

AROUND THE SPIRE



**THE PARISH OF SAINT JAMES THE APOSTLE
QUEDGELEY and KINGSWAY
December 2018 - Number 40**

PARISH PROGRAMME for December...

HERE ARE THE MAIN EVENTS IN THE PARISH THIS MONTH

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2nd - ADVENT SUNDAY

Said Eucharist 09.30am

STJ Family SERVICE for old and young alike 10.30am.

'The Holy Birth' an informal service with songs, stories and activities. COME ALONG and JOIN US – as well as our act of worship it is opportunity to meet and greet one another, and partake of refreshments afterwards.

Advent Carol Service 6.00pm

Monday 3rd December - Scouts and Guides Carol Service 6.00pm

SUNDAYS, DECEMBER 9th and 16th – Second + Third in Advent

Parish Eucharist, 10.30am with activities for children and refreshments

Tuesday 18th December - Carol Singing at Tesco 4.00pm - for everyone!

SUNDAY 23rd DECEMBER – Fourth in Advent.

Parish Eucharist, 10.30am with activities for children and refreshments

Monday 24th DECEMBER, CHRISTMAS EVE

Crib Service 4.00pm

Carol Service 6.00pm With the Charter Band

Midnight Mass of the Nativity 11.30pm

Tuesday 25th CHRISTMAS DAY

Mass of the Nativity 10.30am

SUNDAY 30th DECEMBER - FIRST AFTER CHRISTMAS

Parish Eucharist, 10.30am with activities for children and refreshments

Refreshments and social time after all morning services

Each Wednesday – Holy Eucharist at St James – 10.00am and at 7.30pm

On Saturdays – December 1st; 8th; 15th & 22nd - ADVENT COURSE

– 'The Songs of Advent' – talk and discussion with soup 11.00am

Further details of weekday services and events are to be found in the WEEKLY NEWSLETTER published each Sunday. Copies are always available in the Church.

COPY FOR January 2019 MAGAZINE - to Father Hugh no later than Sunday 9th December 2018.

Electronic or Back Copies can be made available if required. Please email the Editor, hugh.broad@yahoo.co.uk, if required.

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## ***Editorial for December – “Lord, teach us to pray!”***

“Lord, teach us to pray”

Many thanks to several people who have expressed the views that the first of this series in the last magazine was of some value to them in various ways, and hoped the subject would be explored further.

So here goes! And for this part a sub-title could well be - LET THERE BE LIGHT!

Almost every time I go into St James Church I find that someone has been there and lit a candle by the Shrine of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Sometimes I actually meet the person concerned, and if it seems right I ask them if they would like me to say a prayer with them along the lines of the lighted candle before us, and this can, on occasions be a real help.

Similarly, and of course in a much larger context , I have a similar experience in Gloucester Cathedral when I am on my duty times as a Cathedral Chaplain. Here we come across people from a much wider area of course and often from overseas. But the same opportunities do present themselves and are quite often much appreciated. For some, of course this is an intensely private moment and it would not be right to intrude.

So like so many places of worship, here at St James and at our Cathedral, the experience of the lighted candle is a living token for the person who seeks to pray.

I do this myself every day almost for a variety of people and occasions and places. It means a lot to me to be aware that when I leave the place of worship, my lighted candle will continue as a living flame of God's love for a while.

In Hereford Cathedral where I was ordained, there is a Shrine of St Thomas of Hereford – it is a place where pilgrims have gone over the centuries to meet Our Lord in prayer.

By the Shrine of St Thomas there are cards for pilgrims to take away to remind them of that special moment in that very special place.

*LIGHTING A CANDLE IS A PRAYER  
When we have gone it stays a light -  
continuing our prayers of thanksgiving  
and intercession for those in need.*

*LIGHTING A CANDLE IS A PARABLE  
Burning itself out it gives light to others.  
Christ gave himself for others.  
He calls us to give ourselves.*

*LIGHTING A CANDLE IS A SYMBOL  
Of love and hope – of light and warmth.  
Our world needs them all!*

So – do join in this adventure of Prayer – I am sure like me, you will never forget setting out on this journey!

***FATHER HUGH, your Editor***

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Snippets...

Chinese proverb.

- Life isn't measured by how many breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away.

Lovell Cornwall

A Letter from Canon John

Dear Parishioners and Friends,



Follow the Star

We have just concluded the services for Remembrance Sunday, wreaths, wooden crosses and painted rocks have been laid at the foot of the war memorial in the churchyard, the last post and reveille played, the national anthem sung, the prayer “We will remember them” spoken, sadness and in some cases tears have flowed.

Remembrance Sunday is a time when we bring those thoughts and acts of compassion to the present. So where do we go from here?

“Follow the Star”

Well of course the next big event in our lives will be the celebration of Christmas. For the Christian it’s not just about the Christmas presents, the dinner, the decorations, the tree or the parties – its first importance is to remember and celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

What is the celebration of the birth of Jesus – the child in the manger – all about?

Christmas is actually about the Love and Compassion of God, who looks on a world and a humanity gone its own way, resulting in such things as the horrors of World Wars I and II, and in all the conflicts and sufferings since and before.

The love and Compassion of God, delivered in the form of a helpless child. As we prepare to celebrate Christmas with family and friends it might be a good offering and a great idea if we found a little time to,

“Follow the Star”

The star that leads to the child of Bethlehem.

So why not travel with the wise men, and let us go there together in our hearts and minds this Christmas.

And the gift that we can bring and take along with us; and which does not need to be wrapped up in fancy paper – is the gift of
Ourselves.

“So why not follow the Star”

Come and join us at Saint James, Church, this Christmas.

CHRISTMAS EVE

4.00pm – Crib Service

6.00pm – Parish Carol Service

11.30pm – Mid-Night Mass

CHRISTMAS DAY

10.30am – Christmas Family Service

With prayers and blessing,

Fr John

*Rector and Parish Priest of Quedgeley and Kingsway.
Canon of Gloucester Cathedral*

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# Saint James CHATTERBOX

... *time for fun!*



[www.quedgeleychurch.org.uk](http://www.quedgeleychurch.org.uk)

## **Parent, Baby and Toddler 'Drop –in' St. James Church Quedgeley** **Every Tuesday 9.30am - 11.00am**

Last month we supported BBC Children in Need the children loved dressing up in fancy dress or in Pudsey outfits.

Our craft activities continue to remain a success and we are extremely grateful to Lin for providing a different craft activity each week. We are now in the run up to Christmas so our activities will include Christmas cards, decorations and something festive!

We have all been busy working towards the Christmas Fayre and I'd like to thank everyone from Chatterbox who supported us in this venture.

Have a lovely Christmas - Chatterbox is back in the New Year on 8th January 2019!!

Keep up with our events and activities by visiting our Facebook page.

<https://www.facebook.com/StJamesChatterbox/>

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“Sits Vac...”

If you would like to take part as one of our Bible-readers in church, please contact me (because Fr John has charged me with the task of compiling the rota of readers!)

Fr. Ian

SAINT JAMES' CHURCH AT WORK AND PLAY...





SAINT JAMES CHIT-CHAT

Relax and meet new friends!



EVERY THURSDAY AT SAINT JAMES CHURCH
QUEDGELEY 10.00AM - 12NOON FOR THE NOT
SO YOUNG BUT YOUNG AT HEART!

Another busy month and the weather is turning colder. This month we are looking forward to our Christmas Party. Santa has promised to pay us a visit! We shall be finishing for Christmas on 13th December and resuming in the New Year on Thursday 3rd January 2019. We hope you all have a lovely Christmas and look forward to seeing you in the New Year!

If you would like more information on Chit Chat then please visit our website www.quedgeleychurch.org.uk We are also on Twitter – so join us there @StChatter1

Give us a ring on 01452 721062 if you'd like more information.

Jackie

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# ***Songs of Advent – a Bible Study from Luke’s Gospel***

Songs are very much at the centre of our celebrations of Advent and Christmas, and have been so for many of us throughout our lives.

The Christmas carols we love are a real mix, some with origins more in the country inn, sung as a rousing chorus, rather than in a Cathedral to a choral setting. Lots of them have been handed down from one generation to another and they continue to retain their popularity.

There’s an old saying that familiarity breeds contempt so how many of us who sing them in carol services once a year reflect on the meaning of the words that we sing, nevertheless, the fact that we sing them is good news!

Luke’s Gospel, which we’ll be following through next year, has a series of songs as part of his introduction to the story of Jesus, and these have been handed down to us within our Bibles and Prayer Books as part of the liturgical life of the Church.

We’ll be studying four of them during Advent - the Magnificat, the Song of Mary, The Song of Simeon - the Nunc Dimittis. One that we sing most Sunday mornings, The Song of the Angels – the Gloria and finally the Song of Zechariah, which we call - the Benedictus. The words may be familiar. But maybe we haven’t been looked at them so often in their actual context, leading up to and just beyond the birth of Jesus.

That’s what we’ll be doing on four Saturday mornings through Advent 1st, 8th, 15th and 22nd December between 11 and 12.30. We will be looking at something of where they have come from and what they still mean to us today. If you want to know a bit more about what we’ll be doing then have a word with me. We hope that we may have a cup of soup to keep us warm on a winter’s morning so if you are able to sign the sheet at the back of Church it will help us with the catering.

Every Blessing

*Gordon*

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Christmas Gifts - “Come and See”

What gifts are you giving this Christmas? What gifts are you hoping to receive? I'm sure if you've got children they'll all be clamouring to let you know what gifts they would like to receive from Father Christmas this year. And yet, one of the most important gifts of all is totally free!

At Christmas, we celebrate the gift of God's only Son, a gift of mystery and a source of joy, a very special present for all of us - if only we would recognise it.

Shepherds, at the time of Jesus' birth, had a very bad reputation and were more accustomed to abuse than to angelic visitations! Yet they followed the angels' invitation to “come and see” and found the baby Jesus, lying in a manger. Whether they actually brought him a lamb, as the carols have it, we don't know, but they did bring their curiosity, their eagerness to know more about what the angels had said. They found a gift waiting for them and when they realised the gift was for them they glorified God.

We know from Matthew's Gospel that other visitors came later, but our nativity plays, and cribs often put them in the stable with the shepherds. The Magi, or Wise Men, followed a star's invitation to “come and see” and they found the child with Mary his mother. They brought him precious gifts but discovered an even more precious gift waiting for them. When they realised the gift was for them, they were overwhelmed with joy!

This precious gift of the Christ Child that God gave us on that very first Christmas was for us all. It really did have all our names on it, our own names. Because God knows us by name, however different we are as individuals, and at whatever stage on our Christian journey we may be - even if we haven't yet begun.

This very special gift is something for the whole family to share and each of us needs to accept our personal invitation to “come and see”, to learn more about Jesus. When all the presents have been opened this Christmas, remember to look for the one that has “Your Name” on it. The one that's for you, for everybody; the one for sharing, not only with those whom we love but everyone we meet. The one we can open over and over again, throughout our lives.

May we come to see that it's not just a wonderful story for the children at Christmas, but a mysterious, life-transforming reality. “Come and see” for yourself this Christmas-tide by following the star to St James' Parish Church. Details of our church services will be found in this magazine.

Revd Jenny

KNITTING NEWS

At the time of writing this, our knitting needles and crochet hooks are clattering away, preparing stuff to sell at the Christmas Fayre. We also hope to have enough items to sell at Chit Chat. I am knitting little Christmas stockings at present, and I know Liese is knitting some very cute glittery hedgehogs. All monies raised go to church funds. We have also knitted some bookmarks for the baptism outreach team to give as gifts.

As we all have various other commitments we now no longer meet on Thursday afternoons monthly, but instead some of us meet regularly on different afternoons, as and when we are available. This makes things more flexible for us. If anyone would like to knit for us, or would like to come to our get-togethers, please let me know. We have plenty of free wool, needles and patterns available, if you are able to knit for us.

Did anyone see the beautiful fountain of hand-made poppies in the Lady Chapel of Gloucester cathedral? It was a very touching sight, and a fitting memorial to the centenary of the end of World War 1.

Angie Wright

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## **FROM THE REGISTERS IN OCTOBER**

### **HOLY BAPTISM:**

October 7<sup>th</sup> - NOAH DUKE COOK  
- SIENA LILY THELMA SCOURFIELD  
October 14<sup>th</sup> - ALFIE RAY COLMAN  
- DYLAN COLMAN  
- LOGAN GEORGE FRENCH  
October 28<sup>th</sup> - ETHAN PHILIP SPENCER SWEET  
*"Welcome to the Lord's Family"*

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“Times and Seasons”: Saints in December

3rd: Francis Xavier, Apostle to the Indies – born in the castle of Xavier in Spain in 1506, Francis was educated in France and became one of the first group of seven monks who took vows as members of the Society of Jesus – the Jesuits. Preaching the Gospel overseas was an integral part of their vocation and Francis sailed for Goa on the west coast of India in 1541. He travelled all over the East Indies, teaching and evangelising, and established the church in Sri Lanka, Malacca, Malaya, and notably in Japan, where he left behind two thousand converts. He died at sea, on his way to China, in 1552.

4th: Nicholas Ferrer - Deacon, founder of the Community at Little Gidding
Born in 1592, Nicholas was educated at Cambridge. After university he travelled on the continent and tried his hand at several occupations, including, on his return, that of member of Parliament. In 1625 he moved to Little Gidding in Huntingdonshire with his family, where they set up a community of prayer centred on the 1662 Prayer Book and a life of good works in the local area. He was ordained a deacon and he dedicated his life to the community in study and service. He died in 1637 and sadly the Puritans were so suspicious of the Community and its aims that it was forcibly disbanded in 1646 and all of Nicholas' manuscripts were burnt.

6th Nicholas of Myra, Bishop - Nicholas was a Bishop in Southern Turkey in the 4th century. His reputation as a wonder-worker was enhanced by a later biographer, and he is now best-known through these stories. Many of them concern his love and care for children, his feeding of the hungry, and his caring for the sick and oppressed. He saved three girls from a life of prostitution by providing them with dowries – and so developed the tradition of giving gifts to children on his feast-day, a practice later linked with Christmas. Nicholas is one of the saints of Russia.

8th The Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary - This festival in honour of the conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary is celebrated in both Eastern and Western Christendom. It dates from the 7th century and acknowledges the preparation by God of his people to receive their Saviour and Lord, putting “heaven in ordinary” and showing that mortal flesh can indeed bring Christ to the world.

13th Lucy of Syracuse, martyr - Born in Sicily in the 4th century, Lucy lived at a time when the Roman empire was again attempting to establish the worship only of gods of which the authorities approved, the Emperor himself

being the supreme focus. As a young Christian, Lucy attempted to give away her personal wealth to help the poor; this so angered her betrothed – who felt that her property should be his! - that he betrayed her and she was duly executed in 304 AD. “Lucy” means “Light” in Latin, and as her feast-day falls in December, she became associated with the one true light who was coming to redeem a fallen world.

26th Stephen, Deacon, First Martyr - The Acts of the Apostles describes Stephen as one of the seven deacons chosen to minister to the widows in the early church in Jerusalem. He made an impassioned defence of the faith to the Council of the Sanhedrin, which served only in enraging the council who immediately sentenced him to death. Luke records Stephen's dying vision of Christ in glory together with his request for forgiveness for his persecutors. Luke also records that one of the official witnesses of the the stoning, as required by law, was a young man – Saul of Tarsus.

27th John, Apostle & Evangelist - The “beloved disciple” is honoured on this day as the one who proclaims Jesus as the Word made flesh. He was one of the sons of Zebedee, along with James, who left their father and the family fishing business to follow Jesus. He was there as a witness to the Transfiguration, present at the Last Supper; a witness to the agony in the garden, and at the foot of the cross when he was given the care of the mother of Jesus. As a witness to the Resurrection, he “saw and believed”. He is said to have lived to a great age, always testifying to the Word become flesh, who loved him and whom he loved.

29th Thomas Becket, Archbishop & Martyr - After an early ministry in the service of Archbishop Theobald, Thomas became an accomplished diplomat. He was appointed chancellor by Henry II, with whom he initially worked in harmony. Following his appointment as archbishop, tensions soon began as Thomas set about defending the Church. He was determined to maintain a discipline within the church and the realm, but the nobility grew in opposition. Words of anger at court led to four knights travelling to Canterbury where they eventually forced entry and murdered Thomas on the steps of the altar on this day in 1170. Thomas' stubborn nature and determination to uphold a life of self-discipline caused conflict with an equally strong-minded king, leading to an inevitable conflict between Church and State.

To be continued... Fr. Ian

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## **EXTENDED CHURCH OFFICE, in the vestry**

...for the Calling of Banns of Marriage; Holy Baptisms; Marriages etc.

WEDNESDAY: 5.30 – 6.30pm

SATURDAY: 9.00 – 10.00am

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