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December 2024



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Georgie Gregson
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A Caring Christian Community, here for everyone

St John's is open every day from 9.30am to 4pm. Please feel welcome to visit us. Warm Space in the Centre Foyer 10am to 2pm, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday during the winter months.

Sunday services are listed on Page 2.

Services during the week:

Morning Prayer Monday to Thursday at 9.00am in Church.

Holy Communion on Wednesdays at 10.30am in the Merrow Hall, St John's Centre.

Evening Prayer on Fridays at 5.00pm in Church.

All are welcome.

December 2024
Sunday Services (Year C)

Sunday 1st December Advent 1, Purple
1 Thessalonians 3.9-end, Luke 21.25-36
8am BCP Holy Communion
10am All Age Worship

Sunday 8th December Advent 2, Purple
Philippians 1.3-11, Luke 3.1-6
8am CW Holy Communion
10.00 CW Parish Communion
6pm Sing a New Song

Sunday 15th December Advent 3, Purple
Philippians 4.4-7, Luke 3.7-18
8am BCP Holy Communion
10am CW Parish Communion

Sunday 22nd December Advent 4, Purple
Hebrews 10.5-10, Luke 1.39-45(46-55)
8am BCP Holy Communion
10am CW Parish Communion

Sunday 29th December 1st Sunday of Christmas, White
Colossians 3.12-17, Luke 2.41-end
10am CW Parish Communion

Sunday 5th January 2nd Sunday of Christmas, White
Ephesians 1.3-14, John 1.[1-9]10- 18
8am BCP Holy Communion
10am All Age Worship

Please note there will be **NO** Wednesday service on 1st January 2025.



St. John the Evangelist
Merrow

CHRISTMAS

ST JOHN'S, MERROW



21 DECEMBER 19:00

CAROLS IN THE PUB - HORSE AND GROOM

22 DEC 16:00

CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE

24 DEC 16:00

CRIB SERVICE WITH DONKEY!

24 DEC 23:00

MIDNIGHT MASS

25 DEC 08:00

BCP COMMUNION

25 DEC 10:00

ALL AGE COMMUNION

29 DEC 10:00

PARISH COMMUNION

4 JAN 16:00

MESSY CHRISTINGLE

Letter from St John's Rectory

December brings with it the closing of the calendar year and with it the chance to look back.

As I sit back and remember the year, I recall all of the Life Events (aka Occasional Offices - baptisms, weddings and funerals) which have taken place in our church building. Moments when we have gathered together as a church community to celebrate a life event of one of our own, like the wedding of Mary Sweetland or the baptism of Albie Moore. Or the times when I have officiated at a life event of a member of our parish who might not have been a regular church goer but who still has the opportunity, and legal right, to be baptised, married or buried at St. John's.

Life events are so important to us all and make up the role of a church. I have to say that the smooth running of our life events here wouldn't happen without the skills of Helen Chambers, who works so tirelessly behind the scenes to make sure that every event goes well. We are all so grateful for her ministry and service and we are so lucky to have her here.

Of course, at the end of December is the great festival of Christmas. Advent is my favourite church season. We are able to look forward with such excitement, perhaps harking back to our childhood Christmas joys, as we journey to the manger. Through the Incarnation (God being made human), God understands what it is to be human and the events that we go through in our lives.

Throughout our own lives we follow the path the Jesus followed - of birth pain and death. We wouldn't have the life-giving joy of Easter without Christmas. So, we gladly celebrate this birth, this great life giving moment in the life of our Lord and Saviour

Wherever you are this Christmas, whichever life events (of joy or sorrow) may come your way, I hope and pray that your Christmas will be filled with the life-giving love of Jesus.

With good wishes,

Tim



From the Registers



Funeral

7th October

Iris Oliver

Thank you very much to Chantries & Pewleys for sponsoring our colour cover again throughout 2024 and to Jane Stevenson for taking the photograph.



Come and join the choir for our Christmas Carol service on Sunday 22nd December at 4pm. All ages and abilities are welcome and it is good opportunity to test your vocal skills and sing carols both old and new. Practices will be at 6pm in the Church Centre on the following dates:

22 nd November	29 th November	6 th December
13 th December	20 th December	in Church before the service

On Saturday 21 December at 7pm Rev. Tim is asking us to join him to sing Christmas carols in the Horse and Groom, I suspect this will be a novel experience for many of us!

When Tim talked about this I thought about the times (at the Carol Service) when we have sung "While Shepherds Watched their Flocks by Night" to the tune of "On Ilkla Moor Baht 'at" - also known as Cranbrook - and the look of surprise on people's faces when they realise what tune they are singing. Some research suggests that "While Shepherds Watched" was the first carol to cross over to the Church of England from the secular, folk tradition.

A survey in December 2023 found that the most popular carol is "Silent Night". It has been translated into hundreds of languages and recorded across all genres. Apparently, there are 137,000 different versions and it is the most recorded "holiday" song!



Wednesday Coffee Club

Guy Fawkes and Halloween are a distant memory and we are now in advent, with Christmas fast approaching (with certain Christmas Music & adverts getting very tiresome) we will have our Christmas party on the 18th December and we hope as many of you can come as possible so we can thank you for supporting us throughout the year. There will be mince pies Sherry and lots of seasonal food as well as a couple of Carols (but no more) it will hopefully get everyone in the mood for Christmas.

We will then have a break and return on Wednesday 8th January 2025

Hoping everyone keeps well and has a very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Gerald Hunt

Should you have any queries, please contact me on my e-mail merrowcoffeemorning@hotmail.com or ring me on 07545256114

Why did the kangaroo stop drinking his coffee?

It made him too jumpy!

Why did it take the bean so long to do its homework?

Because it was procaffeinating!

Why was the coffee-shop worker fired?

He kept showing up in a Tea-shirt!

View from the Pews



No doubt many people saw and appreciated the recent TV series describing Homewards, the initiative started by the Prince of Wales to demonstrate that with the right approach and assistance homelessness in the UK can be ended.

It was so encouraging to hear how many homelessness organisations and others from a range of business sectors have been involved with Homewards in sharing their expertise and experience.

What especially struck me was how their emphasis was very much on prevention - working to intervene in situations before they became hopeless, and someone ended up with nowhere to live.

Of course it is expensive and often very time consuming working to prevent the causes of homelessness -poverty, family breakdowns, mental health issues and addiction, but not when compared to the costs incurred by the NHS and social services in dealing with the fallout when someone is made homeless.

Especially at this time of year we are often bombarded with requests from charities for our support, and it is easy to suffer from donor fatigue when we are overwhelmed by continuous and seemingly relentless appeals for support.

Christmas can be such an expensive time, and we are surrounded by people encouraging us to spend more money than may be necessary on food and presents. We live in an age of rampant consumerism. There is pressure to keep up with 'everyone else'.

Two of the charities that we at St John's are supporting this year, Foodwise and Christians Against Poverty, together with our local food bank and Baby Basics, are very much at the front line of helping those in need in this country and in our own area.

This Christmas, as we remember how blessed we are in so many ways here in Merrow, let us all do whatever we can to support them all, both practically and spiritually - not only by giving what we can, but by remembering them, and all those who they help, in our prayers.

The Oxen

Christmas Eve, and twelve of the clock.
"Now they are all on their knees,"
An elder said as we sat in a flock
By the embers in hearthside ease.

We pictured the meek mild creatures where
They dwelt in strawy pen,
Nor did it occur to one of us there
To doubt they were kneeling then.

So fair a fancy few would weave
In these years! Yet, I feel,
If someone said on Christmas Eve,
"Come; see the oxen kneel,

"In the lonely barton by yonder coomb
Our childhood used to know,"
I should go with him on the gloom,
Hoping it might be so.

Thomas Hardy



From Merrow C of E Infant School

Dear Friends,

I had to close the office door earlier today as the rehearsals for the Nativity plays at school are well underway and whilst the sound of our children singing always gladdens my heart it does not help my concentration as the songs are quite catchy!

So much of what we do at school is outside of the classroom and the formal learning and the last few weeks have been full of such opportunities for the children, opportunities that we hope will enhance their learning, widen their experiences and maybe even spark in them something they will go back to when they are older. Early in November, Michelle Maiden visited school to read the KS1 children her book Grandpa Kuma; the children loved hearing her speak Japanese as Grandpa Kuma and hearing about how you need to be resilient and tenacious if you want to get a book published. We all put on our best 'Ooooooohs and Aaaaahhs' at the Firework display at the Junior site - the children were very excited to tell us about their glow sticks and fudge! Thank you to the PTA and Mr Notley for all their hard work in such a successful community fundraising event.

Perform theatre group took each class of children for an exciting (and quite noisy) adventure into space as part of their Drama4All programme for schools. You may be aware of the new development of houses opposite school including the refurbishment of Tretower House - well some of us were lucky enough to visit the finished site and ask Mr Jelley all sorts of questions about the new houses and even have a look around the 'big house!'. The children were the winners of the site safety poster competition. We were really impressed to see the measures the builders have put in to support the wildlife including a toad tunnel, bat houses, bird boxes and a water drainage system!

Still to come this term - a visit from a Ukulele group to perform for us, a trip to see The Snowman at the High School, and a performance of The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse by the Pied Piper Theatre Group. Not to mention our wonderful school Christmas Fair, Nativity performances by the YR and the KS1 children, a further Open the Book Collective Worship as well as all the general excitement of Christmas preparations in an Infant school.

As we draw to the end of another busy term we thank you for all your support and prayers and wish you all a Merry Christmas and peaceful New Year.

Warm regards, *Emma Hooper*

At Nine of The Night

At nine of the night I opened my door
That stands midway between moor and moor,
And all around me, silver-bright,
I saw that the world had turned to white.

Thick was the snow on field and hedge
And vanished was the river-sedge,
Where winter skilfully had wound
A shining scarf without a sound.

And as I stood and gazed my fill
A stable-boy came down the hill.
With every step I saw him take
Flew at his heel a puff of flake.

His brow was whiter than the hoar,
A beard of freshest snow he wore,
And round about him, snowflake starred,
A red horse-blanket from the yard.

In a red cloak I saw him go,
His back was bent, his step was slow,
And as he laboured through the cold
He seemed a hundred winters old.

I stood and watched the snowy head,
The whiskers white, the cloak of red.
'A Merry Christmas!' I heard him cry.
'The same to you, old friend,' said I.

Charles Causley

Breakfast with the Men-in-Fellowship

Here is a reminder to you men to put Saturday 14th December in your diaries for our next Breakfast Meeting. In addition to the generous choice of cereals, yoghurt, fresh fruit, orange juice, croissants, bacon butties and gallons of tea and coffee, we have on our menu emeritus Bishop Peter Hancock, once of Bath and Wells.

Retired some four years ago, Peter will be giving us his own idiosyncratic view of fulfilling one of the key posts in the Anglican communion in England. Details of how to register will appear soon on the St John's website.

And what's coming up in the Spring of 2025?

- January - another Breakfast meeting scheduled for 18th
- February - a Martin Day led ramble in the Tilford area finishing with lunch in the Barley Mow
- March - we are hoping to take in another Cathedral visit and are looking at the possibility of Chichester

More of these later but put the dates in your 2025 diaries.

The Two R's; Robert Avis and Richard Burtonwood.

Legacy

Past legacies have ranged from a few hundred to thousands of pounds. One from a lifelong worshipper enabled the reordering of the church in 2012.

The North Porch glass doors were gifted in memory of a faithful parishioner. The lectern and the Prayer Wall were partly funded by loving bequests. These benefactors are honoured by having their names recorded on plaques around the church.

If you decide to leave a gift, we will make sure it is honoured in a suitable way if you so desire. Please consider leaving a legacy to St John's in your will. Thank you.

GARDENING HINTS

I wish you all a Happy Christmas, however we are allowed to celebrate it, and a successful year in your garden in 2025

John Boon.

Gardening hints for December.

Tulip bulbs should be planted by the end of the month.

October sown Sweet Peas should be pinched out after the second or third pair of leaves have formed.

There is still time to cut perennials which have finished flowering but be careful to leave Hardy Fuchsias, Peonies and Hydrangeas as they will benefit from the stems being left to protect the plant through the winter.

Bare root Roses can still be planted if the soil is not waterlogged, collect the fallen leaves of Roses which have been attacked by Black Spot and dispose of them to prevent the disease from spreading.

Lightly trim Heathers which have finished flowering to encourage bushy growth.

If you are growing bulbs indoors the pots should be turned frequently to ensure even growth.

Poinsettias, which are now available in many different colours are popular at this time of the year, they prefer a warm, light position away from draughts. Like all houseplants they are easily killed by over watering.

Regularly water indoor Azaleas with rainwater to prevent the dense root ball from drying out. Reduce the watering of houseplants, as winter light levels begin to fall they should be placed in a bright place, do not leave them overnight in the cold between closed curtains and the window, particularly on frosty nights.

Clear the vegetable plot of plant debris left over from summer produce, then dig the ground over to open it up so that any bugs and diseases are killed by the winter frost.

Rhubarb can be forced by covering the crowns with a dark bucket.

Most deciduous trees and shrubs can now be cut back but leave all types of flowering Cherry until they are in full again, Magnolias should not be pruned until the Summer.

Continue to remove fallen leaves from the lawn and on mild days the grass can be mown with the mower blades set on a high cut. Keep off the grass when it is frosty or very wet.

Insulate garden taps and exposed pipe work against extremely cold weather.

John Boon



Decorating the Church for Christmas

At 3pm on Sunday 8th December there will be a Christmas Tree Decorating Service in Church – the boxes of decorations are ready to go!

On Saturday 21st December from 9am to 12 noon the Church flower arranging team will be playing their part in decorating the Church for Christmas. We would like to extend an invitation to anyone who would like to come along and “have a go” and previous experience is not essential! Styles of flower arranging change over the years, and there is opportunity and scope to craft more naturalistic arrangements, and for Christmas dried and artificial materials are definitely allowed. This year we will be working on a red and gold colour scheme and there will be materials available for people to use.

Refreshments will be on offer during the morning so even if decorating the Church is not in your skill set you will be most welcome to join us for coffee!

Helen Chambers

01483 846574

The Christmas Rose

What is the flower that blooms each year
In flowerless days,
Making a little blaze
On the bleak earth, giving my heart some cheer?

Harsh the sky and hard the ground
When the Christmas rose is found.
Look! its white star, low on earth,
Rays a vision of rebirth.

Who is the child that's born each year —
His bedding, straw:
His grace, enough to thaw
My wintering life, and melt a world's despair?

Harsh the sky and hard the earth
When the Christmas child comes forth.
Look! around a stable throne
Beasts and wise men are at one.

What men are we that, year on year,
We Herod-wise
In our cold wits devise
A death of innocents, a rule of fear?

Hushed your earth, full-starred your sky
For a new nativity:
Be born in us, relieve our plight,
Christmas child, you rose of light!

Cecil Day-Lewis

ONE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF THE AUTUMN BUDGET.

One of the charities we support, Christians Against Poverty has commented on the Autumn Budget, welcoming the positives but looking to where more needs to be done to address poverty in the UK. CAP noted that disposable incomes are no higher in October 2024 than in 2019. It's the poorest third of people who suffer the greatest proportionate fall in living standards. CAP was hoping to see:

Liveable incomes (wages). CAP looked for a clearer Government commitment to ensure the legal minimum wage becomes more like a real living wage reflecting the true cost of living. CAP welcomed:

- Acceptance of the Low Pay Commission's recommendation to increase the National Minimum Wage for 18–20 year olds bringing it closer to the National Living Wage.
- Some support to help people into work by committing not to increase employee National Insurance and income tax, and to end the freeze on personal tax thresholds in 2028. This means people will get to keep more of the money they earn.

CAP still look to the linking of the National Minimum Wage to the true cost of living.

Social security. CAP wanted the Government to acknowledge that social security rates are not high enough to cover the costs of essentials. CAP welcomed:

- The commitment to increase working age benefits by the current CPI rate, giving a small 1.7% increase in income.
- Raising the earnings limit for carer's allowance to equal 16 hours of the National Minimum Wage. Thus, more can be earned before losing entitlement to benefit.
- Reducing the maximum deduction from Universal Credit from 25% to 15%. Those with debt deductions thus keep more of their benefit entitlement.

CAP is still looking for:

- A commitment to review the approach to this in future particularly to reduce the significant time lag between the decision and implementation

- A consideration of other benefit-related changes which would make a big impact, such as removing the 2 child limit or increasing the benefit cap (increased only once in 8 years)

Escalating living costs. CAP wants the Government to provide support for those struggling with escalating costs and therefore building up unmanageable debt. CAP welcomed:

- Reference to extending the Household Support Fund for a further year from April 2025. This includes Discretionary Housing Payments, key to local councils helping those who cannot afford their rent for a variety of reasons.
 - A one year extension of the bus fare cap even with a rise to £3.
- CAP is still looking for help for energy costs, either over winter or as a more general Help to Repay scheme.

To address poverty in the longer-term CAP welcomed the funding committed to alleviate homelessness and the increased funding for the provision of breakfast clubs to enable all children to have a nutritious start to the day. But they would have liked additional support for projects more directly affecting debt, like increased funding for debt advice or new legislative powers for the Enforcement Conduct Board to stop negative practices in debt collection.

CAP would also look for more details on the Work Capability Assessment review and possible changes, which may seriously affect lots of disabled people.

In summary CAP welcome those policy announcements made in the Autumn Budget. But, a dire situation still faces many whose incomes are insufficient to cover the costs of essentials. More needs to be done to provide support for people in financial difficulty and to tackle poverty in all its forms.

(Edited by RAA)

From the North Guildford Food Bank



The following is an extract from a mail sent to Jane Farquharson. If you would like to read the full mail with statistics, please contact Jane.

Hi Jane

We are only able to support so many people in need in the community with the generous and faithful support of our donors. Thank you to each of you who have donated so generously.

We have never had to make a Christmas appeal in the past. This year we have seen demand for food parcels increase by nearly 30% and have had to spend from our reserves to keep providing our clients with the same level of service. Therefore, we feel that now is the time to ask for some additional support from our community.

We know we will be busy

We are approaching what we know to be the busiest time of year for food banks. Last December, demand increased by 50% on 2022. If demand continues at current levels for 2024, we will expect to distribute around 400 food parcels. To put this into perspective, a "normal month" is around 150 parcels.

- 1 Financial donation** - we buy around 60% of the products (including fresh produce) needed to make up our food parcels. We try to find the most cost effective options possible, to support our clients the best we can.
- 2 Produce collection** - 40% of our parcels are made up from generous donations from the local community

- 3 Specific donations - Tesco vouchers** - Each December, we want our food bank clients to have some food shopping choice, in addition to their food parcel. We give a Tesco voucher, of either £30 or £50, depending on the size of the household. This has been extremely well received, with often, quite emotional responses.
- 4 Specific donations - Fuel support** - We partner with The Fuel Bank Foundation, to provide fuel vouchers to our clients who are on prepayment meters. The Fuel Bank Foundation does not currently ask for a financial contribution from us for this work.

Thank you so much for the time you have taken to read this email. Every donation, from a tin of soup to larger financial donations mean so much to us, our clients and volunteers. Thank you so much for your support to date and I look forward to updating you in the new year with news from December 2024.

Very best wishes and a Happy Christmas (when you get there!)

Jessica

Food Bank Collection for Christmas

The following is a list of the items the Food Bank are in real need of – ideally to be in Church by **8th December**:

- Christmas Biscuits (sharing tins/boxes)
- Laundry detergent
- Shampoo / Conditioner
- Sharing chocolates/sweets
- Instant Coffee
- Spreads - Jam/chocolate/marmite/peanut butter etc.

Continuing the Christmas celebrations...

St John's Messy Christingle

A stylized Christingle, which is a round orange with a red band around its middle, decorated with small orange and red items. It is positioned in the center, overlapping the word 'Christingle' in the main title.

Saturday 4th January at 16:00 in Church

An interactive service for everyone!
Followed by tea, coffee and biscuits.

Supporting the work of
the Children's Society



St. John the Evangelist
Church



CHRISTMAS

STORY

CROSSWORD

by Marsha R. Chudy

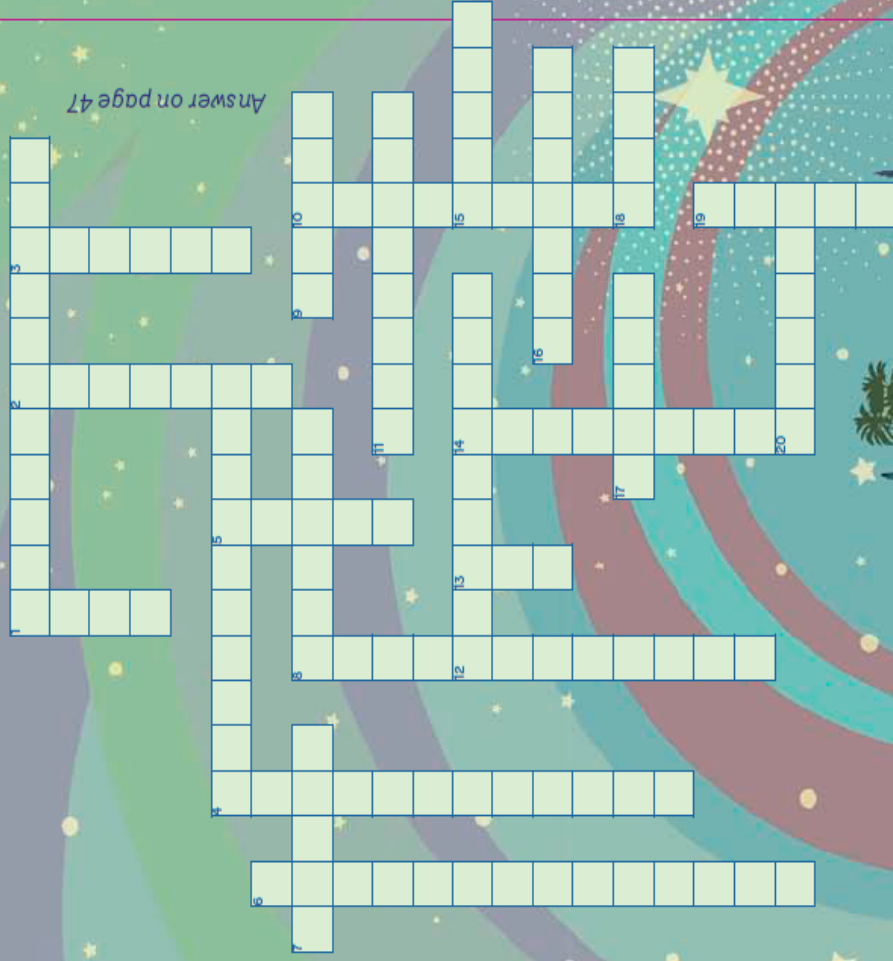
How much do you know about Jesus' birth? If you get stuck, check out the clues in your Bible.

ACROSS:

1. *Emmanuel* means ____ (4 words). (Matthew 1:23)
4. The angel called Mary ____ (2 words). (Luke 1:28)
7. Joseph had a ____ about marrying Mary. (Matthew 1:20)
8. After they finished praising God, the angels went into _____. (Luke 2:15)
9. The visitors who brought gifts came from the _____. (Matthew 2:1)
11. The angel brought ____ (2 words) to the men in the fields. (Luke 2:10)
12. Mary visited her relative named _____. (Luke 1:36, 40)
15. ____ was the king when Jesus was born. (Matthew 2:1)
16. An angel named ____ appeared to Mary. (Luke 1:26)
17. Mary wrapped Jesus in bands of _____. (Luke 2:7)
18. The visitors followed a ____ to find out where Jesus was. (Matthew 2:9)
20. Mary used a ____ for Jesus' bed. (Luke 2:7)

DOWN

1. ____ was one of the gifts given to Jesus. (Matthew 2:11)
2. The ____ (2 words) travelled a long distance to see Jesus. (Matthew 2:1)
3. They came to pay ____ to Jesus. (Matthew 2:2)
4. ____ was another gift given to Jesus. (Matthew 2:11)
5. Jesus was born in the City of _____. (Luke 2:11)
6. The visitors brought their gifts in ____ (2 words). (Matthew 2:11)
8. The ____ (2 words) appeared to the men in the fields. (Luke 2:13)
10. The men living in the fields were _____. (Luke 2:8)
13. There was no room for Jesus and Mary and Joseph in the _____. (Luke 2:7)
14. Another name for the city in #5 DOWN is _____. (Luke 2:15)
19. The men also gave Jesus ____ as a gift. (Matthew 2:11)



Answer on page 47



CHRISTMAS NIBBLES

Stilton and Toasted Walnut Balls

Ingredients

- knob of butter
- 200g/7oz stilton, crumbled, at room temperature
- 50g/2oz unsalted butter, softened
- 1 tbsp green peppercorns
- 50g/2oz walnut halves
- 1 tbsp port
- 1 tbsp flatleaf parsley

Method

1. Heat a knob of butter in a frying pan and fry the walnut halves for 1-2 minutes until they are just toasted. Allow to cool and then blend in a food processor until finely chopped.
2. Roughly mash the Stilton and butter together in a bowl. Mash in the port and peppercorns, then chill in the fridge for at least three hours but preferably overnight.
3. Mix the parsley into the chopped nuts and place into a small bowl.
4. Roll teaspoonfuls of the mixture into small balls, then dip them into chopped nuts until evenly coated. Place onto a tray lined with baking paper and chill in the fridge until ready to serve.
5. To serve, pop a cocktail stick into each one and pile onto a plate.

Parmesan Biscuits

Ingredients

- 125g/4½oz chilled butter, cubed
- 25g/1oz freshly grated parmesan (or vegetarian alternative)
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 125g/4½oz plain flour
- pinch cayenne pepper

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 180C/160C Fan Gas 4.
2. Rub the butter into the flour, by hand or in a food processor, until the mixture looks like fine breadcrumbs.
3. Stir in the parmesan, seasoning and cayenne pepper.
4. Work the mixture together into a ball and then knead briefly on a work surface lightly dusted with flour until smooth.
5. Cut the dough in half, flatten each piece slightly, then roll out thinly between 2 large sheets of cling film.
6. Lift off the top piece of cling film and cut into 5cm/2in biscuits.
7. Carefully lift them onto a lightly buttered baking sheet, then knead together and re-roll the trimmings to make more biscuits. You should make about 30 biscuits in total.
8. Bake the biscuits for 8-10 minutes until crisp and golden. Leave to cool on the baking sheets. Store in an airtight tin.



GUILDFORD
CATHEDRAL

*About **our** Cathedral.....*

A shy person's guide. After you've deliberately hung back and watched the congregation enter you can go quickly into the high, wide Nave. Before the Service walk fast along the North or the South Aisle until you spot a vacant chair. If you have to cross the Crossing from one Aisle to the other, and you'll be in full view of **everyone** if you do, look out for the brass Stag in the floor: it marks the top of Cathedral hill. Then choose where to sit: near the front, unlikely, on one side or the other or at the very back, perfect. Settle into your seat making yourself as small as possible. There's a hymn book in the slot in the chair back in front of you or you might have to share with a perfect stranger. If you know the Hymn you can mime and if you join in with the prayers you'll want to say them silently but you'll be humbled and inspired whatever you do. At the end of the Service take a moment for contemplation but don't sit for too long; church people have a habit of welcoming strangers. You might then want to explore and if you're next to the South Aisle walk forward hugging the wall and avoiding eye contact as most people are going the other way. You'll pass the Children's Chapel. It's quiet and peaceful but you won't want to intrude. Then there's St. Ursula's Porch but don't leave yet though it's tempting, turn left and you'll pass the Lady Chapel where you can enter a haven of peace. It's likely to be empty and the silence is a wonder to experience. Stay there and most people will be gone by the time you emerge and you'll have the Cathedral to yourself. Leave the Chapel, turn right and enter the North Aisle. You might meet a clergy person on your way – do try and say **something** even if it's only "hello". Or just smile and if you blush, well, so be it but please don't avoid eye contact by studying your feet as you hurry by. Then you'll pass the Diocese map, the Treasury (usually deserted) and the Royal Surrey Regiment Chapel. Now you're on the home stretch but take a moment to look at the stained glass. Then as you approach the exit you might see a guide but look away and you can quickly sneak by and make your escape.

A "Festive" Quiz

- 1 Whose first full episode playing the Doctor in *Doctor Who* was screened on Christmas Day 1985?
- 2 In charades, what word is signified by putting two fingers into a T shape?
- 3 Which church in Bethlehem is built over the traditional site of Jesus' birth?
- 4 *Last Christmas* was a 1984 hit for which duo?
- 5 Which poet wrote *A Child's Christmas in Wales*, published in 1952?
- 6 Which alcoholic beverage is mixed with lemonade to make a snowball cocktail?
- 7 In which pantomime does the title character sell the family cow in exchange for five magic beans?
- 8 In 1992's *Home Alone 2: Lost in New York* which future US president does Kevin run into in the hotel lobby?
- 9 Who starred as criminal psychologist Dr Edward "Fitz" Fitzgerald in the television drama *Cracker*?
- 10 Which Jewish candelabrum has nine branches in the version used at Hanukkah?
- 11 Which saint is said to have created the first nativity scene at Greccio in Italy?
- 12 Which artist painted two versions of *The Virgin of the Rocks*, one owned by the Louvre and one by the National Gallery Scotland?
- 13 "The playing of the merry organ" is a line from which Christmas carol?
- 14 In a book published in 1960, which detective solved the *Adventure of the Christmas Pudding*?
- 15 *Dude, Where's My Donkey?* Was the third instalment of which film franchise?
- 16 According to 1 Corinthians, which is the greatest out of faith, hope and charity?
- 17 Who resigned as president of the Soviet Union on December 25, 1991?
- 18 George Ferrers, during the reign of Edward VI, was the last man to be royally appointed to which medieval post?

Answers in the January magazine!

Future Dates for your Diary

Saturday 4th January Messy Christingle at 4pm in Church

Wednesday 8th January Coffee Club resumes

Saturday 11th January Woman in Fellowship breakfast and talk

Saturday 18th January Men in Fellowship breakfast meeting

Saturday 8th February St. John's Barn Dance – get your dancing shoes ready and practice your dosi-does

How did the reindeer learn to play the piano?

He was elf-taught

Why are mummies such big fans of Christmas?

Because they enjoy the wrapping

What is green, covered in Christmas lights and Christmas bulbs, and goes ribbit?

A mistle-toad

How did Joseph and Mary weigh baby Jesus at birth?

They had a weigh in the manger

Elves use what kind of money?

Jingle bills

What happened to the man who stole an Advent Calendar?

He got 25 days

What is every parent's favourite carol?

Silent Night

The Friends of St John the Evangelist (FOSTJ)



The Friends of St John the Evangelist is a registered charity formed by members of the community of Merrow to assist in maintaining and preserving the buildings and grounds of the magnificent Grade II listed Church.

If you would like to help in our endeavours in any way and keep up with our news, please visit www.fostj.org. We would love you to become a member.

At the time of going to print we can confirm that about £1,300.00 was raised at our very successful quiz night in November – a big thank you to all who supported this event.

There is still time to buy your tickets for our Christmas Wine Tasting Extravaganza on 6th December from 6.00 to 10.30 pm at St. John's Centre. Tickets are £16.00 from:

<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/fostj/1393110>

Forthcoming magazine information

Issue	Copy date	Editor	Editor's email address
January	15 th Dec	Chris Starr	chrisstarr10@btinternet.com
February	12 th Jan	Frances Jewson	frances.jewson@ntlworld.com
March	9 th Feb	Helen Chambers	hmchambers@virginmedia.com

(If you draft your copy in Tahoma, 16 point, on an A4 page, you'll get a good idea of how much space it will take up.)

Who's Who

Rector	The Revd Tim Clifford Hill (Day off Friday and Sat am)	951649
Youth Worker	Georgie Gregson (Days off Friday & Saturday)	07974 494504
Churchwardens	Jane Farquharson	07765 620017
	Cathy Thompson	07518 202920
Deputy Churchwarden Verger	Michael Eagle	07850 000224
	Helen Chambers	846574
St Johns Centre Office	9.00 – 2 Mon, Wed and Fri 9.30 – 1 Tues and Thurs	01483 454621
- Centre Manager	Barry Dickinson	centremanager@saintjohns.org.uk
- Parish Admin Assistant	Sandra Rayner	office@saintjohns.org.uk

Web site: www.saintjohns.org.uk

Email: office@saintjohns.org.uk

PCC Secretary	Tricia Tappin	579193
PCC Treasurer	Lindsay Dobson	07809 836896
Gift Aid, Legacies and Parish Giving Scheme	Martin Thompson	578923
Organist and Choir Director	Micky Clare	538306
Babies and Toddlers Group	Jane Farquharson	07765 620017
Baby Basics	babybasics@saintjohns.org.uk	458128
Bell Ringers	Jane Farquharson	07765 620017
Bible Reading Fellowship	Jenny Welbourn	825541
Cathedral Link	Nick Bond	579462
Children's Society representative	Judith Sampson	571847
Christian Aid Organiser	Sara England	504205
Electoral Roll	Carole Burtonwood	
	carole.burtonwood@saintjohns.org.uk	
Flower coordinator	Helen Chambers	846574
Magazine Advertisements	Sara England	merrowadverts@gmail.com
Merrow C of E Infant School	Louisa Dormer (Executive Head Teacher)	
	Emma Hooper (Deputy Head)	561501
Church Governors		
Safeguarding Officer St John's Merrow, Pre-School Diocesan Lay Pastoral Assistant	Michael Eagle	07850 000224
	Rosanne Bond	579462
	Amanda Bazley (Manager)	454625
	Helen Chambers	846574
Readings and Intercessions Rota	Joe Bullock	07521 960480
Sunday Newssheet		office@saintjohns.org.uk
TiC and Lay Parish representative	Isla Stables	567599
Wednesday Coffee Mornings	Gerald Hunt	07545 256114
Transport	Rosanne Bond	579462
Website contact	Parish Office (as above)	

For any changes to Who's Who, please email Sara on merrowadverts@gmail.com

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