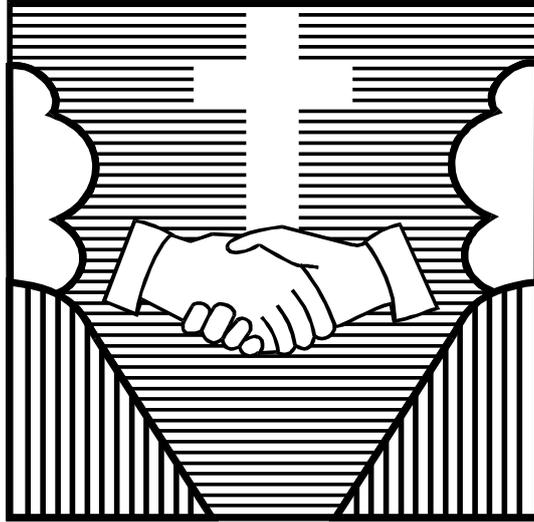


The **Valley**



Church

We are ordinary people led by an extraordinary God, whose love inspires us to welcome everyone, serve our communities and grow as we follow Jesus together

24th December 2017 – 4th Sunday of Advent

09.30 Holy Communion with Graham Watts
15.30 Crib Service with Graham & Sami Watts
16.30 Crib Service with Graham & Sami Watts

Services – December 2017

25 Dec	09.30	Holy Communion with Graham & Sami Watts
31 Dec	10.30	Holy Communion in The Chapel

NEWS AND DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Open house for New Year's Eve! Sami and Graham would love to welcome you for a drink and some nibbles to toast the end of 2017 and anticipate the New Year. On December 31st there will only be one church service in Marlow Bottom - a joint Communion at Marlow Bottom Methodist chapel at 10.30. so if you would like to join us at [165 Marlow Bottom straight](#) afterwards for a glass of something bubbly, then we will be hosting open house until 1pm (or a little later, but not for lunch). Do let us know if you can make it, thank you!

ALPHA is a series of evenings exploring the Christian faith. Each evening looks at a different question around faith and is designed to create conversation. Alpha is run all around the globe, and everyone's welcome. Alpha begins with a meal and then the topic for the evening is introduced in a documentary style TV programme. The rest of the time is spent discussing, questioning and getting to the heart of each topic. **The next Alpha Course starts on Thursday January 11th.** It runs for 10 weeks with a break for half term. If you are interested in coming or know somebody who is there should be Alpha information at the back of each Church. Or check out the website <http://4u-team.org/alpha/> . For any questions or to book onto the course graham.watts@4u-team.org

Have you ever thought about being confirmed? What is Confirmation you ask? A full answer can be found here <https://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/confirmation> on the new Church of England website. A brief answer is, it is a Service where one has the chance to declare publicly their faith by reaffirming the promises made on their behalf at their baptism. The next Confirmation Service in our area is on Sunday March 4th in the evening at St Mark's Church in Bourne End. We already know of some of the congregation who will be getting Confirmed that evening so we will be heading down there en masse that night. So if this could be for you have a read of the info on the C of E website, speak to Graham or Sami, PRAY about it and pencil the date in your diary. There will be Confirmation classes run for adults and young people in preparation for the Service. Look out for details in the New Year. There is no exam!

At any time in the life of a church, there are people who are struggling - through illness, bereavement or other circumstances. There is a lot of care that already goes on in our congregations, but there is also a need for others to get involved. If you would be interested in finding out more about this, Sami will be running 3 training evenings in January - Tuesdays 16th, 23rd and 30th, 8-9.30 at 165 Marlow Bottom. Please contact her if you are interested Sami.watts@4u-team.org or 01628 440106

Another way we can be involved in supporting others is through prayer. Alan Greening, from the chapel, sends out regular emails updating prayer requests and prayer needs. If you are not on Alan's circulation list and would like to be, again, please contact Sami.

Readings for next week: **Isaiah 61:10 - 62:3** **Luke 2: 15-21**

TOGETHER IN PRAYER 4U Team

Week beginning 24th December 2017

A Prayer for Christmas: Lord Jesus, this Christmas as we sing the familiar carols, hear the familiar readings and ponder on familiar mysteries, give to us the gift of pure worship – that ability which Mary had of attributing to you your true worth, your full value, your inestimable greatness. Teach us to be reverent; yet teach us how to express the love that burns within our hearts as we think of your goodness to us that you have come to be our light in darkness, our hope in despair, our strength in weakness, our shelter in the storm – yes, and our eternal Saviour.



Pray for peace, hope and faith

Give thanks for our friends, families and carers, all who support and nurture us; for the joy of sharing worship together and for a shared hospitality. Help us to be an open and welcoming church to all and any who seek to know our Lord better and to draw closer to God. Help us to be tolerant and respectful to each other and all whom we meet especially at this time of Christmas.

Give thanks for the uplifting services of Carols, Christingles, and Nativities that we have enjoyed in schools and churches in Marlow, for the joyful occasions with our many children and young people and for the quiet moments to reflect on the magnitude of God's gift of his son and the impact that should have on our lives and how we need to respond as a church and individually.

Pray for the people of Yemen, isolated and facing starvation, a cholera epidemic and devastation of crops, homes and livelihoods. **Pray** the embargo will be lifted and aid allowed into the country to bring some relief to the millions at risk. **Pray** that all those fleeing from oppression, violence and poverty, may find a welcome and a safe haven offering hope, security and love for the future. **Pray** for those in our neighbourhood facing financial hardship and homelessness, adults and children unable to afford Christmas at all.

Pray for the opportunities to move forward in the power of a new Spirit as we grow in new and exciting directions, as ordinary people with our extraordinary God. **Pray** for our Team Council that there will be new ways to include all our congregations in a generous and inclusive church community, where all are valued and loved equally.

Pray for those who are sick in body mind or spirit and all those who have asked for our prayers, give thanks for those who are healing. **Pray** for those who are elderly and housebound, or living in residential homes with few friends or visitors especially members of our church family. Pray for those recovering in hospital or at home. **Pray** for those who have recently died and those who are still missed, may those who mourn them know the peace and love of Christ



four churches,
one vision