

ST GEORGE'S NEWSLETTER

Serving God and the community in Chichester

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

22 December 2024



Dear friends,

Let me wish you and all your loved ones a very Merry Christmas. May these days be full of blessings and joy. In many ways, it is remarkable that Christmas continues to feature as such a large part of our culture, bringing brightness amid the bleak mid-winter. Remarkable because by most measures we are no longer a Christian country, but much more obviously a secular one in which religion features as part of our backstory and an optional lifestyle choice but not the fundamental underpinning of our values, the narrative which holds together all our individual and shared stories, the life-changing perspective on reality which shapes our understanding of what it means to be human. How is it that Christmas still shapes our mindsets, our emotions, our relationships, our workplaces, homes, holidays, economy, and so much more when Christ is all but gone from our hearts and minds? How does Christmas, at its secular best, still inspire generosity, acts of service, care, and compassion, and so carry the message of the Church beyond its boundaries into the traditions and practices of people's everyday lives? It is always tempting to put this down to how attractive Christmas is to the powers of commercialisation which are all too eager for us to spend money on each other. Yet this does not explain how the spirit of this season escapes that of endless buying and spending. It is also tempting to say that Christmas cannot continue without a rediscovery of Christ but will simply become about the practices of raw capitalism, shorn of any need to suspend our disbelief. Tempting but too cynical and faithless. Should we not rather say that the lasting significance of Christmas is precisely that it speaks to the truth of our humanity in a way that no one can market, control, or sell? God became human to show us precisely this. That the truth of our humanity is no one's possession but belongs to all people and that humanity is made for love, peace, justice, and joy. Christ has not gone, but plays in so many hearts, minds, and voices. Cannot you not hear how his word echoes in the world's cries for peace, justice, community, compassion, joy, love?

With my prayers and blessings,

Fr Angus

DONATE TO ST GEORGE'S

The life and mission of St George's are entirely dependent on your support. There are many ways to donate:

Gift Aid: Gift Aid envelopes are available in church that enable us to reclaim tax on donations made by UK taxpayers, increasing the donation by 25%.

Regular Giving: Set up a standing order, preferably via the Parish Giving Scheme (<https://www.parishgiving.org.uk>). Contact the treasurer for details.

Contactless Giving: A card reader is available in church for card donations. Card donations are also accepted via our website.

www.easyfundraising.org.uk: Use this when you buy online. For each purchase, a donation will be made to your nominated charities.

QR code: Scan this image to donate via your smartphone:



Thank you for your generosity.

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NEW TO ST GEORGE'S?

Welcome! If you have any questions, please ask a Warden or Fr Angus, we are happy to help.

VOLUNTEERING

There are many ways to engage at St George's. Please ask the Rector or Wardens.

COME AND SING!

Our choir sings at the main services and practises once a week. You are welcome to come along. Contact Susan Howell Evans.

PARISH NOTICES

Christmas Flowers

The flower team are making the Church beautiful for Christmas on Monday 23 December at 10am. All are welcome to come along and give a hand. Thank you!

Christmas Services

On 24 December at 3pm there will be 'Carols at the Crib' for children and families. The service will have a reflective feel as the children are engaged in song, story, discovery, candlelight, and activities as we build the crib together with our crib figures. Then later, on 24 December, we will celebrate Midnight Mass with a blessing of the crib to rejoice at the birth of Christ. On 25 December, we have our Christmas Day Choral Mass to give thanks for God's being born as one of us. During this service, there will be special activities in the church centre for any children who come, including time to watch a short film ('The Snowman' based on Raymond Briggs' storybook).

Christmas Lunch Venues In Chichester

For any who are alone or looking to experience Christmas lunch with others, there are the following options in the city: **Heart for the Homeless** will be providing their usual cooked breakfast (with Christmas extras) between 08:30 - 10:00 with gifts given out - St Pancras Church Hall, St Pancras, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 7LG. **Stonepillow** will be having a Sunday lunch for the homeless and vulnerability housed at 1pm - St Cyriacs, Chichester PO19 1AJ. **Newell Center** are offering a free Christmas meal 11.30 -15.30. Book early for your seat. This is for anyone that is lonely, would like company on Christmas day, to have some interaction and socialise, people who are struggling, etc. Call Julie to reserve a place: 07803 314268 - Tozer Way, Chichester PO19 7LG (by St Pancras Church Hall).

Fr Angus On Leave

Fr Angus is on leave from Thursday 26 December until 4 January. For any pastoral emergencies during this period, please contact the Rural Dean, Fr Paul Doick, rector@stpaulschichester.org or Archdeacon Luke (archchichester@chichester.anglican.org). Fr Luke will be taking the service on 29 December.

No Services During the Week

There will be no Meditation, Morning Prayer or Mid-Week Masses during the Christmas weeks up to the Feast of Epiphany on 5 January. Weekday services will resume as normal from 6 January.

No J Team or Tots

The J-Team are now on a well-deserved Christmas break and will return on 5 January. St George's Tots is always on a break and will be back on 6 January.

Car Park Closed 9-11 January

We are having the large potholes in the car park filled in the new year. The contractors will be working Friday 10 - Saturday 11 January and we will keep the car park clear and closed from the afternoon of Thursday 9 January.

UK Harvest Back 17 January

UK Harvest who run the community food hub at St George's will be taking a break over Christmas. The next one to be held will be on Friday 17 January 10-11am. The hubs seek to battle both food waste and food poverty. Bring along a carrier bag and fill it with the food on offer. There is a suggested £5 donation, no referral is needed.

Rumboldswyke Children's Choir (RCC)

RCC is based at St George's church and open to all children from year 1 upwards. The runs every Tuesday during term time from 10am to 4.30pm. Please email music@whyke.info if your child wishes to join.

Friends Of St Mary's Churchyard

The Friends are a group of volunteers who care for, celebrate, and enhance our churchyard as a sacred space and haven for wildlife. For info about how to get involved, scan here the QR code. You can also email friendswhyke@gmail.com.



Prayer List

If you want to add someone to the parish prayer list, please contact the parish office or Fr Angus.

Pastoral Ministry

Please contact Fr Angus for pastoral matters like visits, baptism, confirmation, first communion, weddings, funerals, house blessings, etc.

Sacrament Of Reconciliation (Confession)

Available by appointment with the Rector

THIS WEEK

SERVICES

4th Sunday of Advent 22 December

10:00am Choral Mass (no J-team)

Christmas Eve 24 December

3pm Carols At The Crib (for families and children)

11pm Choral Midnight Mass

Christmas Day 25 December

10am Choral Mass (with activities for children)

First Sunday of Christmas 29 December

10:00am Sung Mass (no J-team)

EVENTS

No Events