

St Andrew's Chaplaincy

Newsletter January 2021

Welcome

Welcome to our January Newsletter



Happy New Year - it's still not too late to say that as we begin to think ahead and try and plan for 2021!

Thankfully we were able to hold our Christmas Services in three of our Church centres, and it was good to welcome a few visitors at each. It may have been very different from what we are used to, but it was just such a relief that we could gather to celebrate Christmas - Emmanuel - God with us, after having to cancel all Services over holy Week and Easter.

It was really good to be able to use Zoom for our Carols and Cocktails - with it's mix of being socializing with friends across the chaplaincy in small break-out rooms and just wonderful to be joined by friends from Canada and the UK. To be able to then sing some carols without masks and with some gusto was just great, as many emails and text messages afterwards confirmed! We plan to develop that way of getting together this year.

On Sunday 10th January at each service we had to remind people of the reasons why we must follow the instructions and guidelines that allow us to gather for worship. Our Bishops had just reissued their guidelines that had been updated, following the most recent scientific and medical advice. It's all about keeping one another safe and preventing any spreading of infection. We only need to look at the UK to know that clear instructions should be welcomed and advice followed. In this part of Spain we have been remarkably lucky and by playing our part in being careful can only help one another - whatever our own personal views may be about such rules.

I am glad this was put on our Facebook page and one of the comments clearly confirmed our need to try our best in this:

Please be kind

As governments are trying to figure out how to ease back into a new normal, please remember:

Some people don't agree with the suggested reopening.... that's okay.

Be kind.

Some people are still planning to stay at home.... that's okay. **Be kind.**

Some are still scared of getting the virus and another wave happening.... that's okay. **Be kind.**

Some are sighing with relief to go back to work knowing they may possibly save their business or their homes....that's okay. **Be kind.**

Some are thankful they can finally have a surgery they have put off....that's okay.

Be kind.

Some will be able to attend interviews after weeks without a job....that's okay.

Be kind.

Some will wear masks for weeks....that's okay. **Be kind.**

Some people will rush out to get the hair or nails done.... that's okay. **Be kind.**

The point is, everyone has different viewpoints/feelings and that's okay.

Be kind.

We each have a different story. If you need to stay home, stay home. But be kind. If you need to go out, just respect others when in public and be kind! Don't judge fellow humans because you're not in their story. We all are in different financial and mental states than we were a year ago. So remember, **be kind.**

At the start of this new year, let each one of us be determined to pray daily for our Chaplaincy and for one another, as these strangest of times continue.

Fr Nigel



PASTORAL CARE

Please make contact should you simply need a chat, prayerful support or just quiet reassurance at this time. If there is someone you know who would value a call at this time, then please do email us in confidence - and then this can happen.

Fr Nigel - 608 403 024 -
vicar.costadelsol@gmail.com

Caroline - 697 867 377 -
carriemachome@gmail.com

Don't forget our Prayer Chain - a small dedicated team who will pray for you or those you may be concerned about. It is done in complete confidence, and you will never be approached by a member of the Prayer Chain about your requests. Only first names are used and details are kept to a minimum.

For information about the Prayer Chain please contact Linda Hammond cdsolprayer20@gmail.com or have a word with Caroline or Fr Nigel.

THANK YOU

Many thanks indeed to everyone who supported our Advent Challenge and Christmas Prayer Candle Appeal. At the time of writing we are unable to give the final amounts raised, as money is still due to come in for both. But so far it's most encouraging - thank you!

Our thanks also needs to go to Sandra Standen for the many homemade Christmas cards she made - and were sold very quickly across the Chaplaincy!

Sign up to receive future newsletters via email. Visit our website to find out how....

Services

Following the news on Friday evening of the latest restrictions for our region, the Chaplaincy Council have made the difficult decision to close each worship centre with immediate effect for at least two weeks.

This was not an easy decision, but there is now clearly a global concern that the different strains of Covid-19 present an increased risk infection to all age groups. While every precaution has been taken in our Churches, there is a risk of infection as people gather before and after the services. We are simply following the majority of Churches in the UK, who have closed for these reasons, despite being able to remain open for worship in their latest lockdown.

Please pass this news on to your friends who may not use the internet and to anyone else in your usual 'bubble' so that no one turns up at Alhaurin, Calahonda or Los Boliches for a service. We hope to be able to open for Sunday 31 January - but will send an email to confirm.

As we have been saying throughout this difficult time, please be in contact with Fr Nigel, Caroline or the Wardens if you simply need a chat, prayerful support or just quiet reassurance at this time. If there is someone you know who would value a call at this time, then please do email us in confidence – and then this can happen.

*With prayers and best wishes,
Fr Nigel*



You are invited to join us next Sunday for a Chaplaincy Zoom - with chance to chat with friends across the Chaplaincy and beyond with our Swallows and a short act of worship at the end.

St Andrew's Sunday Fellowship
Sunday 24 January at 11am (Madrid)

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5734420030>

Just a thought

'For most of my life I have struggled to find God, to know God, to love God. I have tried hard to follow the guidelines of the spiritual life - pray always, work for others, read the Scriptures - and to avoid the many temptations to dissipate myself. I have failed many times but always tried again, even when I was close to despair.

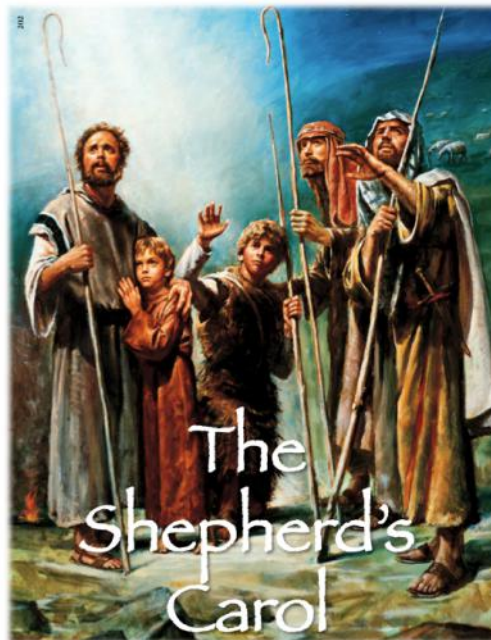


Now I wonder whether I have sufficiently realized that during all this time God has been trying to find me, to know me, and to love me. The question is not 'How am I to find God?' but 'How am I to let myself be found by him?' The question is not 'How am I to know God?' but 'How am I to let myself be known by God?' And, finally, the question is not 'How am I to love God?' but 'How am I to let myself be loved by God?' God is looking into the distance for me, trying to find me, and longing to bring me home.'

*Henri J.M. Nouwen,
The Return of the Prodigal Son*

Over Christmas I enjoyed listening to a rather beautiful carol by Bob Chilcott (b.1955), written for the King's College Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols in 2001. He had been a treble as well as a Choral Scholar in the choir. I have to agree with one commentator who said: I love the phrase: "'Silence more lovely than music folded the hill," and the way the use of the word Lady evokes the idea of their humble origins'. The words are still very apt for this time of the year....

You can listen to the Carol here:
<https://youtu.be/j8N2YTikOsc>



The Shepherd's Carol
(Clive Samson 1910-1981)

We stood on the hills, Lady,
Our day's work done,
Watching the frosted meadows
That winter had won.

The evening was calm, Lady,
The air so still,
Silence more lovely than music
Folded the hill.

There was a star, Lady,
Shone in the night,
Larger than Venus it was
And bright, so bright.

Oh, a voice from the sky, Lady,
It seemed to us then
Telling of God being born
In the world of men.

And so we have come, Lady,
Our day's work done,
Our love, our hopes, ourselves,
We give to your son.

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Thinking about our lifestyle

Caring for God's Creation



Life during the Covid 19 pandemic has not been easy and for some it has brought tragedy and hardship. However we have had more time to think about our lifestyle and what is really important. Sustainable living and ethical decision making are two factors that people are thinking about in relation to caring for creation.

The Church of England General Synod has declared a Climate Emergency. The Church at all levels is working and praying in response to this situation. Much helpful material is now available that we can use as our current circumstances allow.

Veganuary has been held since 2014 encouraging people to go vegan in January. You might have seen the advert for non-meat sausage casserole on TV. Veganuary's vision includes a world where food production does not decimate forests, pollute rivers and exacerbate climate change. Maybe going vegan is too much but I ask you to join me in reviewing what we eat and how it is produced.

Small but positive steps in caring for the environment are being taken in our supermarkets. Products made using recycled plastic or paper are appearing along with biodegradable/compostable

packaging. Plastic crockery and cutlery are being replaced by environmentally friendly alternatives. Bamboo is a good example. It can be confusing but I'm trying to get to grips with it all.



Lock-down has meant that we are shopping more locally. I am surprised by how much locally grown and produced foodstuffs are available in my village. A good opportunity to change our shopping habits for the better.

Finally for now are you watching Perfect Planet on BBC1? (I'll have to watch on catch-up). It looks like a fascinating programme. With all of life created to work in harmony our God has indeed created a perfect planet.

Hilary Tompkins

Useful link: <https://veganuary.com/>



Charitable giving



For some years now, the Chaplaincy has supported various charities, both local and international, as part of our Christian Stewardship and money is usually sent off towards the end of the year.

This is all good, but there really doesn't seem to be much interest in this part of our outreach at all – getting suggestions for suitable charities to support has been hard work!

So this year the Chaplaincy Council has decided that we will have a bi-monthly Charity of the Month – and would welcome nominations for local, national and international Charities to support during 2021. We will fund this through our usual Stewardship and also retiring collections during the year.

Please let us know the charity or charities, you would like us to consider with as much information about them as possible, so we can make their work known through our Newsletter and encourage other people to give generously too.

Bible study



Bible Study Groups are still up and running!

Both the coastal and inland groups are meeting via Zoom - please contact the leaders directly for information and they can send you the links to join:
John Sutton johnsutton2104@gmail.com
or Caroline carriemachome@gmail.com

Visit our website www.st-andrewscofe-spain.org for Chaplaincy information

Notices

A reminder

For those who continue to self-isolate even when we are able to reopen the churches, we will still produce a shorter version of this on-line service for you.

If you would like to receive this, please drop a line to CdSEpewsheet@gmail.com and we will gladly add you to the mailing list.



Church Council Meeting

Thursday 21st January
4pm Zoom Church Council Meeting



More Tea Vicar with a Songs of praise

Sunday 31 January – 5pm
More Tea Vicar with a Songs of Praise

This will be our next Zoom gathering,
just use this link to join:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5734420030>



As usual there will be chance to chat in smaller rooms with friends across the chaplaincy, Canada and the UK - and even further afield. We will then come together to sing 4 or 5 hymns or songs that will be chosen by you.

So if you would like us to sing your favourite hymn or song please let Fr Nigel know asap (just email him) and then we can hopefully get the music sorted and can sing away.... Please note the earlier time of 5pm.

If you need help connecting to Zoom, then just have a word with Fr Nigel, Caroline, or one of the Wardens. It is easy to use and install on your computer, tablet or smart phone. You may even find it easier to keep in contact with family and friends by using this.

Sad news

Many of you will have already heard the sad news about the death of Bill Oliver on Friday 15th Jan. He had been ill for some months.

The funeral was held on Saturday 16th Jan and a Service of Thanksgiving will be held, post-Covid restrictions, when many of his friends from St Andrew's and the various organisations and charities he supported, will be able to attend. As we give thanks for his life, please remember his wife, Suzana, and his children, Jonathan, Sarah and Joshua in your prayers.



Lent 2021

Lent 2021 starts on Ash Wednesday – 17 February.

Details about our Lent programme will be available on our pewsheets and in the next Edition of our Newsletter.

The Anglican Chaplaincy
of Saint Andrew



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