

"John answered them all, "I baptise you with water. But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." (Luke 3:16)

People sometimes admire great preachers or Christian leaders. You may have your favourites or perhaps remember someone whose life and ministry had a profound impact on you or whose book was a key influence in your Christian life. It is good to thank God for such people, but it is important not to let our faith become focussed on any Christian leader.

John the Baptist was the most popular and famous preacher of his day. His proclamation had a profound effect on people and many flocked to hear him. In terms of spiritual leadership, he was the superstar of the day.

Yet, look at what John says about the one who is to come after him, that is Jesus. He says he is not even worthy to untie the thongs of his sandals. Apparently, when discussing what it was appropriate for a disciple of a Jewish Rabbi to do for their teacher, many servant-like roles were allowed, but some were deemed to be demeaning. Untying the thongs of their sandals was one such role. What John says emphasises how amazingly more significant Jesus was than him!

Let's not focus on great Christian leaders, but let's fix our eyes on Jesus, the one who has won our salvation, given us the Holy Spirit and will one day be judge of all. He is far more worthy of our affections than any Christian leader could ever be.

Paul Worledge

This Sunday's Service is also available online:
[Livestream Sunday 12th December, 11am](#)

Click the above link to access the livestream for Sunday's service. You can also use the link to watch the service at a later time.

Weekly Calendar

Friday 10th

Play and Praise – Christmas Special (Church Hall) - 10:00-11:30am

Saturday 11th

Daily Prayer (at St. George's Church) - 9:30-10:00am

Cantate Concert in Church, 7pm.

Sunday 12th

Family Service (St. Luke's Church), Luke 3:7-18 – **John's Preaching**
- 11:00am-12:00pm

Youth Led Service (St. Luke's Church) - 5:00-6:00pm

Monday 13th

Daily Prayer (St. Luke's Church) - 9:30-10:00am

Tuesday 14th

Daily Prayer (at St. George's Church) - 9:30-10:00am

Thursday 16th

Daily Prayer (at St. Luke's Church) - 9:30-10:00am

Cafe4All (St. Luke's Church), Coffee and Chat for all - 10:00-11:30am.

Friday 17th

Christmas Baroque Concert (at St. George's church), 7:00-8:00pm

Saturday 18th

Daily Prayer (at St. George's Church) - 9:30-10:00am

Christmas Service: Remembrance (St. Luke's Church) - 6:30pm-7:30pm

Sunday 19th

Family Carol Service (St. Luke's Church) - 3:00pm-4:00pm

Check out the website for details of our Christmas services: [Christmas 2021](#).

Prayer Requests

Be assured I will do my best to check that people are happy for the requests to be shared before including them. Please pray for...

- The Youth Led service next Sunday (12th), that it will be a big encouragement to the young people leading and all that attend.
- For the preparation for and good attendance at all our Christmas Services.
- Norah and family after her daughter Katrina passed away. Pray them all as they hold the funeral this Friday.
- John Galer for a continuing recovery from his stroke and that plans to move him between hospitals from Tenerife to Canterbury on Monday will go ahead successfully.
- Ken Tipler that the pain caused by his bone cancer can be kept under control.
- Lyn Danino thank you that she is back home and doesn't need any surgery, but pray for her continuing recovery.
- David Gill for a good recovery after having a stent put in his heart.

Please also continue to pray for: Flo Baldock, Nathan Court, Pauline Emptage, Shirley Crabb, Collette Judge, Barb (Gloria's daughter's friend), Jean Simmons, Rita Ryan and Joy Smithers.

Plan B Covid Restrictions and Church Services

With the introduction of Plan B by the government this week, it is now mandatory for anyone 11 years or older to wear face masks in places of worship, for services and concerts – unless you are exempt. This will be for everyone in the congregation, including when they are singing. Those leading the singing at the front or speaking will keep socially distanced, but not need to wear a mask.

As hospitality venues such as cafes and pubs are still allowed to be open, we will continue to provide hospitality for those who wish to stay behind after the service. People should wear masks when serving at the counter or collecting drinks, but can remove them once seated in order to eat and drink.

Please respect social distancing as much as possible and be considerate to all those in church and aware that some will be more anxious about these measures than others.

We will also continue to make Sunday morning services available online via YouTube and most of the Christmas Services will also be available in this way. Check out our website or [St. Luke's Ramsgate on YouTube](#) for more details.

Cantate Concert, This Saturday 11th, 7pm

Please join us for this wonderful concert and bring friends and family. Why not encourage others to come along or advertise the event on Facebook? Link to use: [Cantate Christmas Concert - St. Luke's, Ramsgate \(stlukesramsgate.org\)](#).

If anyone would like to volunteer to provide refreshments, welcome people at the door or collect donations on the ways out, then please let me know by the end of Friday.

This Sunday: Youth Led Service, 5:00-6:00pm

Please join us for a special service on Sunday afternoon, which will be led by a few of our young people. It is youth led, but all ages are encouraged to come and join in!

The title is 'Are you prepared?' It is an exciting chance to gather together to worship and ponder this theme. There will be refreshments following the service.

Christmas Services - Mince Pies

We love to offer mince pies at our Christmas Services and we rely on donations from members of the congregation to make that possible. With that in mind we would be grateful for donations of mince pies. It would help to have some brought along on 12th December so we have them ready for the following weekend, but more offerings on 19th ready for the Christmas weekend would also be welcomed!

Christmas Baroque Concert, Friday 17th, 7pm – St. George's Church

As part of our Christmas Tree Festival this year, we have a wonderful concert by Beachside Baroque. The group includes Petra one of our amazing organists, a violinist and a tenor. There is free entry, but we are suggesting a donation of £10 each.

Links to Share:

Last Sunday's Sermon:

Last Sunday's Sermon is available on YouTube, as a Podcast or a transcript:

[Have you flattened a mountain? \(Luke 3:1-6\)](#)

In ancient times in order to prepare for a king's visit to a city, they would level the ground, flattening mountains and filling in valleys. The prophets said that someone would come to prepare the way for God to come as king - that was John the Baptist, who came calling for people to repent.

Abuse of Power in the Church

Many Christian leaders provide faithful ministry and loving care for people. However, positions of leadership in the church can enable a few to use their position to abuse and exploit others. This is always a tragedy and a far cry from what Jesus expects of his followers, yet sadly it happens in churches of all traditions. The Church of England Evangelical Council has recently done a lot of work on this issue and this blog and video by Ed Shaw is an introduction to the materials they have produced.

[How should evangelicals respond to abuse of power?](#)

If this raises issues for you personally, then do please feel free to get in touch for a chat.

Church of England – Christmas Single

For the first time, the Church of England have produced a Christmas single. It is a new setting of *In the Bleak Midwinter*.

[In the Bleak Midwinter](#)

Finally, let's remember that Jesus is far more powerful, loving and worthy than any Christian or non-Christian leader.

Yours in Christ,

Paul Worledge
(Vicar, St. Luke's Ramsgate)