

**Please pray for:**

Those who are sick including Val Flippance, Gordon Wenham, and Colin Johnson.  
The family and friends of Mary Lewis and Trevor Lambert who have died recently.  
We also remember Frederick Yeates, Alan Rogers, Meg Rae and Peggy Harris whose year's mind falls at this time.

**WEDDING AND BAPTISM ENQUIRIES - 6:00—6:30pm in St Mary's Church**

All enquiries about weddings or baptisms should be made directly to the Vicar or Curate. Please come to meet the clergy in church each Wednesday evening between 6:00 and 6:30pm.

**CONTACTS:**

**Parish Office** 01242 224883,  
parishoffice@stmarysck.org.uk

**Vicar -**

Revd Graham Bowkett, 01242 253402  
vicar@stmarysck.org.uk  
(Day off—Tuesday)

**Curate -**

Revd Adrian Beere, 07788 725331  
curate@stmarysck.org.uk  
(Day off—Friday)

**Church Wardens -**

Jean Hockett, 01242 300415  
Jean.Hockett@stmarysck.org.uk

Colin Revell, 01242 285757

Colin.Revell@stmarysck.org.uk

**Organist -**

John Clift, 07708 244844  
organist@stmarysck.org.uk

**Verger and Sacristan -**

Derrick Walker 01242 525742  
sacristan@stmarysck.org.uk

**Church Flowers -**

Margaret Walker, 01242 525742

**Bells -**

Hilda Ridley, 01242 511706

**Pastoral Team Lead -**

Heather Anderson-Paine, 07814 271716

**Pastoral Team contacts -**

Heather, Alison and Jenny  
Email: pastoral@stmarysck.org.uk

**Prayer for Advent 4**

God and maker of all,  
to redeem the world  
you chose the most unsuspecting  
of women  
to mother your Son  
and by your choice gave new glory  
to human flesh and earthly parenting.  
With the joy that was Mary's,  
may our souls magnify the Lord,  
and our bodies be the means  
through which you continue  
the mighty work of salvation  
for which Christ came.  
**Amen.**

Items for inclusion in the Notices need to be emailed to  
**Jean.Hockett@stmarysck.org.uk** by **Tuesday** each week



**ST MARY'S CHURCH,  
CHARLTON KINGS  
CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR  
DOUBLE ISSUE**

Whether you are reading this online or in hard copy the Clergy and Churchwardens wish you a very happy, holy and peaceful Christmas and a healthy New Year. We will be delighted to welcome you to join us, in person, for any or all of the services we are offering over Christmas and the New Year. **Services marked with \*\* will also be live streamed on St Mary's website at <https://www.stmarysck.org.uk/>**  
Please note that, if attending any of our services in person, face coverings are now, by law, mandatory in places of worship unless one is exempt on medical grounds  
Please, when in church, follow the guidance from the Welcomers and continue to respect social distancing and the sensitivities of others around you.

**Christmas and New Year Services at a glance:**

**Sunday, 19<sup>th</sup> December - Advent 4**

8:00am Holy Communion  
10:00am Parish Communion  
6:30pm Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols ) \*\*

**Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> December - Christmas Eve**

2:30pm Crib Service  
4:00pm Crib Service \*\*  
11:30pm Midnight Mass (First Communion of Christmas)

**Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup> December - Christmas Day**

8:00am Holy Communion  
10:00am Parish Eucharist \*\*

**Sunday, 26<sup>th</sup> December - St Stephen's Day**

10:00am Holy Communion (said - Order 2, Traditional language)

**Sunday, 2<sup>nd</sup> January - Epiphany**

8:00am Holy Communion  
10:00am All Age Service with Communion \*\*  
NB No evening service

**TODAY'S SERVICES - Advent 4**

**8:00am Holy Communion**

President: Rev'd Adrian Beere

**10:00am Parish Communion**

Presiding and Preaching:

Rev'd Graham Bowkett

**Readings:**

**Hymns:**

CP 49 Come, thou redeemer of the earth

CP 38 The people that in darkness sat

CP 41 A great and mighty wonder

CP 362 Tell out my soul

**Anthem:**

There is no rose - John Joubert

**Readings:**

Old Testament - Micah 5:2-5a

New Testament - Hebrews 10:5-10

Gospel - Luke 1:39-55)

**Please stay for refreshments after this service.**

**Collect**

God our redeemer,  
who prepared the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of your Son:  
grant that, as she looked for his coming as our saviour,  
so we may be ready to greet him when he comes again as our judge;  
who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

**Amen.**

**Post Communion Prayer:**

Heavenly Father,  
who chose the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of the promised saviour:  
fill us your servants with your grace,  
that in all things we may embrace your holy will  
and with her rejoice in your salvation;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**6:30pm Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols**

(followed by mince pies and mulled wine)

**26<sup>th</sup> December - St Stephen**

**10:00am Holy Communion (said)**

President: Rev'd Graham Bowkett

**Collect:**

Gracious Father,  
who gavest to the first martyr Stephen grace to pray for those who took up stones against him:  
grant that in all our sufferings for the truth  
we may learn to love even our enemies  
and to seek forgiveness for those who desire our hurt,  
looking up to heaven to him who was crucified for us,  
Jesus Christ, our mediator and advocate,  
who liveth and reigneth with thee.  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

**Organist and Choir - Thank you . . .**

. . . to John Clift and to the Choir for leading the musical offering in our worship. After the restrictions of lockdown when we relied much on soloists, primarily Erika Fletcher and Alison Talbot, it is good to have the Choir back in numbers - though John would welcome expressions of interest from potential new choristers, especially from children aged 8 and above.

**Technical Team - Thank you . . .**

. . . Martin Grinter, Peter Ryan and Peter Aylott who have been both tireless and inventive in providing high quality streamed services for people to watch at home as well the technology needed to assist the clergy and congregation present in church.

**Mince Pies and Mulled Wine - Thank you . . .**

. . . to Sean, a member of the 10:00am congregation, who has kindly provided mince pies and mulled wine for refreshments after the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols.

**Holy Dusters - Thank you . . .**

. . . for giving up your Saturday mornings every two weeks to come in to clean and tidy St Mary's ready for Sunday and other services.

**Comfort and Joy project - Thank you . . .**

. . . to all who have supported our initiative to bring the joy of Christ's coming to those who need it particularly this Christmas. We've been inundated with donations, financial and goods for the goody bags. We're now preparing the logistics of delivering the packs to the people you've nominated. This will take place from Monday 20th onwards.

**Thank you also** to Anne Grinter, Erika Fletcher and Adrian Beere for organising and co-ordinating the Comfort and Joy effort.

**Welcomers - Thank you . . .**

. . . for your assistance before and after every service is much valued, though not always acknowledged publicly so, at this particularly busy time of year it is right that omission is corrected.

**Special thanks to** Jenny Downes who, most Sundays, covers for the Churchwardens whose duties as Choir member and Reader often mean they are unable to be at the West End of church as the congregation arrives.

## THANK YOU TO ALL WHO SUPPORT ST MARY'S

Thanks are due to so many people who work in so many and different ways, often quietly and without seeking recognition, to make our church a place of warmth and welcome for the whole of Charlton Kings. At this time of year it is right that we should publicly recognise some of those people who play an important part in the whole life, mission and ministry of St Mary's.

Of course, St Mary's would be nothing without its faithful congregations who attend the regular services on Sundays and on Thursdays - it is the prayer of the faithful who fill the pews which gives the church building its soul. During lockdown the lack of prayer being offered regularly noticeably affected the atmosphere - so thank you for returning to the pews and maintaining that constant flow of prayer and worship and may you all have a very **HAPPY AND PEACEFUL CHRISTMAS**

### Derrick Walker - a HUGE THANK YOU . . .

. . . for all you do so quietly and efficiently for St Mary's, especially during the Advent season. For the past couple of weeks as the procession of school rehearsals (and a couple of funerals) have taken place, Derrick has been in church for several hours each day to ensure that everything is working. So much that Derrick does is behind the scenes but we all benefit, not least in coming into a warm church for services and organising the beautiful Christmas tree which all who come into church admire. Included in these thanks we should also recognise Mervyn Roberts who has assisted Derrick in putting up and taking down the staging several times in the past fortnight - not an easy task, especially if you value your fingers! Thank you Merv.

### Church Flowers - Thank you . . .

. . . to Margaret Walker and the team of Flower Arrangers who work so hard to beautify St Mary's Sunday by Sunday and particularly at festival times.

We also thank everyone who responded to the appeal for donations towards the cost of flowers to decorate St Mary's for Christmas. Donations are welcome throughout the year and especially before festivals when we make a special effort to decorate St Mary's appropriately.

As with most things, the cost of cut flowers has risen in recent times so the Flower Fund is still not as healthy as it once was. Why not consider sponsoring flowers for special occasions - an anniversary or thanksgiving for example. Margaret would be happy to discuss options if you are interested in this possibility.

## From the Vicar,

Well I've had an interesting December so far.



It started brilliantly with 200 children from our local schools coming to St Mary's for the 'Experience Christmas' project. The volunteers who met the children in church and talked them through the Christmas story did a brilliant job. The children seemed to take a great deal from the experience.



On the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of December we too had a fabulous All Age service, which if you were there I hope you would agree was lively and exciting – St Mary's was exciting! And I think most people had a lot of fun.

But then, I pushed it too far and caught Omicron and have had to spend 10 days isolating – even this though, whilst boring has given me without doubt the most restful December I have ever had.

I've watched/listened to a fare bit of news during my time of isolation. The Covid emergency, the one we are currently experiencing is the central topic of discussion. A close contender has been the British government's illustration of apparent exemption from morality/reality. One other serious journalistic avenue of enquiry though, doggedly persuade by some journalists has been to ask of governmental representatives 'is the government going to cancel Christmas?' The usual answer is 'No'. But I might have got that wrong – after all what any of them say doesn't necessarily mean it is going to happen.

The idea of cancelling Christmas is an interesting one though. It hasn't happened, if you count last year as not cancelled, since Puritanical times in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Interestingly it was a reaction by those deeply suspicious of the catholic connotations associated with Christ's Masse, observed by papists that caused the idea of banning Christmas to take root. Also, the demonstrative wanton excesses indulged in by those who observed the 'Feast of the Nativity' put the festival for the puritans simply beyond the pale. The Puritans were suspicious of people having too much fun, which caused the grumpy naysayers in authority to legislate against

Christmas. I wonder if Oliver Cromwell and his band of parliamentarians had a Christmas party despite banning it in the country.

This Christmas is looking a little shaky. I'm not sure what yet we will be allowed to do. At St. Mary's we have gone through a risk assessment process, to try and mitigate the risks associated with gathering. I reflect too that we are all getting rather professional at living with this virus now – we know what we all have to do, and broadly we do all do it.

Of course though, Christmas cannot be cancelled – because whilst gathering for beautiful services in church and gathering with family is brilliant, we all know it is not simply only about that. Neither is it simply a capitalist Shangri-La, and that is because it is about God coming into the world and starting a revolution, dangerous and subversive, a revolution dangerous and seditious.

Christmas is all about revolution, the birth of a child who is the Son of God, who didn't come for the rich and the wealthy – they have already had their fill – he came for the marginalised, the prisoner, the poor, those whose futures have been stolen by failing schools, disinterested social structures, legal systems that uphold unjust social divides – monopolists who are cabbage heads

Christmas cannot be cancelled. Jesus was born in poverty, He was persecuted by the powerful, He was scourged and murdered by those in authority to protect the system of government at the time - Jesus did something very special, he created a new morality, a new theology, he served all humanity by freeing them from suppressed thought & regulation, making the Christian a citizen of a New Kingdom, one based on Justice, Freedom and really importantly - Love. Christmas cannot be cancelled.

**Happy Christmas everyone**

**Graham**



## Parish Diary

### Regular Services in Church:

#### Sundays:

8:00am Holy Communion (CW Order 2— Traditional language)

10:00am 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday - All Age Service with Communion

2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays - Parish Communion (CW Order 1)

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday - A Service of the Breaking of Bread (**new**)

6:30pm 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday - Choral Evensong (BCP)

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday - Taizé service (**new**)

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday—Evensong

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday - Prayer and Praise Service (**new**).

5<sup>th</sup> Sunday (when there is one) - Full Choral Evensong

Thursdays: 11:00am Holy Communion (CW Order 2—Traditional language)

Monday to Friday: 9:00am Morning Prayer 5:30pm Evening Prayer

**Online Sunday Services: 10:00am Parish Communion (CW Order 1)**

**See front page for service details from 19<sup>th</sup> December to 2<sup>nd</sup> January**

#### Other events:

#### December

#### Monday 20<sup>th</sup>

2:00pm Funeral of Trevor Lambert Church

7:00pm Choir Practice Church

#### Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup>

9:00am Church Flowers for Christmas Church

#### Friday 31<sup>st</sup>

9:00am Church Flowers Church

#### 2022 - Happy New Year!

#### Monday 3<sup>rd</sup>

7:00pm Choir Practice Church

#### Friday 7<sup>th</sup>

9:00am Church Flowers Church

#### Saturday 8<sup>th</sup>

9:30am Holy Dusters Church