

Coulsdon Cross

News & Views from St. Andrew's Church

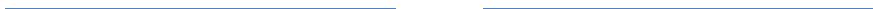
December 2023 and January 2024



St Andrew's Vision Statement

A joyful, daring, diverse and generous Christian community, setting the world alight with the love of God.

Come and join us! All are welcome



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Saturday 2nd December 7 pm / Sunday 3rd December 3 pm– Parish Panto ‘Rick Whittington’

Thursday 7th December 3 pm Carol singing at the Eadmund.

Sunday 10th December 3 pm ‘Live Nativity’ – carol singing around a live Christmas crib, 4 pm Carol singing at Emerald Court.

Saturday 16th December 10 am Carol singing in Coulsdon Library

Sunday 17th December 6 pm 9 Lessons and Carols

Sunday 24th December 4 and 5 pm Carols around the Christmas crib, 10.30 pm Choir carols, 11 pm Midnight Mass

Monday 25th December 9.45 Christmas Day Eucharist

REGULAR EVENTS

Every Sunday 9.45 Parish Communion – (Junior Church on the 1st Sunday of the month)

Every Monday 10 -12 noon Time 2B: Coffee chat and craft in the church hall.

Every Tuesday Tots and Toys playgroup in the church hall. 11-12 noon.

Every Wednesday 10 am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer; 3rd Wednesday of the month Holy Communion with laying on of hands and anointing for healing). ***Please note there will be no service on 6th***

December and 27th December

1st and 3rd Wednesdays 7.30 pm Prayer and Bible Group on zoom. Please contact Reader Gerry Daly for details.

Every second Tuesday Pop in Tea at 2 pm in church hall preceded by service in church at 1.30 pm.

Every third Tuesday 3.30 – 5.30 pm Messy Church – craft activities, bible story and hot meal for children and their parents / carers.

Every fourth Tuesday 8 pm – Mothers’ Union, Committee Room.

Dear Friends,

What do you love best about Christmas? There are many things that gladden our hearts during the festive season – the St Andrew's Pantomime among them! More about that in the next edition. Jessie loves



her Christmas dinner, turkey minus the trimmings – though she will deign to eat a Yorkshire pud, so long as it is drenched in gravy. For my money, Christmas wouldn't be Christmas without carols.

Carols are fun – which is why the Puritans banned them! Apparently the only one they allowed was 'While Shepherds Watched' because its lyrics come from the Bible. I wonder how many Puritan children sang about washing socks? Perhaps they wouldn't have dared back then.

What's your favourite carol? According to a poll carried out by Classic FM, the top choice in the UK is 'O Holy Night.' It was written to celebrate the renovation of the church organ in Roquemaure, France, in 1843. Perhaps Christopher will write something to celebrate the renovation of our West Window, which we hope will take place in 2024? Ideas on a postcard please. 😊

They say the devil has all the best tunes and some of the best loved carols began life as secular dance tunes, like 'Ding Dong Merrily on High' and 'Good King Wenceslas' – the words were added much later. Apparently 'carol' once meant 'to dance in a ring'. Most of us make do with tapping our toes but if anyone feels brave enough to dance down the aisle at St Andrew's, please don't be shy!

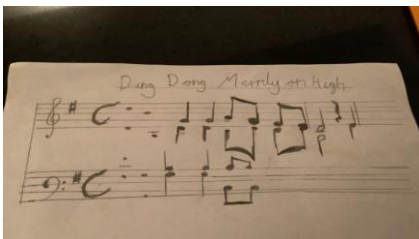
Christmas is a time of joy – something so many of the great carols remind us of: joy to the world, tidings of comfort and joy, joyful and triumphant, joyful all ye nations rise, news of great joy, new of great mirth... I am sure I must have missed some. It's a shame those Puritans

didn't spend more time with the gospel of Luke because there are lots of joyful songs in his telling of the story of Jesus' birth. The first is Mary's 'Magnificat' (Luke 1:46-55). Here Mary praises God for what he has done for her, an ordinary Galilean peasant girl – and for what he will do for all the poor and powerless of the world. The second singer is Zechariah, whose 'Benedictus' speaks of Jesus as God's mighty saviour who will bring liberation to all who 'sit in darkness and in the shadow of death' (Luke 1:79). The next song belongs to the angels – the 'Gloria in Excelsis' which we sing each Sunday (though not in Advent or Lent -Luke 2:14). The final song that Luke records is the song of Simeon, the 'Nunc Dimittis' in which this 'righteous and devout' man thanks God for allowing him the privilege of 'seeing salvation' – the infant Jesus who was brought to the temple for the rite of purification when he was just forty days old (Luke 2:29-32).

None of these folk – apart from the angels – had trouble free lives – far from it. Sometimes we too can feel that joy is a long way from our lived experience. But joy often comes when and where we least expect it – the trick is to be open to recognise it when it does arrive. Isn't that the message of Christmas? Who'd have thought - *"a little child, a shining star, a stable rude, the door ajar – yet in that place, so crude, forlorn, the Hope of all the world was born."*

May the music of the angels fill our hearts with joy and hope this Christmastide and beyond. Wishing you and yours Christmas blessings, love from your friends,

Esther and Jessie the Vicarage dog xx



(Artwork by Edward Inns)

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW YOUR CHRISTMAS TUNES?

Can you work out these anagrams of Christmas carols and popular songs?

The first person (or dog) to send the correct answer to Jessie c/o Esther at estherfoss79@gmail.com will win a box of Christmas chocolates. (If you live more than 5 miles outside of the parish, we will eat them for you!) Good luck – you'll need it!



1. Not Software Hymns (3 words)
2. Earth Shaking Danger Shell (5 words)
3. Sweet Gherkin (3 words)
4. Thy Lion Hog (3 words)
5. Tinsel Two (3 words)
6. I hates whispers (4 words)
7. Hold it thy heavenly (5 words)
8. Icy Coordinately Divans (5 words)
9. Troubledly trim me (3)
10. Marshiest witch (2)

A Poem For Christmas By Alex Inns

Noel is a time of joy,
When Jesus was a little boy,
Everyone comes forth to sing,
All do this even the king,
So take some time,
Sing a rhyme,
At Christmas happiness should be prime.



CHRISTMAS DONATIONS

Our friend Lizzie Mills works in the Communications team at King's College Hospital. She reminds us of the importance of giving at Christmas.



For many NHS hospitals, Christmas is the busiest time of year. It's when we see the highest number of people in need of medical treatment, and it's also when our staff will go above and beyond to try and make sure patients have the best chance possible to be at home with their loved ones over the festive season. There are a number of ways you can support your local hospital at Christmas time – see below for a few ideas.

Take part in Christmas Jumper Day 2023 - save the date!

Croydon Health Charity is asking the local community to take part in its festive fundraiser to help raise vital funds for Croydon's NHS. The charity is asking people to wear their favourite festive jumper on Thursday 7 December, and text FESTIVECROYDON to 70085 to donate £5.

The charity is based at Croydon University Hospital, and aims to raise funds to make sure patients, carers and family members have the best possible experience of NHS care. Donations will also help improve hospital facilities and support staff wellbeing.

Christmas Toy Appeal

Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust has an annual Christmas toy appeal, bringing a little joy to young patients who have cancer, medical conditions, and other illnesses or injuries. Sadly, many young patients with serious illnesses can spend days or weeks at a time on one of the wards.

Donations at Epsom can be dropped off at Casey Ward. Gifts need to be brand new and left unwrapped so staff know what gift they are giving to the children. The teams are grateful for any donations, but are particularly short on baby gifts and teenage gifts.

Give the gift of your time

Are you friendly, reliable and a good listener? Do you live nearby to a King's College Hospital NHS site (King's College Hospital in Denmark Hill, Princess Royal University Hospital in Bromley, Orpington Hospital and Beckenham Beacon)? Are you able to give up at least three hours of your time a week? If so, the volunteering team at King's College Hospital would love to hear from you.

Volunteers support the work of the hospital in many different ways, including admin support, helping patients with emotional reassurance, and getting involved with social activities on the wards. PAT registered volunteers and their dogs also visit our hospitals and bring a smile to those patients who need it most. To find out more, contact the team on 020 3299 5510 or email kch-tr.volunteers@nhs.net



**Then the Grinch
thought of something
he hadn't before.
Maybe Christmas, he
thought doesn't
come from a store.
Maybe Christmas,
perhaps... means a
little bit more!**

"You can give without loving, but you can never love without giving."
Robert Louis Stevenson

NEWS FROM ST ANDREWS' CONTACT GROUP

Monica Jefford, Contact Group Co-ordinator, writes

"Life is all memory, except for one present moment that goes by so quickly you hardly catch it going." Tennessee Williams

As technology becomes the driving force for many aspects of our lives it is necessary to ensure all our devices have sufficient capacity. However without any decision making input from us scientists have shown the average human brain can accumulate the equivalent of 2.5 million gigabytes of memory. This equates to 450 years worth of memories! There are four types of memory: working, sensory, short and long term providing us with positive and negative ones. It takes just one molecule to decide the latter.

We have 70,000 thoughts a day, memory peaks at 20 years and left handed people have apparently drawn the longer straw. We can remember 10,000 faces over a lifetime with the average recall being 5,000. This is all very well but we just wish many of them came with the name printed underneath as in virtual calls!

"Science and technology revolutionise our lives but memory, tradition and myth frame our response." Arthur M Schlesinger.

At this time of the year our recall is always heightened as we join with the national designated periods of remembrance to commemorate the contribution of British and Commonwealth military in conflict. Current global events constantly played out on our media mean we continually remember/never forget, have low mood, shed tears for the horrors of war and its aftermath.

At our November Pop In, guests had the opportunity to consider and share happier memories with our friends in Ukraine, making greetings cards, decorating bookmarks and wrapping gifts. There was also an elephant quiz. What do you get when you cross a computer with an elephant ? A lot of memory!

There is now the potential for AI to enhance our memories along with the already mind blowing medical, surgical, pharmacological and technological expertise out there. Some of you possibly still prefer the old fashioned way of making a paper list which is OK if you can remember where you put it. Likewise also finding the elusive place called 'safe.' A sense of humour helps 😊

Whatever your system don't forget to join us on 12th December 2023 for a Christmas Pop In tea and 9th January 2024, weather permitting, a Christmas lunch with all the trimmings.

At the beginning of the New Year, for catering purposes, please let us know if you'd like to attend the lunch.

With every good wish for the Christmas and New Year season

Monica and the Contact Group volunteers x



HAVE YOURSELF A MERRY – BUT ETHICAL – LITTLE CHRISTMAS!

Ann Witham, our eco-church co-ordinator writes



For most of us Christmas is a joyous time of celebration and meeting friends and family but it can also be a challenging time to uphold our intentions to work for a greener more ethical world. It can be so tempting to over spend and over eat. Here are a few ideas that may help you make each aspect of the season more meaningful and beneficial to the people and environment around us.

We all want to give gifts that are enjoyed and valued but they do not always need to be store bought items. Why not consider creating a hand made gift – sew, knit or crochet something the receiver can wear or display, try making an art work or if you love cooking or baking have fun making Christmas treats. There are many intangible gifts you could consider too. Perhaps a voucher for a special experience – a delicious afternoon tea, a visit to a country house or participation in an activity or creative class. Maybe you could offer your time – taking someone who doesn't drive for a ride in the country, making a home cooked meal for a lonely person or baby sitting for tired parents.

Unfortunately much of the paper and plastic used in gift wrapping cannot be recycled. Try to use reusable items such as boxes, tins or fabrics and tie with ribbon or string rather than tape. Definitely avoid glitter or tinsel which have microplastics so small they end up sinking through landfill into ground water then into the sea.

Christmas decorations are often costly and wasteful made from unsustainable materials like plastic, easily breakable and poorly made.

For the Christmas tree go for decorations that have a long lifetime and can be used year after year. No matter your skill level there are countless ways to make home made decorations – bunting, wreaths etc. If you already have an artificial tree then the most sustainable thing to do is to continue to use it. If you wish to have a real tree choose a locally grown one and dispose of it wisely. Alternatively buy a potted fir which you can reuse every year. It is now even possible to rent a tree.

What about the food? If possible choose locally sourced seasonal produce. Try to support local vendors at markets and independent shops. You can then be confident that the food has not stacked up thousands of miles making its way to your table. Make menu plans and try not to over buy but if you have a lot of left overs look up recipes that will ensure these can be used up.

Finally there are a number of Christian charities concerned with climate justice and the protection of the environment. If you are able please consider supporting them.

Whatever you are going to do over the holiday season may I wish you a blessed and sustainable Christmas

Ann Witham

THE HIDDEN SECRETS OF JELLY BABIES

Thanks to Marion Charman for submitted the following article

Jelly Babies are still a popular Christmas gift. But do you know the story behind this beloved sweet?

After World War I, what we today know as Jelly Babies started being manufactured. Back at this time they were known as ‘Peace Babies’ because each one was a different colour, representing a nation that had fought in the war.

It wasn't long before World War II began and sugar became a luxury which was rationed – therefore the production of Peace Babies had to end.

After the war was over, a Christian took over production of the newly named Jelly Babies. He designed in them a means of illustrating the gospel. To get the story you have to lick off the icing sugar that they are sprinkled with. Once you do that you can see that the black jelly baby has a heart on it. This was used to illustrate sin and the darkness that can infect the human heart.

The green jelly baby is crying – this represents God's sadness that people did not follow his ways of love and peace.

The red jelly baby has a big B on its chest which represents Jesus' blood – given freely for love of us.

The pink jelly baby is smaller than the rest and is a baby – reminding us that we are reborn in Christ when we decide to follow him and become his children.

The yellow jelly baby has a necklace. This represents the riches and treasures of the Christian life.

The orange baby is carrying a bag which illustrates the need to be prepared to follow the Christian way.

“How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear.” Enjoy your Jelly Babies this Christmas!



CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR UKRAINE

It has been almost two years since the conflict began in Ukraine. Many people are forced to live with the constant threat of attacks, surrounded by the devastation of their home.

This year, Ukraine will be battling an even more severe winter. Can you help?

We would welcome donations of new or nearly new gifts of warm clothing for men, women and children, sleeping bags, blankets and non perishable food items, toiletries, cleaning supplies, pet food and medicinal items. Please leave your gift in the box in the Narthex.

You can also make a donation through Christian Aid who are actively involved in assisting internally displaced people and refugees. As of August 2022, Christian Aid have delivered emergency assistance to over 800,000 people affected by the war in over 20 Oblasts (regions) across Ukraine and the border areas of Hungary and Romania.

Find out more: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/>

A Prayer for Ukraine

God of peace and justice,
we pray for the people of Ukraine today.
We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.
We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow,
that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.
We pray for those with power over war or peace,
for wisdom, discernment and compassion
to guide their decisions.
Above all, we pray for all your precious children,
at risk and in fear,
that you would hold and protect them.
We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.
Amen.

*Archbishop Justin Welby
Archbishop Stephen Cottrell*



JESSIE'S CHRISTMAS JOKES

A man sent his friend a cryptic Christmas card. It said: A B C D E F G H I J K M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z. The recipient puzzled over it for weeks, finally gave up and wrote asking for an explanation. In July he received the explanation on a postcard: "No L." ☺

It was Christmas Eve. Harry and Shirley had returned from an enjoyable midnight mass at their local church. They arrived home and spent a short while relaxing by an open fire before retiring to bed. But sometime in the middle of the night they were awoken by heavy knocking on their front door. Harry was very unhappy about this. He went downstairs and noisily unlocked the door to be confronted by a dishevelled man who was obviously the worse for drink.

"Th'cuse me thur. Will you helpth me with a puth" the man pleaded "Help you with a push!" said Harry. "You drunken fool! Get away from my house before I call the police! Irresponsible people like you should be banned from driving!" And he slammed the door into the man's face. He went back to bed and was astonished to find himself being reprimanded by his wife.

"How could you be so mean and uncharitable." she said. "Surely this evening's sermon must still be ringing in your ears - how the innkeeper turned Joseph and Mary away on Christmas Eve. Yet here you are, presented with the same situation and you show yourself to be no better than that uncaring man. Shame on you."

Harry was shocked by the relevance of what he had done and was full of remorse. He ran down the stairs and opened the front door, but the man was no longer there. He ran down the path to his front gate to see if the man or his car was along the road; but there was nothing to be seen. On the off-chance that the man might still be around somewhere he shouted loudly. "Hey mister, needing a push, where are you?"

The unmistakable drunken voice replied immediately: "Over here thur, on the thwing." ☺

What do you get if you eat Christmas decorations? Tinsel-itis! 😊

What is a skunk's favourite Christmas carol? Jingle Smells 😊

What did the doctor say to the sick Christmas chorister? Wassailing you? 😊

When I asked my girlfriend what she wanted for Christmas, she said she'd be happy with anything with lots of diamonds in it. She's going to love this pack of playing cards I've bought her 😊

I bought my boyfriend a pug as a Christmas present. Despite the squashed nose, bulging eyes and rolls of fat, the dog seems to like him 😊

My buddy just gave me glass cookware from Jamaica as a Christmas present. It's 'Pyrex of the Caribbean' 😊

What are the terms and conditions on a Christmas gift? Santa Clauses 😊

What's a mathematician's favourite Christmas snack? Mince Pi 😊



USEFUL CONTACTS AT ST ANDREWS

Woodmansterne Road CR5 2DD Website: standrews.coulsdon.net

Vicar: Rev'd Esther Foss – 020 3620 1885
(Day off – Friday)
Email: estherfoss79@gmail.com

Reader: Gerry Daley – 07717 233858
Email: gerrydaley@btinternet.com

Churchwardens: Sheila Linney 07815 091206
Toni Best 07767 308375

SPA & Messy Church Co-ordinator Jenny Atkinson

Treasurer: John Linney
E-mail: jlinney1@aol.com

Baptisms/Weddings: standrewsoffice@yahoo.com

Contact Group Co-ordinator: Monica Jefford

Hall Lettings: hall.lettings@standrews.coulsdon.net,

Junior Church: Beth Ten Cate

Parish Canine Rep: Jessie Foss
(Days off Monday – Sunday. Don't contact unless you have treats. Thank you.)

PARISH MAGAZINE:

Editor: Rev'd Esther Foss (details as above)

Parish Administrator: Danielle Stobart, Parish Office 020 86762966
(open Monday and Wednesday 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.) E-mail:
standrewsoffice@yahoo.com

USUAL SERVICES

Sunday 9:45 am Parish Eucharist (1st Sunday Junior Church, 3rd Sunday Renew All Age Eucharist)
Wednesday 10.00 am Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion, 3rd Wednesday, Holy Communion with prayers for healing.