seeking to alleviate child poverty in our society.
Friday	27th	...those who have recently died and their grieving families and friends.
Saturday	28th	...those attending or participating in sporting events today.
Sunday	29th	...anyone finding love and support in the Church for the first time.
Monday	30th	...ourselves as we come before God in penitence.
Tuesday	31st	...peace throughout the world as we prepare to enter a New Year.



The Brooke Benefice and The Hempnall Group Thoughts and Prayers December 2024

“A city set on a hill cannot be hidden”

This line from Jesus’ teaching in the Sermon on the Mount may not at first glance seem particularly seasonal. Recent events, however, suggest to me that while we are busy with all the normal December activities leading up to Christmas there are other issues that also demand our attention.



Our Church is under scrutiny as never before. The publishing of the Makin report and subsequent resignation of Archbishop Justin seem unfortunately to be only the latest in a never-ending series of negative media coverage. If it’s not abuse and the way its victims have been treated, it’s same sex relationships or reparation for the historical wrongs of slavery.

“A city set on a hill”. When Jesus used that metaphor, he was not referring to the built structures of his day but to the quality of spiritual leadership of his people. It was the beginnings of the challenge that Jesus made to the “scribes and Pharisees” (a phrase which is shorthand for the religious leaders of the day) to live out more fully, more compassionately, God’s laws which they claimed to uphold but so often seemed to fall short of. Our own church has some big questions to face up to in its status as a “City set on a hill”, a light to shine before others, and in no area more than that of safeguarding.

Of course this is not the whole picture. At its best the Church continues to be a place of sanctuary and safety, of care and compassion, of loving service to the community and especially to the poorest and most vulnerable. Christians are among the most active in voluntary work and community service and while the senior leadership of the Church clearly failed so many in the past, there is a sense that we are at least beginning to put our house in order. We have promised to devote the appropriate level of resources to ensuring that we can be better, that we can bear scrutiny. Without it detracting from the joyousness of the season, let’s all keep safeguarding in the forefront of our minds. Find out who the contacts are at diocese, benefice or parish level. They are all there and

Throughout, we pray for those who especially need your help at this

time, remembering: Martin, Ian, Emma, Helen, Michael, Ann

Bedingham/Woodton: Sheila, Hilary, Peter, Liz, Anne, Barrie, Bruce,
Harry, Sally, Kath, Richard, Susan, June

Fritton/Morningthorpe: Jason

Hempnall: Lesley and family, Phillip, Sophia, Claire, David

Topcroft: Gerald

Long Term Care...

Bedingham/Woodton: Dennis, Shirley, Jacob, Ruth

Brooke: Ron

Fritton/Morningthorpe: Beryl

Hempnall: Colin

Mundham/Seething: Margaret, Nancy

Recently Deceased...

Wendy Marsden, Ann Ling, Albert Forder, Diana Alexander

(Compiled by and for the Brooke Benefice and the Hempnall Group of Parishes)

Acknowledgements: Talk by Rev'd Dr Ken Jeffrey, 'Pastoral Care – session 3', Church of Scotland Pastoral Care Conference, 2017: <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/learn/events/content/pastoral-care-conference-2017> (at 2.25-3.14 of 57.20) [accessed 24.9.24]. Photograph of slow cooker from: <https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/howto/guide/10-top-tips-using-slow-cooker>. [accessed 25.9.24].

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very willing to respond. Undertake the training available, there's nothing to fear from it! Never be afraid to act on concerns for someone.

The good news is that while we have a lot to repent and a lot to live up to, we are not imprisoned by the past. We can learn from the past but must inhabit the future in which Christ's love, grace and strength are the abiding marks of the Church.

A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.

Have a very happy Christmas.

~Tim Francis~

Sunday Readings	
1st December – Advent 1	<i>Psalm 25:1-9</i> <i>1 Thessalonians 3:9-end</i> <i>Luke 21:25-36</i>
8th December – Advent 2	<i>Canticle: Benedictus (Luke 1:68-79)</i> <i>Philippians 1:3-11</i> <i>Luke 3:1-6</i>
15th December – Advent 3	<i>Canticle: Isaiah 12:2-6</i> <i>Philippians 4:4-7</i> <i>Luke 3:7-18</i>
22nd December – Advent 4	<i>Canticle: Magnificat (Luke 1:45-55)</i> <i>Hebrews 10:5-10</i> <i>Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]</i>
29th December – Christmas 1	<i>Psalm 148</i> <i>Colossians 3:12-17</i> <i>Luke 2:41-end</i>

Prayers – This month

Day	Date	We pray especially for...
Sunday	1st	...our congregations gathering today at Brooke and Topcroft for communion on the 1st Sunday of Advent
Monday	2nd	...anyone subjected to modern slavery and for those seeking to abolish it.
Tuesday	3rd	...those suffering from disabilities of body or mind and their careers.
Wednesday	4th	...our churchwardens and designated persons maintaining the operation of our churches so selflessly.

Day	Date	We pray especially for...
Thursday	5th	...all voluntary organisations helping others and those who tirelessly work for them.
Friday	6th	...all missionaries spreading the word of God at home and abroad.
Saturday	7th	...aid agencies supporting victims of natural disaster throughout the world.
Sunday	8th	...Christians throughout the world coming together today in Jesus' name.
Monday	9th	...the emergency services and all they do for us when in dire circumstances.
Tuesday	10th	...those working to ensure Human Rights for all people.
Wednesday	11th	...all those in hospital and the staff caring for them.
Thursday	12th	... the Samaritans and all those suffering alone in need of a listening presence.
Friday	13th	...those whose lives are affected by domestic violence of any kind.
Saturday	14th	...local shop workers and other providers in our villages. .
Sunday	15th	...those training for or considering ministry in whatever form.
Monday	16th	...our families, loved ones and all who we hold dear.
Tuesday	17th	...all doctors, nurses, other medical professionals and their support staff.
Wednesday	18th	...for all refugees and migrants forced into seeking safe places to live.
Thursday	19th	...the Government that they may work towards the good of all.
Friday	20th	...the pupils and staff at our schools as they break for their deserved holiday.
Saturday	21st	...anyone suffering from seasonal affective disorder on this the shortest day of the year.
Sunday	22nd	...our bishops, archdeacons, clergy and all who minister in Christ's name.
Monday	23rd	...everyone decorating and preparing our churches for Christmas worship.
Tuesday	24th	...the homeless and all with accommodation needs at this festive time.