

St John the Evangelist

2nd Sunday of Advent

Signpost Weekly

9th December

Dear Friends,

Fancy popping into Weatherspoons on Thursday at 4pm? Local Churches are getting together to offer a Christmas message. There are lots of these events going on, as we seek to share a message of love in our towns and villages. It's good to share in these things and to support each other. Do pick up a leaflet today that tells you about the many church activities in our area, and use the leaflet as a source of prayer during Advent. Please also pray for all of our local schools and for clergy and ministry teams going in to share the Christmas Message. Churchfield School will be with us on 21st December.

Rev Preb Sharon

PS – Great effort last weekend – well done everyone!!



God with us

Well, we are into the frantic pressie-buying month of December now. The American 'Black Friday' tradition appears to be firmly a part of our own pattern and has brought the search for the perfect Christmas present yet earlier in our calendar. Parish and school Christmas Fayres offer us home-made, Fairtrade, recycled and singular alternatives. And increasingly the inequalities within our economy become more apparent as people risk debt to bring a smile to their child's face.

When I was a parish priest, we found that many of our single parents felt trapped by the pressure of keeping up with those around them. We tried to introduce a maximum spend for all our congregational and family present buying in order to bring some parity. It wasn't easy!

I'm reminded at this time of year of the line that we are seeing more frequently, accompanying invitations to weddings and Birthday parties: **'No presents required, just your presence!'**

It makes me think about what Christmas really means. During this time of preparation and waiting for the big day to arrive, many of us will sing the words of that Advent hymn, 'O come, O come, Emmanuel', a 12th century hymn that invites God to fulfil his prophecy to his people. Will we really take in those words?

'Emmanuel' means 'God with us', such an important and comforting phrase in these times of uncertainty and anxiety, as we wonder what the new year will bring.

Christmas, we know is a time when people can feel lonely, disappointed, stressed. There are reputedly more suicides and marriage breakdowns during the course of this holiday period. One of the best Christmas presents we can offer then must surely be that of hospitality, a listening ear and simply our 'presence' among those who feel forgotten, rejected or overlooked.

In so doing we will find God's own present to us this Christmas, as in any and all other Christmases, His presence. The God to whom "every animal of the forest and the cattle on a thousand hills, belongs" (Psalm 50) has given us the best present of all - **He is with us.**

The Right Reverend Ruth Worsley

Bishop of Taunton



COLLECTS AND READINGS

9th December: 2nd Sunday of Advent Readings: **Malachi 3.1-4; Philippians 1.3-11; Luke 3.1-6**

Collect: 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.

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.

16th December: 3rd Sunday of Advent Readings: **Zephaniah 3.14-end; 1 Philippians 4.4-7; Luke 3.7-18**

Collect: God for whom we watch and wait, you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way of your Son: give us courage to speak the truth, to hunger for justice, and to suffer for the cause of right, with Jesus Christ our Lord.

Post Communion: We give you thanks, O Lord, for these heavenly gifts; kindle in us the fire of your Spirit that when your Christ comes again we may shine as lights before his face; who is alive and reigns now and for ever.

Our Pastoral Prayers



To include somebody on this prayer list please let Shirley in the office know by lunchtime on Thursday, making sure the person you wish to be included wants their name in print.

Baptisms: We pray for parents, godparents and those preparing to be baptised.

Those in need of our prayers:

Margaret Moyle, Hazel, Betty Montgomery, Stevie, Betty Player, Christine Marston, Val & George Crawford

For those who have died: We pray for those who have recently died and their loved ones who grieve their loss.

Vera Hatfield, Margaret Edwards

Those whose anniversary falls this week:

Noel Furze, Eileen Dennien, Sandra Pescaglini, Paul Plume

PRAYER FOCUS

Sunday:

Many of our churches hold special community events during advent. Let us pray for each other in this time of outreach and support

Monday:

For local businesses

Tuesday:

For the Toddler Christmas Service

Wednesday:

Pray for those in positions of leadership in local and national government.

Thursday:

The ecumenical event in Weatherspoons Pub

Friday:

For the Friendship Club Christmas Service

Saturday:

Pray for the gentlemen of the parish gathering to share in breakfast and fellowship



Would you like to offer some prayer suggestions?



Carol Service next week

Are you able to help out with welcoming or refreshments for our Carol service on **Sunday 16th December at 5pm?**

YES?.....then please get in touch with Shirley as soon as possible.

ADVANCE NOTICE

The last Weekly Update of 2018 will be on 23rd December and this will take us through to 6th January. Please let Shirley know by 19th December of any events you would like added. The office will be closed between Christmas & New Year (from 21st Dec until 2nd Jan).

THANK YOU....

...for your support at the Christmas Fair, which raised £584, along with much good cheer & fellowship!



The Christingle service was also enjoyed and well supported by our community, who were very generous in their donations, totalling £165 for the Children's Society.

On your own this Christmas?



Community Christmas

If you, or anyone you know, fancy having Christmas lunch and fellowship with others for a couple of hours on 25th December from 12-2.30pm, do get in touch with:

Marion Hance 792082
Carolanne Palmer 786277
Linda Barratt 788068

You will be very welcome!

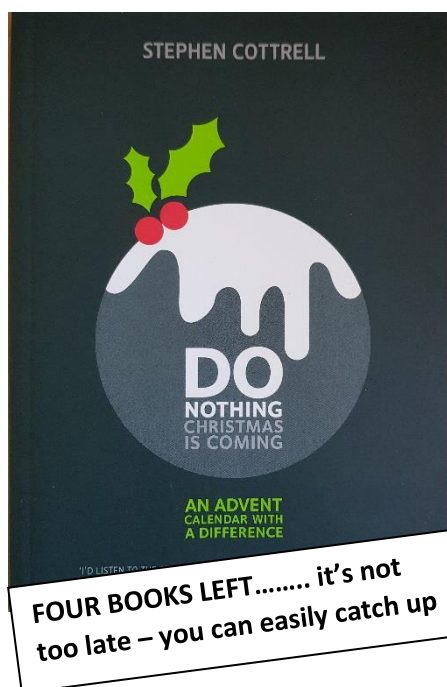
Men's breakfast



**Saturday 15th December
8.30am in the church hall**

Come along for a hearty cooked breakfast and good company – all for £4

Contact Chris Perry 783753 or Martin Angell 07860 624308 for tickets by Wed 12th



For every day of Advent,

Stephen Cottrell provides short, practical steps to help us slow down, take time out - and enjoy Christmas without piling on the pressure. This eye-catching book is perfect if you need to slow down over Advent.

Normally sold at around £7- you can have one for just £5. Speak to Rev Dan.

With a get together on Thursday 10th January at 2pm & 7.45pm in The Vicarage to discuss the book and share our thoughts (*just for an hour or so*).

CALENDAR

Who's Who at St John's:

Vicar: Rev'd Preb Sharon Crossman 789290
Associate Priest: Rev'd Tonya Nixon 793950
Training Curate: Rev'd Dan Crouch 325194
Churchwarden: Chris Perry 783753

- Sun 9th Dec** 8am Said Communion 9.30am Sung Communion 11am Christmas choir rehearsal
- Tues 11th 10am Toddler Group in hall
- Wed 12th 9.30am Said Communion & 10.00am Foodbank Listening Place in church hall
- Thurs 13th 10.30am Little Angels in hall
- Fri 14th 10.45am Friendship Group Christmas service and last meeting
- Sat 15th 8.30am Men's breakfast
- Sun 16th** 9am Said Communion 5pm Carol service *Please note there is NO 3pm Communion today
- Tues 18th 10am Toddler Group on Christmas break
- Wed 19th 9.30am Said Communion & 10.00am Foodbank Listening Place in church hall
- Thurs 20th 10.30am Little Angels on Christmas break
- Fri 21st Churchfield school Christmas services
- Sun 23rd** 8am Said Communion 9.30am Sung Communion
- Christmas Eve** 4pm Crib service 11.30pm Midnight Mass
- Christmas Day** 10am Family Communion & stocking challenge



- Wed 26th **BOXING DAY** – NO Said Communion or Foodbank today
- Thurs 27th Little Angels on Christmas break
- Sun 30th December** 10am **TEAM SERVICE** at All Saints church, East Huntspill
- NO SERVICES at St John's today**

To submit an article for the Signpost Weekly please e-mail
office@stjohnshighbridge.org.uk or leave a message on 01278 780633

Parish office opening hours:

Weds 8am-2pm Thurs 8am-10am Fri 8am -noon

Please ring in advance