



Sunday 24th & 31st December 2023

A Note From **Your Vicar**

Are you feeling 'Christmassy' yet?

I don't really know what this means.

I think that's partly because the idea is vague. It can mean 'ready for Christmas' or it can mean 'I've had a lovely experience which felt quintessentially Christmas like', but what qualifies for this 'Christmas feeling' varies enormously but it's often whether a massive and ever growing list of 'traditions' for Christmas is completed. The details will vary but Christmas is a time which is laden with meaning and tradition that could probably do with some spreading out across the year. There is special food which we love/endure: hot wine (love), sprouts (love), pigs in blankets (love – actually I don't think I dislike any Christmas food). There is special music which is played on a loop in every store and carol service. Some have more active traditions, massive hikes or cold water swimming. Other traditions are changing, so Christmas Cards are reducing year on year (it's not just me...). Then there is church too which has it's own set of traditions which as your Vicar makes me a bit nervous because I feel like I'm supposed to know them telepathically and am in constant danger of tripping over some hallowed tradition that I didn't know about...

These traditions build upon one another until they can become a bit stressful. I'm sure one Christmas I tried three different supermarkets in search of cranberry sauce (a 'meh' for me) and going around the post-apocalyptic looking supermarkets I saw a sort of wild hollo-eyed fear amongst shoppers...what if....they've run out of stuffing mix, chocolate coins or...

The majority of the traditions started with an awesome sign. Nicholas of Myra gives coins to poor children at Christmas, the tree has been used as an image of the Trinity, Christmas lights indicate the light of Jesus coming into the world. I love it and say cheers to the celebration – light in the darkness is important. But I wonder that as these signs and traditions build up, we stop seeing what they point to and only see the signs themselves. So it's ok not to try and achieve a 'perfect Christmas' – signs are useful when they point to something else but not when they point to themselves. If there is no cranberry sauce/sprouts/ but you spend time with your loved ones, in prayer or service to others that is more 'Christmassy'. And unlike the stressful and consumer driven visions we see everywhere, these are acts achievable and life giving.

Merry Christmas!
Nick

St George's **News**

ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS...

Is MORE Christmas Carols....and never fear, St George's is here to oblige. Fresh from the roaring successes of our two Carol Services we are giving you 4 more chances to Ding that Dong, sing for peace on earth and to be joyful and triumphant....

SUNDAY 24th

There will be no 9.30am or 11am - instead there will be a **SPOKEN HOLY COMMUNION SERVICE AT 10AM IN CHURCH** for those wishing to attend. **There will also be no refreshments Sunday morning**

SUNDAY 31st

Almost normal service is resumed (9.30am in church) although the **11am will be in church** for tech reasons and it also sadly means **no livestream that Sunday** but the Refreshments Team will be back.

DO REFER TO THE FORTNIGHT AHEAD DIARY COLUMN FOR REMINDERS!

CHRISTMAS THANKS

And talking about our Carol Services - weren't they wonderful. A **HUGE** thanks must go to Chris Sampson for the enormous amount of work he put into the Traditional Carol Service with arrangements, choir rehearsal - it was a lot of work and it certainly paid off as the feedback we have received about the comments were "best one we've been to!" "it was perfect!" and "a triumph!".

Thank you too to our tremendous Tech team - the lights, the sound - a lot of set up work but it really made a huge difference. Apologies that the live stream didn't work according to plan (that's why we love tech!!) but you at least had a flavour of the service and gave us insight into what work needs to be done for livestreaming in the church. *(We shall next be live streaming the Midnight Communion Service and Christmas Day.)*

Thanks also to the super worship band for our Contemporary Carol Service in the morning - it's not every service we can sing "Parup apum pum" and get away with it!! We so enjoyed it and hope you did too.

THE FORTNIGHT AHEAD

Sunday 24th December CHRISTMAS EVE

10.00am A short SAID **Holy Communion Service** - no music, just a spoken Communion Service

2.30pm Christingle Service

4.00pm Christingle Service

11.30pm Midnight Communion Service in Church

Monday 25th December CHRISTMAS DAY

10.00 JOINT CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE IN CHURCH - Come and celebrate this special day together with our short, informal Communion Service

**Tuesday 26th - Wednesday 3rd January
PARISH OFFICE AND CLERGY OFF AND ALL USUAL WEEKLY EVENTS CLOSED FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE WEEK**

Sunday 31st December

9.30am Holy Communion in Church

11.00am Worship Service **IN CHURCH**

Wednesday 3rd January

PARISH OFFICE BACK OPEN

CLERGY BACK FROM HIBERNATION

9.30am STAY AND PLAY Baby and Toddler Group

Thursday 4th January

12.00pm SOUP - we're back! Come and bring a friend for a bowl of soup. Do get in touch with Rob at rob@stgchurch.co.uk

Friday 5th January

9.30am COMMUNITY FRIDGE BACK OPEN

FUTURE PLANNING

Tuesday 9th January 12.15pm

MONTHLY LUNCH AT THE VIVARY ARMS

Contact Judith Pickles

Thursday 11th January 2.30pm

THE VALLEY CAFE

Contact Geoff Treasure

Monday 15th January

7.00pm LADIES CHOCOLATE QUIZ

7.30pm MENS SHED

Thanks to ALL our musicians for both services, our Choir and singers and we mustn't forget our talented flower team who have made the church look so very beautiful with the displays in the porch, the altar, the sills - simply stunning (*along with the candles - thank you Mens Shed!!*)

To all of you who have played a part in these Christmas Services, a heartfelt **THANK YOU!**

A HOUSE MADE OF GINGERBREAD

The gingerbread house sessions were a sweet, sticky success on Monday! Thanks to all of the families who came today, we hope you had lots of fun. There were some amazing creations - we just loved them but only have space to show you a few.

Thanks so much to all of you who have supported and joined in with our Mossy Church events over this last year. It's such a great way to get to know one another better, to bring along those who maybe do not connect with church, to have some fun together.

Thank you to those of you who volunteer for Mossy Church Team. We are so thankful for you for the care and support you give the team and those who come to the events. We really are seeing people's lives changing by asking questions about Jesus and wanting to find out more from these events and if you'd like to be a part of that - do email **families@stgchurch.co.uk** - we'd love to have you onboard the team!



PARISH OFFICE IS
CLOSED UNTIL
WED 3RD JANUARY
IF YOU HAVE AN ARTICLE FOR NEWS-
BOARD PLEASE SEND BY TUES 2ND
JAN 12.30PM FOR ENTRY THAT WEEK

Merry Christmas

VOLUNTEERS AREA

COME AND JOIN US!!!

By serving on team, you don't just perform a task, you build life together and fulfilling the call of Jesus to love one another. Here are some teams you can join or may be looking for some additional hands on deck!

WELCOME TEAM

We want everyone who comes along to St G's to feel welcome, to see what a great church family we are and to want to come back again! If you think you could be that welcoming face for either of our services, get in touch with either Peter Joyce (for the 9.30am) or Michael Hayes (for the 11am)
joyce07@btinternet.com
mhhayes@outlook.com

COFFEE TEAM

Come and join our Coffee team to provide the wake up, the calm or the energy by helping on the coffee team serving the church family with refreshments in between our services. Get in touch via email to
rob@stgchurch.co.uk

COMMUNION ASSISTANT TEAM

Have you been a Communion Assistant in a previous Church? Would you like to serve in this team, especially at our 9.30am service? We would love for more to be a part of this really special ministry - one that feels a real privilege to be a part of. If you have done this before or would like to help serve in this way, please email us to let us know!
office@stgchurch.co.uk

SET UP TEAM

Join the 11am Hall Set up team - a very easy way to help give to church! Putting out tables and chairs before the service and helping to put away once the service has finished. It only takes half an hour, so do get in touch to join the team
office@stgchurch.co.uk

**Any volunteers joining any team with young people or vulnerable adults must complete St George's Safeguarding training and be DBS checked by our Safeguarding Officer prior to helping....but this does not apply to setting out chairs, serving coffee or communion :)*

Monthly Lunchtime Meals Returns

We're going back to The Vivary Arms for a lunch together once a month on a Tuesday lunchtime!

**FIRST LUNCHTIME DATE
TUESDAY 9TH JANUARY
12.15PM**

**PRE-ORDERS NEED TO BE IN
BEFORE WEDNESDAY 3RD
JANUARY. PLEASE
CONTACT JUDITH PICKLES**



Judith Pickles has spoken to The Vivary Arms and they would be happy to offer meals on a Tuesday lunchtime for us, for a minimum of 10.

**Please book by contacting Judith on
07798 834495 or judithpickles@hotmail.
com BEFORE 3rd January**

Thanks so much!

CHURCH WEEKEND AWAY

**Do you want to have a change from thinking
about Christmas?**

Why not think about Lee Abbey?

No, not an Abbey but a large house in a
stunning location.

Why not think about a lovely group of people
looking after you?

No, not nuns and monks but a mixed group
of people, many of them young people from
all over the world, giving a year or two to learn
about Christian giving and serving.

Why not join with church friends for a
weekend away where you can meet with God
in a special way?

Pick up an information sheet, and consider
filling in the application form. Check out their
website <https://leeabbeydevon.org.uk/>

Further information from **Hilary Hayes**
hilhayes7@gmail.com. or **Hilary McKegney**
hilarymckegs@gmail.com

ST GEORGE'S CHURCH
**COMMUNITY
FRIDGE**

St George's Church Hall
Fons George
Taunton
TA1 1JX

**CLOSED FOR CHRISTMAS
FROM 21ST DECEMBER
TO 4TH JANUARY**

JANUARY HOURS
SUNDAYS, TUESDAYS,
WEDNESDAYS & FRIDAYS
9.30am to 4.00pm
email: fridge@stgchurch.co.uk

COMMUNITY FRIDGE
ES TD
ST GEORGE'S CHURCH
WILTON
20 23

TAUNTON TOWN COUNCIL

**wednesday
prayer**

**Wednesday Prayer will take a
break on 27th Dec and 3rd Jan.
BACK ON 10th JAN**

A short time of worship and
prayer at 12.30pm each week in
the Prayer Shed.

Taking A Break

There will be no refreshments on **Sunday
24th December**, but we will be serving
again on **Sunday 31st December**.

ST GEORGE'S **GIVING**

- If you have started coming to St George's regularly, or have been coming for some time but haven't yet done so, may I encourage you to **join our committed Christian Giving scheme** by completing a pledge form and possibly a standing order form. Just email Robin on **giving@stchurch.co.uk** to find out how you can begin to give to the work of St George's
- If you pay income tax, and have not already done so, please consider **Gift Aiding your giving**
- If you are putting your affairs in order and are considering making a will or revising an existing one, would you like to remember **St George's in your will?** It can make a huge difference to us.
- Another way to donate to the work of St George's, is via our **Give A Little page** which you can access on our website, Alternatively you can donate directly into our bank account using the following information and putting 'Donation' reference:
Account Name: **St George's Wilton Stewardship**
Account No: **59935227**
Sort Code **60-80-06**

Thank you so much!



*Merry Christmas
from the Soup Team!*

**SOUP WILL BE
SERVED AGAIN ON
4TH JANUARY '24**

In Loving Memory

We remember

**Alan Pendlebury, Leslie Baker
and Bert Nunn**

*and pray that you would bless
those who mourn with the
comfort of your love that they
may face each new day with
hope and the certainty that
nothing can destroy the good
that has been given.*

*May their memories become
joyful, their days enriched
with friendship, and their lives
encircled by your love.*

*Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Amen.*

*Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I will fear no evil, for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me*

The
**Valley
Cafe**

A Bereavement Support Group

St George's Church Hall
Fons George, Taunton, TA1 3JT

**Thursday 9th November
Thursday 14th December
Thursday 11th January
Thursday 8th February
Thursday 14th March
at 2.30pm**

An opportunity to share experiences of
bereavement and grief

Email office@stgchurch.co.uk for more information

BISHOPS CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Bishop Michael



Recently I enjoyed a visit to Bath Abbey, where they were busy getting ready for a charity Carol service and just outside their doors there was the hustle and bustle of Bath with the Christmas market in full flow. People were buying presents. Traders were promoting their wares. Mulled wine, mince pies and a host of different treats were being enjoyed.

At Christmas, how does all that's happening in places like the Christmas market relate to what's going on in church? In the market and in the shops, it's mainly about buying and selling, commerce in full flow. Whereas in the Abbey and in all our churches, the focus is on recalling the journey of Mary and Joseph, the birth in the stable, the arrival of the shepherds, the song of the angels, the visit of the Magi.

How can there be any connection between what looks like two very different worlds? Quite simply, the connection is Jesus. In him, God came to be at one with us. To share fully in every aspect of our humanity, from our physical needs to our enjoyment of the world that God has given us, to our spirituality, that hunger for the divine that's at the heart of every human soul. When Jesus was born in that stable 2000 years ago, he came to join in every part of our human condition – from market, to church, to every place in which we find ourselves.

And as we look at the world around us at the close of this year, it's important to remember that Jesus came to be with us not just for the good times, but for the difficult too. Jesus is 'God with us' everywhere– in trenches in Ukraine, bomb shelters in Israel and Gaza, in hospital wards where loved ones die, in relationships where there is conflict and distress.

The baby born in Bethlehem stands with us in all that we experience. This child comes too to offer us the possibility of opening every part of our lives to the transforming power of God's life of love and joy and peace. He comes so that every day we can become whole, a little more like him – growing into his likeness in every place in which we find ourselves – from our churches to our marketplaces, our homes to the whole of the world in which we live.

May the love, joy and peace of Jesus, the God who is with us, be yours this Christmas and always.

+ Bishop Michael



CHARITY COLLECTION at St G's For Christmas



Over the Christmas and New Year season our retiring collections will be donated to 'The Children's Society', formally known as The Church of England Children's Society - a UK national children's charity allied to the CoE. It is an organisation working to transform the hopes and happiness of young people facing abuse, exploitation and neglect. They support them through their most serious life challenges and campaign tirelessly for the big social changes that will improve the lives of children who need it most.

The Society began in 1881 when a young Sunday school teacher saw the effects of poverty on children and decided to do something about it - and it continues to help alleviate the damaging effects of

poverty of opportunity on children's lives for thousands of children today.. The Children's Society instigated and supports the Christingle Services throughout the country each year.

Your donations really do make a difference - Thank You

SING CAROLS AND MAKE YOUR OWN
CHRISTINGLE THIS CHRISTMAS EVE

ST GEORGE'S

*Christingle
Services*

**CHRISTMAS EVE
2.30PM AND 4PM**

ST GEORGE'S WILTON
FONS GEORGE, TAUNTON, TA1 3JT

A TRADITIONAL COMMUNION SERVICE

ST GEORGE'S
*Midnight
Communion*

Christmas Eve
11.30pm

ST GEORGE'S WILTON
FONS GEORGE, TAUNTON, TA1 3JT

CELEBRATE ON THIS SPECIAL DAY WITH US

ST GEORGE'S

**Christmas
Day
Service**

MONDAY 25th DECEMBER 10am

Join us for a short family service
followed by Holy Communion

ST GEORGE'S WILTON
FONS GEORGE, WILTON, TAUNTON, TA1 3JT

A Warm Welcome This Christmas!

COMMUNITY CAROLS & TUKTUK ON THE MOVE
WEDNESDAY 6th AND 13th DECEMBER 6.30pm
Sing Christmas Carols around Wilton & Sherford together

CONTEMPORARY CAROL SERVICE
SUNDAY 17th DECEMBER 11am

Join us for our Sunday worship with contemporary Carols in our Church Hall

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT
SUNDAY 17th DECEMBER 6pm

Traditional Christmas Carols and Readings

CHRISTINGLE SERVICES
CHRISTMAS EVE 2.30pm and 4.00pm

Come and make your own Christingle and sing some carols this Christmas Eve

MIDNIGHT COMMUNION
CHRISTMAS EVE 11.30pm
Traditional Christmas Carols and Readings

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE
CHRISTMAS DAY 10am
A short family service followed by Holy Communion



ST GEORGE'S CHURCH WILTON, FONS GEORGE, TAUNTON, TA1 3JT
www.stgchurch.co.uk Tel: 01823 284253 office@stgchurch.co.uk

Who's **WHO**

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK WITH ANY OF OUR TEAM, PLEASE CONTACT THE PARISH OFFICE OR GET IN TOUCH VIA EMAIL

Rev'd Dr Nick Griffin

Tel: 01823 774128

Email: nick@stgchurch.co.uk

Day Off: Fridays

Churchwardens

Peter Joyce 07761 407433

Di Vickery 07598 319163

Curate

Rev'd Rob Cromwell

Tel: 07889 452524

Email: rob@stgchurch.co.uk

Day Off: Fridays

Associate Minister

Rev'd Richard Kelley

Email: richard@stgchurch.co.uk

Worship Director

Chris Sampson

Email: chris@stgchurch.co.uk

Reader

Kate Taylor

Email: kate21taylor@icloud.com

Parish Administrator

Bethan Baigent

Tel: 01823 284253

Email: office@stgchurch.co.uk

Office Hours: Tues - Thurs 10-1pm

Safeguarding Officer

Jenny Norman

Email: safeguarding@stgchurch.co.uk

PCC Reps

Matt Norman

Paul Cole

Mary Carson

Pete Underwood

Laura Willetts

Katie Lanchbury

Families Coordinator

If you would like to find out more about what we have on for families here at St G's

Email families@stgchurch.co.uk

Pastoral Care Coordinator

Hilary McKegney

Email pastoral-care@stgchurch.co.uk

Digital and Technology Coordinator

Matt Norman

Email: matt@stgchurch.co.uk

Small Groups Coordinator

Carmen Cromwell

Email: carmen@stgchurch.co.uk

Community Fridge Coordinator

Mervyn Roberts

Email: fridge@stgchurch.co.uk

Hospitality Coordinator

Rob Cromwell

Email: rob@stgchurch.co.uk

Prayer Circle

To be in contact for confidential prayer amongst our Prayer Circle email:

prayer@stgchurch.co.uk

Christian Giving

Robin Stamp

Email: giving@stgchurch.co.uk

Electoral Roll Officer

Laurie Jeffery

Email: laurie.jeffery@sky.com

Deanery Synod Reps

Hilary Hayes

Hilary McKegney