



NEWSLETTER

Sunday 8th December - Second Sunday after Advent

8am Holy Communion - Church

10am Parish Communion - Church (Livestreamed)

followed by coffee in Church

10am Sparks 5-11s - Church

3pm Church Children Christmas Tree Decorating - Church

Monday 9th December

9.15am Glow Toddlers - Centre

Wednesday 11th December

10.15am Wednesday Coffee Club - Centre

10.30am Holy Communion Service - Centre

5pm Youth Café - Centre

Thursday 12th December

3.45pm to 4.30pm Choristars - Church

Friday 13th December

6pm Choir Practice - Centre

Saturday 14th December

8.30am M-i-F breakfast - Centre

Sunday 15th December - Third Sunday of Advent

8am Holy Communion - Church

10am Parish Communion - Church (Livestreamed)

(Please take this news sheet home with you)

Regular Calendar Events

(in the Centre unless mentioned otherwise)

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| Sundays | 8am Holy Communion - Church 10am Parish Communion - Church |
| Mondays | 9.15am Glow Toddlers - Centre |
| Wednesdays | 10.15am Wednesday Coffee Club - Centre 10.30am Holy Communion Service - Centre 5pm Youth Café - Centre |
| Thursdays | 3.45pm to 4.30pm Choristars - Church |
| Fridays | 6pm Choir Practice - Centre |

Other Calendar Events

(in the Centre unless mentioned otherwise)

December

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Tues 17 th Dec | Green Team 4.30pm |
| Sat 21 st Dec | Carols in the Pub - Horse and Groom at 7pm |
| Sun 22 nd Dec | Sparks 5-11s group - during 10am service in church |
| Sun 22 nd Dec | Christmas Carol Service 4pm in church |
| Tues 24 th Dec | Crib Service 4pm in church |
| Tues 24 th Dec | Midnight Mass 11pm in church |
| Wed 25 th Dec | Communion at 8am in church |
| Wed 25 th Dec | All Age Communion at 10am in church |
| Sun 29 th Dec | Parish Communion at 10am in church |

January

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|---------------------------|---|
| Sat 4 th Jan | Messy Christingle Service 4pm in church |
| Tues 14 th Jan | Green Team 4.30pm |

February

| | |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Sat 8 th Feb | Barn Dance 7pm |
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Hymns

- 36 Hark! The glad sound the saviour comes
51 The Lord will come and not be slow
38 Hark! A thrilling voice
75 Long ago prophets knew

Collect

O Lord, raise up, we pray, your power
and come among us,
and with great might succour us;
that whereas, through our sins and wickedness
we are grievously hindered
in running the race that is set before us,
your bountiful grace and mercy
may speedily help and deliver us;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit,
be honour and glory, now and for ever.
or
Almighty God,
purify our hearts and minds,
that when your Son Jesus Christ comes again as judge and
saviour
we may be ready to receive him,
who is our Lord and our God.

Reading

Philippians 1.3-11

I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now.

I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that on the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

Gospel

Luke 3.1-6

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness.

He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

'The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

"Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

Every valley shall be filled,

and every mountain and hill shall be made low,

and the crooked shall be made straight,

and the rough ways made smooth;

and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

Readings next week:

Philippians 4.4-7

Luke 3.7-18

Post Communion

Father in heaven,

who sent your Son to redeem the world

and will send him again to be our judge:

give us grace so to imitate him in the humility and purity of his first coming

that, when he comes again,

we may be ready to greet him

with joyful love and firm faith;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS THIS WEEK

Sick or in need

Dick Pyper, Baby Edward, Carol Jeffreys, Barbara Lawrence

The departed

David Holdway, Tony Cousins

Coffee after Sunday 10am service - will be served in church on the 8th December.

ST JOHN'S NEWS

Year of Discipleship and Vocation

Advent brings with it the start of a new church year. This year we will be focussing on Discipleship and Vocation. We will be hearing from some members of our own congregation who will be sharing their faith story and we will have a visiting preacher from the Guildford Diocese Discipleship and Vocation team. Dr. John Valentine was due to visit us this Sunday, but unfortunately can no longer make it. John runs the dioceses own ordination course (called the Local Ministry Programme). Claire Oxborough who is an Ordinand in Training on the course will be joining us this Sunday. Please give her a warm Merrow welcome! *Tim*

Mince Pies for the Christmas Carol Service - 22nd December

We will be serving mince pies and mulled wine after the Carol Service on the 22nd December. As one of the most popular services of the year we will need many mince pies. If you could donate some - homemade or shop bought it would be greatly appreciated.

Please can they be brought to the morning service and left in the kitchen or choir vestry. Many Thanks, Jane Farquarson.

CHRISTMAS GIFTS from St John's

Once again you have all been so generous. Thank you so much! I will be at church at the end of each Sunday service on the 8th December, hoping that some of you can help with delivering cards and/or gifts. Many thanks, Rosanne

Christmas greeting from the Bell Ringers

The Bell Ringing team would like to send Christmas greetings from the tower!

We wish you all a Happy Christmas and hope that the new year brings health and happiness to all.

Men-in-Fellowship Breakfast - Saturday 14th December 8.30am

Our next M-i-F Breakfast Meeting will see us welcome emeritus Bishop Peter Hancock, once of Bath and Wells, to St. John's. Having retired a few years ago, Peter will be giving us his own idiosyncratic view of fulfilling one of the key posts in the Anglican communion in England. This promises to be a most interesting "behind the scenes" talk from Bishop Peter and we hope you can join us.

Capacity is limited, so please book using the link shown on your personal invitation (emailed to all members recently) alternatively contact Robert or Richard.

Saturday 14th December from 8.30am until 10.30am approx.

Venue: St. John's Centre,

Cost: suggested donation to cover the breakfast of £5 per head

We hope you can join us and look forward to welcoming you to the event.

Choir during Communion - 15th December 10am

On one Sunday in each month, we ask members of our congregation to gather in a choir of singers, to sing a hymn during communion. This choir consists of members of our church choir and anyone else who wishes to join in! If you wish to sing, please arrive at church at 9.15am on Sunday for a run-through if you can. Contact Micky or Tim for more information.
15th December: 37 Hark what a sound and too divine for hearing
19th January: 448 I come with joy a child of God

Choir Practice

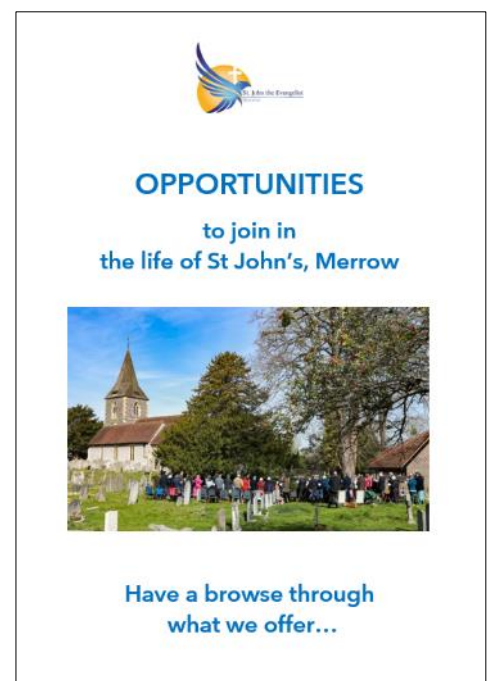
Christmas Carol Service Choir Practice will continue every Friday at 6pm through to 20th December.

Christmas Carol Service - Sunday 22nd December at 4pm

Come along with your family and friends, join us for our Christmas Carol Service. Mulled wine and mince pies will be served after the service

NEW UPDATED Opportunities Booklet available now!!

Have you ever wondered what opportunities there are to get involved in your local St John's Church community? You might be interested to find out about our social events or other opportunities to get involved. In this booklet, you will find an A to Z of all the opportunities we can offer you (just like you pick up an A-to-Z guide in a hotel room, which explains what's available!). Once you've had a browse through, if there is something that you are interested in, ring or email the contact for that activity to find out more. And please don't feel that you have to be committed to join in something on a regular basis. Many of our activities only run every few weeks/months and rotas are the same! We just would like you to be able to find something you might like to do, to join in the life of St John's, Merrow.



Pastoral Care

Pastoral Care in a church should be something we all share, even if some people take a lead on it through training and their personal gifts. We have a vision of Christ-centred pastoral care as a major element of the life of any church, along with worship and teaching. At St. John's, the whole church family aims to care for each other. If you know anyone who would like to be visited (at home or in hospital) or receive communion at home, please let Tim know.

Online Shopping - We would be grateful for your help in raising money for St. John's when you shop online. Follow this link to sign up and join many others at St. John's who already kindly contribute. <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/how-it-works/>

Warm Space

A 'Warm Space' is available on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings between 10am and 2pm.

This Newsletter - content

If you have anything to advertise, or news from the Church family or community for this newsletter, please email office@saintjohns.org.uk by Tuesday each week.

COMMUNITY NEWS

St John's Pre-School Merrow are looking for staff (Permanent or bank)

St John's Pre-school located at our Church Centre weekday mornings 9:30-12:30 (term-time only). They are currently looking for people with level 2 or 3 in Children's Care Learning and Education or equivalent. If you are interested, please contact Amanda Bazley on 01483 454625 or email on amanda.bazley@saintjohnspreschool.org.uk



Food Bank

The food bank would greatly appreciate donations of

- Pasta/Curry Sauce
- Fruit Squash
- Cereal
- Tinned Custard
- Long Life Pudding (Angel Delight, Jelly, Sponges)



Additional Christmas Items of

- Gift Toiletries
- Christmas Biscuits (sharing tins/boxes)
- Sharing chocolates/sweets
- Instant Coffee
- Spreads - Jam/chocolate/marmite/peanut butter etc

Please put donations in the boxes in the Church Centre, thank you. The QR code can be used for monetary donations to the food bank.

Baby Basics

*** NEW DONATION POINT - PLEASE NOTE ***

The new donation point is outside the Church Centre to the left of the main door.

This donation point will be open, Monday - Friday 9am - 1pm and Saturdays (term time only) 12pm - 3pm

Please refer to our baby basics website/Facebook page for a list of items that we accept. Please refrain from leaving other items as space is limited. Prams or pushchairs that are suitable from birth can be accepted, but by prior appointment only.

For more information email babybasics@saintjohns.org.uk, or if you would like to contribute financially to the work we do please visit www.saintjohns.org.uk/babybasics. Thank you.

Hygiene Bank - Thank you!

With 4.2 million people in the UK unable to afford hygiene basics, they are having to make difficult choices between buying food or hygiene basics like toothpaste or washing up liquid.

Your kindness can be life-changing - our stories show just how much your support and gifts are making a difference to individuals and families each and every day.

Thank you for your support and for helping make this festive season a little brighter for those in need.

If you wish to make a donation our Hygiene Bank donation box can be found in the Church Centre next to the office window.

CONTACTS

Parish Office

Please note the following Parish Office opening times:

Barry: Tues to Fri (9.30am to 1pm)

Sandra: Mon, Wed, Fri (9am to 1pm)

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| Rector: Rev. Tim Clifford Hill (days off: whole Fri, & Sat am) | rector@saintjohns.org.uk 01483 951649 |
| Youth worker: Georgie Gregson (days off: Fri & Sat) | youthworker@saintjohns.org.uk 07974 494504 |
| Parish Administrator: Sandra Rayner | office@saintjohns.org.uk 01483 454621 |
| Centre Manager: Barry Dickinson | centremanager@saintjohns.org.uk 01483 454621 |
| Churchwarden: Jane Farquharson | jane.farquharson@saintjohns.org.uk 07765 620017 |
| Churchwarden: Cathy Thompson | cathy.thompson@saintjohns.org.uk 07518 202920 |
| Deputy Churchwarden: Michael Eagle | michael.eagle@saintjohns.org.uk 07850 000224 |
| Treasurer: Lindsay Dobson | treasurer@saintjohns.org.uk 07809 836896 |
| Safeguarding Officer: Rosanne Bond | safeguardingstjohn@gmail.com 01483 579462 |
| Organist & Choir Director: Micky Clare | mickyclare2@icloud.com 01483 538306 |
| Coffee Club: Gerald Hunt | merrowcoffeemorning@hotmail.com 07545 256114 |