



# *St John-in-Bedwardine Parish Magazine*

December 2015

40p

Start of December

Quarrel with the  
in-laws

Post party  
Hangover

Fall off  
the ladder  
putting up  
house  
bling

Hunting for  
presents on  
Christmas Eve

In  
the  
longest  
super-  
market  
queue ever

Experience the  
true joy and  
meaning of Christmas

Mine are riches from your poverty,  
from your innocence, eternity,  
Mine, forgiveness by your death for me,  
child of sorrow for my joy.

**Welcome to**  
**St JOHN-IN-BEDWARDINE**  
**The Parish Church of St John's**

St John's is far more than the most historic building on the Westside of Worcester; it is the centre of a worshipping and sociable community of people, and a resource for everyone in St John's.

**WEST WORCESTER CLERGY**

|  |          |
|--|----------|
|  | Day off  |
| The Reverend Dr. CHRISTOPHER STUART (Vicar of St John's) | Saturday |
| The Reverend PHIL BRADFORD                               | Friday   |
| The Reverend SARAH COTTRILL (Assistant Curate)           | Monday   |

**CHURCHWARDENS**

Gordon Templeton, Joy Job.

**SUNDAY SERVICES AT ST JOHN'S**

**This is the usual pattern. Please see the other notices or the back cover of the Parish Magazine for the actual services in a month.**

|            |                      |   |
|------------|----------------------|---|
| 8.00 a.m.  | Every week           | Holy Communion (BCP)                    |
| 10.30 a.m. | Every week           | Parish Eucharist with Children's Church |
| 5.00 p.m.  | 1st Sunday in month  | Evensong (BCP)                          |
|            | 2nd Sunday in month  | Café Church                             |
|            | 3rd Sunday in month  | Evensong (BCP)                          |
|            | Last Sunday in month | Service of Wholeness and Healing        |
|            | Other Sundays        | Evening Prayer (said)                   |

**WEEKDAY SERVICES**

|            |                            |                                  |
|------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 5.00 p.m.  | Monday to Saturday         | Evening Prayer                   |
| 9.45 a.m.  | Thursday (at St Clement's) | Holy Communion (BCP)             |
| 10.45 a.m. | Thursday (at St Michael's) | Holy Communion (Modern language) |

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The church is open most weekdays for people to drop in to visit or for quiet; to sit, pray or light a candle.

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The church's Pastoral Care Group offers support if you are lonely, bereaved, or unable to attend church. Please contact Sylvia Render (tel 422654/email [sylviarender@talktalk.net](mailto:sylviarender@talktalk.net)).

## *Letter From Sarah Cottrill*

“It’s the most wonderful time of the year!”

Apart from a love of Gill, I don’t have very much in common with my daughter’s boyfriend! It’s not that we don’t get on – we do – it’s just he likes football, I’d rather watch paint dry; he understands technology, I don’t; I like vegetables, classical music and poetry, he doesn’t; You get the picture! On one thing, however, we are united – we both get excited about Christmas. It’s a wonderful time of year! A time for peace and goodwill; for the giving and receiving of presents; for being with the people we love whilst remembering and celebrating the love of God for us and His gift of Jesus. That’s what Christmas should be all about. But is the reality rather different? Has Christmas become so commercialised that instead of being a holy season of joy and love it has become a time of stress and anxiety; of spending money we don’t have on people we never think about the rest of the year; of eating and drinking too much in the company of other stressed out and quarrelsome people? Do we spend the Christmas season frantically rushing from one social gathering to the next possibly just managing to squeeze in a carol service because the children like it? Where, in the midst of all our activity, is Christ?

Please don’t misunderstand me; I enjoy the secular side of Christmas as much as anybody. I’ll be there on Christmas Day with my silly hat, playing daft games, eating and drinking far more than I need, and I actually don’t think this in itself is necessarily wrong. It’s all a question of balance. Christ came to give us life in abundance and that includes enjoying ourselves and “letting our hair down” sometimes. We read many times, in the Gospels, of Christ attending parties, or feasts. In fact, much of His teaching took place over a meal or on the way to and from a

(continued overleaf)

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### *Cover*

Maze from Parish Pump with words overlaid by Graham Evans.

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### *The Magazine*

Copy for the January 2016 edition should reach us by Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December. If you can, please use e-mail: [magazine@stjohninbedwardine.co.uk](mailto:magazine@stjohninbedwardine.co.uk). **The January 2016 edition of the magazine will be available on Sunday 3rd January.**

Opinions expressed in this magazine are personal opinions of the authors concerned and may not represent the views of the editors, our PCC or The Church of England. Such material is offered as a source of debate or reflection.

Unless otherwise directed, please send all written correspondence for the magazine to the Parish Office. ***To subscribe or advertise in the magazine, please see page 33.***

(continued from the previous page) social gathering. It is important to remember though, that on these journeys to and from meals and parties, Christ also tended the needs of the destitute, the sick and the outcast. He was never in too much of a rush, never too stressed, to listen to the needs of others and to demonstrate His love for them. In the midst of our celebrations, we too, can take care of others. When we're buying our festive food, we can buy some extra tins to give to the food bank, MAGGS or to St Paul's; when we're planning our party outfit, we can look out last year's Christmas jumper and donate it to a charity; when we're inviting friends round for a drink or a meal, we can include Mrs Smith down the road who has no family; and when we're rushing past an open church building we can take a moment to go in and offer a prayer of thanks for God's many gifts to us and to hold before Him the needs of others.

When I was a student, many years ago, I saw a sketch which made a lasting impact on me. It began with dim lights, a "religious" carol playing softly and a cross standing centre stage. Two people stood holding a banner which read: "Christmas sacred."

Suddenly all the lights came on, blaring pop music replaced the carol and the stage was filled with "party-goers" drinking, dancing and generally revelling. The cross gradually got nudged to the back where it was used to hang coats and the banner got ripped. Then the lights dimmed again, the party revellers froze and the banner came forward. It had been patched together but now instead of "Christmas sacred" its message read "Christ massacred."

This Christmas I hope you will enjoy time with family and friends. I hope you will spend time relaxing and perhaps doing silly things. I hope you will indulge yourselves and your loved ones. But I pray that you will balance this with active love and care for the less fortunate amongst us and above all, that you will keep Christmas as a Sacred time in your homes and in your hearts.

*Sarah*

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## *A Word From The Editors*

When the Christmas list of 'Things to do' gets longer and longer, and the shops start selling Christmas items in September, it is all too easy to be overwhelmed by the secular and commercial side of Christmas and to find it hard to keep in mind that 'Christmas starts with Christ' (p19). Our theme therefore this month is about keeping that balance between "Christmas sacred" and "Christ massacred"; between enjoying the parties and thinking of those whose needs are so much greater than ours – whether in hospital, on the streets of Worcester or in the war-torn country of Cambodia.

"Yet in thy dark streets shineth, the everlasting light" – we hope and pray that you will find the everlasting light this Christmas.

*Graham and Sue Evans*

## *Dates For December 2015*

Unless otherwise stated, the venue for all the events below is  
St John's Church, or one of the church rooms.

See  
page

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### **Friday 4<sup>th</sup> December**

|           |  |    |
|-----------|--|----|
| 5.00 p.m. | Christmas Tree Festival – opened by Santa                                      | 23 |
| 6.00 p.m. | Sing along carols in the church (6pm to 8pm, join and leave whenever you wish) |    |
|           | Christmas Tree Festival and Fete continue in the evening                       |    |

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### **Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> November**

|           |  |    |
|-----------|--|----|
| 9.00 a.m. | Christmas Tree Festival – Breakfast with Santa | 23 |
| 7.30 p.m. | Concert: Colla Voce                            | 10 |

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### **Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> December: Second Sunday of Advent**

See the back cover for Sunday services on this day  
Afternoon concert by Worcester Brass Ensemble

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### **Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December**

|           |             |    |
|-----------|-------------|----|
| 7.00 p.m. | Craft Group | 10 |
|-----------|-------------|----|

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### **Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> December**

|           |                                       |       |
|-----------|---------------------------------------|-------|
| 3.00 p.m. | Children's Activities (3.00pm–5.30pm) | 10,16 |
|-----------|---------------------------------------|-------|

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### **Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December: Third Sunday of Advent**

See the back cover for Sunday services on this day

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### **Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December: Fourth Sunday of Advent**

See the back cover for Sunday services on this day

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### **Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> December: Christmas Eve**

|            |                              |    |
|------------|------------------------------|----|
| 5.00 p.m.  | Christingle Service          | 18 |
| 11.30 p.m. | Midnight Mass (with incense) | 18 |

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### **Friday 25<sup>th</sup> December: Christmas Day**

|            |                      |    |
|------------|----------------------|----|
| 9.00 a.m.  | Holy Communion (BCP) | 18 |
| 10.30 a.m. | Christmas Service    | 18 |

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### **Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December: First Sunday of Christmas, Feast of St John**

See the back cover for Sunday services on this day

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### **Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2016: Second Sunday of Christmas**

See the back cover for Sunday services on this day

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Thursday Morning Services: There is a 9.45am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer) each Thursday at St Clement's (not 24th or 31st December).  
See page 9 for information about services at St Michael's Church.

# Church Directory

## CLERGY

|  |  |              |
|--|--|--------------|
| Vicar of St John's and<br>St Clement's with St David's | Rev'd Dr Christopher Stuart<br>chris.stuart@westworcesterchurches.org.uk | 01905 429773 |
| Vicar of St Michael's,<br>Dines Green                  | Rev'd Phil Bradford<br>phil.bradford@westworcesterchurches.org.uk        | 01905 423794 |
| Assistant Curate                                       | Rev'd Sarah Cottrill<br>sarah.cottrill@westworcesterchurches.org.uk      | 01905 426257 |
| Rural Dean   | Rev'd David Sherwin<br>davidwin56@aol.com                                | 01886 888664 |

## ST JOHN'S PCC OFFICERS

|                           |  |        |
|---------------------------|--|--------|
| <b>Churchwardens</b>      | churchwardens@stjohninbedwardine.co.uk       |        |
| Gordon Templeton          | gordtemp@btinternet.com                      | 749025 |
| Joy Job                   | joyjob@dsl.pipex.com                         | 423051 |
| <b>PCC Lay vice-chair</b> | Sue Bale                                     | 423257 |
| <b>PCC Secretary</b>      | Graham Evans<br>pcc@stjohninbedwardine.co.uk | 428667 |
| <b>Joint Treasurers</b>   | treasurer@stjohninbedwardine.co.uk           |        |
| Chris Rees                |  |        |
| John English              |  | 427822 |

## THE MAGAZINE

We publish a Parish Magazine each month, except August. The magazine costs 40p to purchase and can be obtained from the back of church. Subscriptions are available at the discounted price of £4 per year. Contact the Parish Office or see the magazine for how to subscribe.

Articles on all aspects of Christian and parish life, letters, jokes and anecdotes are welcome - do contribute if you can. If you have a story to tell, please make contact. Please include your name as anonymous contributions will not be considered.

|   |   |                 |
|---|---|-----------------|
| <b>Magazine Editors</b>                         | Sue & Graham Evans<br>magazine@stjohninbedwardine.co.uk | 428667          |
| <b>Magazine Distributor<br/>&amp; Treasurer</b> | Philip Evans<br>pjevans@physics.org                     | 428667          |
| <b>Magazine Advertising</b>                     | Sue Hussell<br>sue.hussell@talktalk.net                 | 01684<br>893397 |

Any written correspondence for the magazine which cannot be emailed, please send to the Parish Office.

# *Church Directory*

## ST JOHN'S CHURCH OFFICERS

|                                      |  |                 |
|--------------------------------------|--|-----------------|
| <b>Child Protection Officer</b>      | Jane Askew   | 424811          |
| <b>Verger</b>                        | Catherine Templeton                                    | 749025          |
| <b>Stewardship envelopes</b>         | Irene Allen  | 422684          |
| <b>Estates Manager</b>               | Brian Askew<br>brian.askew@stjohninbedwardine.co.uk    | 424811          |
| <b>Parish Administrator</b>          | Liz Edwards<br>liz.edwards@stjohninbedwardine.co.uk    | 420490          |
| <b>Archives Officer</b>              | Philip Evans   | 428667          |
| <b>Pastoral Care<br/>Coordinator</b> | Sylvia Render<br>sylvia.render@talktalk.net            | 422654          |
| <b>Press Officer</b>                 | Philip Evans<br>pressofficer@stjohninbedwardine.co.uk  | 428667          |
| <b>Organist &amp; Choirmaster</b>    | John Brierley  | 358474          |
| <b>Music Group</b>                   | Peter Yates<br>pjyates194@btinternet.com               | 422565          |
| <b>Ringing Master</b>                | John Bower<br>jandjbower@btinternet.com                | 07792<br>574554 |
| <b>Church Flowers</b>                | Eileen Cantrill<br>Di White                            | 422579          |
| <b>Webmaster</b>                     | Philip Evans<br>webmaster@westworcesterchurches.org.uk |                 |

### OUR CHURCH

St John-in-Bedwardine Church is an active Anglican church which has its roots in the Norman period. The church is open daily, as a haven of peace at a busy road junction in the St. Johns area of Worcester.

The church was originally built in 1165 as 'The Chapel of St John' – the parish church then being St. Cuthbert's in Lower Wick. When the church of St Cuthbert's was demolished in 1370, St John's became the parish church.



### OUR PRIORITIES FOR 2015

**Outreach and serving the community** This includes understanding the community, social concern, value to the community, creating a buildings vision (to make our buildings fit for purpose to serve our objectives) and embodiment of West Side Collaboration as collaborating on projects.

and

**Children and Schools and Christian Nurture**

## *In Memoriam*

|                            |                  |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| Alice Moulder              | 1 December 2009  |
| Bertie Harvey Bosworth     | 3 December 1970  |
| Albert Harold Southall     | 3 December 1984  |
| Amanda Louisa Warner       | 5 December 1969  |
| Arthur Frederick Ching     | 6 December 1973  |
| Sarah Rose                 | 8 December 1985  |
| Emily Potter               | 10 December 1984 |
| Vera May Bullock           | 10 December 1991 |
| William Bishop             | 10 December 1996 |
| Hubert Mitford Harvey      | 12 December 1984 |
| Charles Hubert John Lerigo | 13 December 1983 |
| William GS Oldershaw       | 14 December 1971 |
| Thomas Barlow Langford     | 14 December 1976 |
| Jack Taylor                | 16 December 1998 |
| Ivy Muriel Rogers          | 17 December 2001 |
| Fanny Elizabeth Holloway   | 19 December 1958 |
| Harry Palmer               | 19 December 2001 |
| John Goodsell              | 21 December 2004 |
| George Frederick Harrison  | 23 December 1982 |
| Ivy Hooper                 | 25 December 1984 |
| Derek A Bowen              | 28 December 2007 |
| Ann Smith                  | 28 December 2010 |
| Gladys Mitchem             | 30 December 1995 |
| Henry Nelson Russell       | 31 December 1972 |

Additions to In Memoriam are not automatic but must be specifically requested via the clergy.

## *From The Registers*

### **Baptisms, weddings and funerals which took place in October 2015**

**BAPTISMS:** *We welcome you into the Lord's family*

Philippa Florence Parry  
Georgia Poppy Lawton

Freya Louise Jones-Hodgkins

**WEDDINGS:** *Those whom God has joined together*

Andrea Milicchio and Josephine Oram

**FUNERALS:** *Rest eternal grant unto them O Lord*

d. 19th September Catherine Norcott  
d. 12th October William Crawford

d. 14th October Bryn Jones

**From the register of services for October 2015 (4 Sundays):**

Communicants 229. Total attendance at all services 504.

The total attendance includes 299 at funerals, weddings and baptisms.



## *Are you a big knit?*

My Mum is part of the chaplaincy volunteers team at Worcester Royal Hospital where one of the services they provide is a supply of knitted Prayer Squares. These small squares, featuring a cross in the middle, are blessed and left in a basket in the prayer room for anybody to take. They have proved to be immensely popular with patients in the hospital and the volunteers and chaplains have received countless messages of thanks and appreciation for the comfort they bring. However, the volunteers are struggling to keep up with demand and so I am asking for anybody who can knit to make some of these squares for the hospital. They are really easy to do. Even I, a novice knitter, can produce one in less than an hour!

The pattern is below and if you are able to make some, please bring them into church and give them to either me or to Mum. Thank you.

*Sarah Cottrill*

### **Prayer Square.**

Double knit wool. 4mm needles.

Cast on 19 stitches.

Rows 1 – 6: knit.

Row 7: K3 P13 K3.

Row 8: (And all even rows ). Knit.

Row 9: K3 P5 K3 P5 K3.

Row 11: K3 P5 K3 P5 K3.

Row 13: K3 P5 K3 P5 K3

Row 15: K3 P5 K3 P5 K3.

Row 17: K3 P5 K3 P5 K3.

Row 19: K3 P2 K9 P2 K3.

Row 21: K3 P2 K9 P2 K3.

Row 23: K3 P2 K9 P2 K3.

Row 25: K3 P5 K3 P5 K3

Row 27: K3 P5 K3 P5 K3.

Row 29: K3 P13 K3.

Rows 30 – 35: Knit.

Cast off.

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## *St Michael's Church*

At the time of writing, St Michael's Church remains closed following the flood of sewage it suffered. Services will resume as soon as possible. Please contact Margaret Jones on 421594 for confirmation.



## Fellowship and Fund Raising Events

at St John in Bedwardine Church  
(unless stated otherwise)



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|   |   |
|---|---|
| Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> to<br>Sunday 6 <sup>th</sup><br>December | Christmas Tree Festival - see page 23 for details.                                      |
| Wednesday<br>9 <sup>th</sup> December                           | Craft Group 7.00pm - Try something new.<br>All materials included, Refreshments, £5.00. |
| Saturday<br>12 <sup>th</sup> December                           | Children's Activities 3.00pm - 5.30pm.<br>Light tea included. Tel 424811 for details.   |

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### *Colla Voce Concert 5<sup>th</sup> December*

Join local singing group Colla Voce as they journey towards the big city, encountering, ice queens, bears and a mystery cat along the way. A fun musical evening for all the family.

Entrance is £5 - pay on the door. Wine and cheese available during the interval.

*Catherine Templeton*

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### *Can't wait for the Christmas Cracker jokes? Try these:*

*What's brown and sneaks round the kitchen?  
Mince spies.*

*What do you call a snowman with a suntan?  
A puddle.*

*How do sheep greet each other at Christmas?  
A merry Christmas to ewe!*

*What carol is heard in the desert?  
Camel ye faithful!*



"I'm sorry Michael – even if you HAVE changed your ring-tone to 'Away In-A-Manger', it's still ALL mobiles OFF!"

## *PCC Meeting 15<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> September 2015*

The meeting (adjourned on 15<sup>th</sup> September) resumed on 26<sup>th</sup> September, following a discussion among all Group PCCs about service patterns. The PCC ratified the following pattern for Sunday services, with effect from the start of 2016:

- 8am: No change.
- 10.30am: Non-Eucharistic service on the second Sunday of each month (Led by ALMs with the Music Group, approximately 45 minutes long, and titled “Family Service”). No change on other Sundays.
- 5pm: No change.

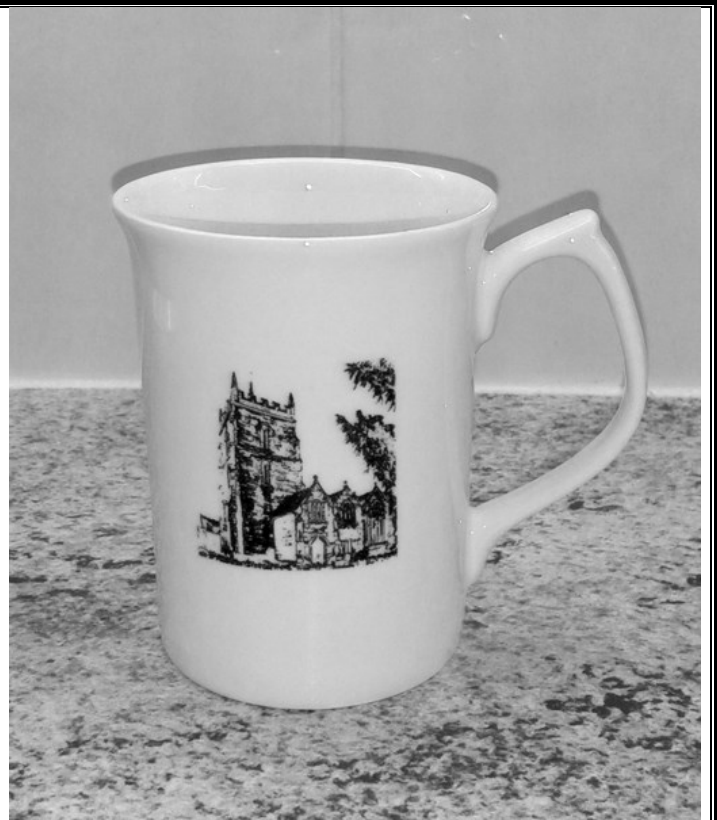
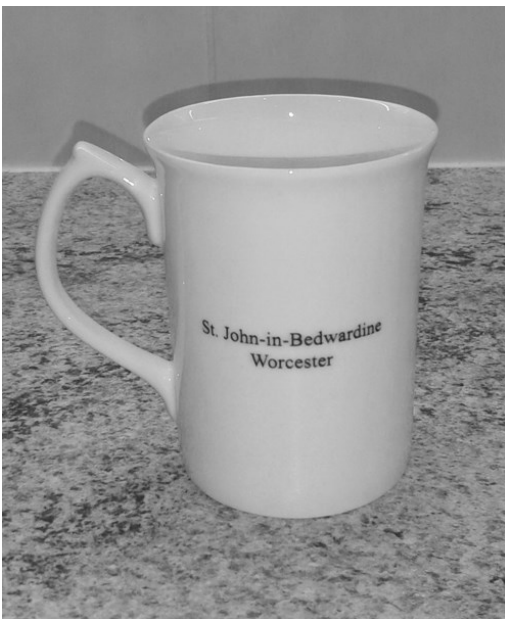
There will also be one ALM-led non-Eucharistic principal service per month at St Michael’s and St Clement’s and there will be a joint service when there is a fifth Sunday in the month (replacing joint services for Patronal Festivals). The clergy will support the ALM team by preparing a liturgy for the year and a theme for each month.

The meeting closed.

*Graham Evans, PCC Secretary*

### *Christmas present idea!*

Looking for a Christmas present with a difference? Fine bone china Church mugs are for sale at £5.00 each, at coffee time on Sunday or through me on 01905 427822.



Something extra could be added to make an unusual gift.

*Jenny English*

## *Volunteering: In Cambodia!*

I work for BT and we have a company intranet that we have to use to access timesheets, expenses and training. One day, back in February, I was on the intranet and happened to notice a tiny message at the bottom that said something like “Volunteers needed for Cambodia”. It piqued my interest and I followed the link. It talked about a project that had been running for a few years where BT People and their friends and family went to Cambodia to help build houses for some of the country’s poorest people. It sounded so exciting and worthwhile and I wished I could do it but immediately dismissed it as out of the question and carried on. But as time went by, it kept popping into my head and increasingly I thought – “what’s really stopping me?” And so it was that at the end of October I found myself on the longest journey of my life, to go further East than I had ever been, to a culture and climate I had read about but never experienced to meet up with 45 other people I had only ever exchanged a few emails with and to go and build houses.

It was a long journey – I went from Worcester to London to Doha to Saigon to Phnom Penh and it took the best part of 24 hours but then I was there and there was no doubt I was in another part of the world.



On the first day we went for an induction at the charity that organises the housebuilding and then went for a very challenging visit first to the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum – a preserved prison/torture camp used by the Khmer Rouge to force people into confessions and then to the Killing Field associated with that prison where those who were tortured into confessing were taken and executed. The number

killed and the brutality was almost impossible to take in even though we were surrounded by the evidence of it in front of our very eyes and all such a short time ago. It helped us understand why the country was in the state it was and why the people who we would meet would find it so hard to believe that a bunch of foreigners would just come to their village and do something nice.

The next day we were up at 6:30 for a two hour drive out to the first village. The drive was amazing as we drove through markets spilling onto the road, wedding tents and

beautiful Buddhist temples. At the village we were given our briefing (and hammers), split into teams and sent off to our first house. Local contractors had already built the framework on stilts, needed because the area floods, so our job was to nail the corrugated iron walls on and finish off the floor. There were six of us on the team but only two of us who would go up a ladder...and one of those was me! So it was hot work in the 32 degree heat up a ladder banging in nails but with regular water breaks and a visit to a guy who crushed sugar palm canes on a machine on the back of his moped to make juice, we stayed hydrated and before we knew it we were saying goodbye to the first family as they stood proudly on the steps of their new home and it was on to the next.

By the end of the day between us we had completed 20 houses and it was time for a handing over ceremony. We gave the families who would live in the new houses



a blanket which would be laid on the floor of the new house – this is symbolic and as they accept the gift of the blanket they are also accepting the gift of the house.

(That's me on the left of this picture).

We were close to the equator so it gets dark quite early, but it was off to a restaurant when we got back where the staff are all street children who are being trained to be waiters and chefs and then off to bed ready for another 6:30 start!

The next day's village was much more rural with views out over paddy fields that were just beautiful. There were only 16 houses to build in this village but somehow everything seemed that much harder, but we got them done and again it was handover time and we were done.

It was an amazing experience and opened my eyes in the way I had hoped it would to what poverty really means, but also what a difference the right kind of help can make. Thanks to all those who sponsored me - the 36 houses we built cost ~£35k for the materials, local contractors, well drilling etc. and while I won't be going back out I will be helping to raise funds so that next year's team can make a similar difference.

*Rob Little*

## *The future of Churches Together*

As usual, Churches Together in West Worcester met in October for its Annual General Meeting, and most of the west side churches were represented. These meetings are a chance to share news, and to plan ways in which our churches can work more closely together to further the cause of the gospel in west Worcester.

The AGM was a particular opportunity to reflect on the state of Churches Together in west Worcester: how far have we come, and where are we heading? A lengthy discussion ensued.

It's important that you are aware of the outcomes of that reflection.

Overall, there was a real feeling that Churches Together has lost momentum in the last few years. To be fair, people are all very busy and when so much else crowds in on our time it's perhaps inevitable that ecumenism slips down our priority list. But for all that, there was nonetheless a sense that Churches Together has begun to suffer through a lack of a really clear vision for the future.

Chatting to folks at the AGM, the feeling was that many in the congregations don't have a clear sense of what Churches Together is for, and what it might achieve. We all agreed that we still do some good things together – for example, the March of Witness on Good Friday, the shared carol service at Christmas, and the Churches Together away day – but the overall feeling we're in danger of losing a clear sense of purpose and direction.

The clergy are committed to the cause of working together to further the gospel in west Worcester - but to develop a clearer vision for that work, we have to listen carefully to where the Spirit is leading us. Does the Spirit even want Churches Together to continue? If so, in what format? The answer lies with all of us as Christians, not just the clergy: God speaks to every Christian by his Spirit, and we need to reflect together on what the Spirit is saying to us as followers of Christ.

To help us do that, we've decided to do something slightly different for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in January.

Normally, the Week of Prayer would culminate in an ecumenical service on the Sunday evening. However, this has struggled to get support in recent years.

Consequently, we've decided to drop this service and instead have a short (20-30 minute) service at 12.30pm on Saturday 23rd January, followed by a bring and share lunch. The idea is to encourage folks from all the churches to come together and socialise as we eat; over the lunch, we're going to invite you to reflect with those at your table on one question: 'what is the Spirit saying to you about the future of Churches Together in west Worcester?' We'll ask you to write down your thoughts, and then the clergy will get together to read through the responses, to pray, and to

reflect. Hopefully this will give us a sense of whether or not Churches Together has a future here in west Worcester, and, if so, a clearer vision for the format it might take. We hope you'll put this date in your diary now, and – if you at all can – come along and join us. In the meantime, please do pray about the cause of Churches Together, and reflect in your own heart about its future.

*Chris Stuart*  
*Chairman, Churches Together in West Worcester*

Editors: The Churches Together Carol Service is at St Clement's Church at 7pm on Tuesday 15th December.

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### *What is "Stand by me"?*

Stand By Me is for people aged 50 plus living in St Johns or Dines Green who may feel socially isolated and would like more contact with their local community, particularly men for whom traditional opportunities for engagement may not appeal.

The aim is to encourage older people to socialise in their local area, skills sharing, using their abilities and experiences to contribute to the development of their local neighbourhood; recognising the valued contribution older people can make to their communities.

You can see the activities that we have planned in December by looking on page 20.

*Lisa Owen*

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### *Live at Home – December dates*

Monday 7th December 11.30am: Christmas "Pudding Club"

Wednesday 9th December 1.30pm: Dick Whittington Pantomime, Swan Theatre

Tuesday 15th December 2.30pm: Live at Home Carol Service, St John's Church

Thursday 17th December 11.00am: Christmas Party with entertainment by Oldbury Park School—all welcome! Bromyard Rd Methodist Church (please let us know if you would like to join us).

Please ring the office 420 805 if you are interested in any of the above, or speak to Elaine, Ruth or Jo at clubs.

We will finish for our Christmas break following our party on **Thursday 17th December** and will restart on **Monday 4th January 2016** with lunch club at Bromyard Rd Methodist Church. The office will be open over those two weeks so please phone if you have any queries.

## Notes From The Choir

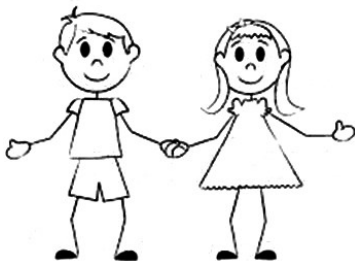


As the year draws to a close, the music examining season gets busier and, once again, I have been on my travels. This time I have been to Malaysia. I was only there for a week but it was a wonderful week packed with music and lovely people. One of the students finished her exam and enthusiastically wished me a very happy Christmas as she went out. In a predominantly Muslim country this was perhaps a little surprising but Christmas trees and lights were appearing during the week I was there and it made me realise once again how universal the festival of Christmas has become.

If Christmas and the extended build up to it have become just one big opportunity to party how can we keep the true message of the birth of Jesus at the front of our hearts and minds? For me of course music has a huge role to play in that and, as I look forward to singing all the familiar carols once again, I think of the words they contain and how profound they are if we just take the time to listen and reflect on them.

O little town of Bethlehem may perhaps seem to be one of the more sentimental carols we sing yet contains the very kernel of the Christmas message for me. At the end of the first verse comes the line: 'The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight'. Putting aside the rather quaintly old fashioned use of the word 'thee', these words strike me as hugely powerful. Wherever we are from and whatever we believe, we all have hopes and fears in our lives and it is in Jesus that they find a place. He may have been born in human form over 2000 years ago but it is the hopes and fears of people today just as much as those of the people who were with him at his birth which meet in Him. We are reminded of the universality of his presence in time and space even as we celebrate the moment of his birth. Christmas truly is for all.

*Luise Horrocks*



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### *Children's Church News*

On Saturday 14th November the Children's Activity had a Christmas theme. Everyone worked together to make our tree for the Christmas tree festival. The efforts of the children and the parents was brilliant and we are very proud

of our creation. Please do try and find the time to come and look at all the tree that will be on display from 4th-6th December.

The next family service will be on 6th December and the December Children's Activity session will be Saturday 12th December 3.00-5.30pm. Hope to see you there.

*Children's Church*





## **Some Right Christmas Crackers!**

**Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> Dec ~ Malvern Shopping Park (£5.00)**

Enjoy an afternoon of Christmas shopping: Boots, M&S, Next, Matalan and Morrisons are just some of the shops you will find at Malvern Link's Shopping Park.

**Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> Dec ~ Bath Christmas Market (£18.00)**

The award winning Christmas Market, in the beautiful City of Bath, has over 170 traditional wooden chalets lining the streets. There is a huge selection of traditional and contemporary gifts to tempt you!

**Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> December ~ Oxford Christmas Market (£18.00)**

“The City of dreaming spires will again be filled with festive joy as the Oxford Christmas Market returns for another year.”

Enjoy some last minute shopping or simply soak up the atmosphere in this delightful City.

**And finally,** would you be interested in seeing “**Dick Whittington**” at **The Swan Theatre, Worcester** on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> December?

To book a seat, please call: **Kate Fenton** on **01905 670236** or **670159**.

- Unless specified, please pay the driver on the day.
- 48 hours notice is needed to cancel a booking. Otherwise you will be charged for the transport.
- Walkers and fold up wheelchairs can be accommodated.

**Thank you to all those customers who have given me the ideas for these trips.**

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IN  
WEST WORCESTER

# Christmas in West Worcester

## Dates for your diaries

### **Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> November**

St. John's 10am-5pm **Group Advent Quiet Day** *A day of quiet reflection. Lunch is provided. Charge: £5.*

### **Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> November**

St. John's 5pm **Advent Carol Service** *Quiet, choral reflection on the theme of waiting for Christmas*

### **Friday 4<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> December**

St. John's **Christmas Tree Festival** *See separate Festival timetable for more details*

### **Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> December**

St. Clement's **Christmas Fayre**

### **Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December**

St. Clement's 6pm **Worship for Everyone Christmas Carol Service** *A service suitable for everyone!*

### **Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December**

St. Clement's 6.30pm **Christmas Carol Service** *A service of lessons and carols*

### **Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December**

St. Michael's 10.30am **Christmas Carol Service**

St. John's 6pm **Carols by Candlelight** *Traditional choral service of lessons and carols followed by seasonal refreshments.*

### **Christmas Eve, 24<sup>th</sup> December**

St. Clement's 4pm **Crib service**

St. John's 5pm **Christingle and Crib Service;** *particularly for children; lasts about an hour*

St. David's 9.30pm **Christmas Eve Communion**

St. Clement's 11.30pm **Midnight Communion** *Join us as we share bread & wine or receive a blessing. Lasts about 1 hour*

St. John's 11.30pm **Candlelit Midnight Eucharist** *Join us as we share bread & wine or receive a blessing. Incense will be used. Lasts about 1 hour*

### **Christmas Day, 25<sup>th</sup> December**

St. John's 9am **Christmas Communion.** *A quiet, reflective said service using traditional language.*

St. Michael's 10am **Christmas Eucharist**

St. John's 10.30am **Christmas Family Eucharist.** *Celebration for all the family; lasts about 1 hour*

St. Clement's 10.45am **Worship for Everyone Christmas Celebration.**

### **Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December**

St. Clement's 10.30am **Christmas season Eucharist.** *A service of celebration for all the West Worcester Group*

St. David's 4pm **Carols Round the Tree.** *A service of seasonal readings and popular carols*

## *Maggs Day Centre*

The manager and staff at the Centre would like to express their sincere thanks for all the support and kindness that we have shown them over recent months. In particular, they very much appreciated the generous donation of £116 (proceeds from the harvest service) and the continuing anonymous week-by-week donations that many of you make in the grey Curver box. They also were very grateful for the individual private financial donations that I have been given from time-to-time to pass on to the Centre.

*John Prangnell*

---

## *Parish Breakfast*

You will be delighted to learn that our fifth parish breakfast, held on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> October, was another great success and provided once more a really powerful example of our church's mission to reach out beyond our immediate membership. Our thanks go in particular to Jenny for so ably organising the event and to the cheerful and hard-working band of 14 volunteers who helped to make it such a joyful occasion.

We were able to build successfully on our first four breakfasts and draw into church, once again, a really good mix of visitors as well as friends from St John's. In all 80 cooked breakfasts were served (though a number of the younger visitors managed seconds and thirds!) and over 100 patrons attended. The new style Indigo Valley coffee was especially appreciated and the L shaped style layout was considered by all to be a great success in encouraging conversation with visitors.

Although the occasion was completely free of charge, a number of generous donations were made so that all the costs covered, and sufficient remained for a float to be available to go forwards for the next parish breakfast. So, Jenny no pressure, but we look forward with enthusiasm to the next parish breakfast and drawing into church yet more visitors and friends.

*John Prangnell - On behalf of the volunteers*

---



[christmasstartswithchrist.com](http://christmasstartswithchrist.com)

Just 12 per cent of adults know the nativity story, and more than one-third of children don't know whose birthday it is. Meanwhile, 51 per cent of people now say the birth of Jesus is irrelevant to their Christmas.

Christmas Starts with Christ is a campaign aimed at helping churches to make Christ and the amazing story of his birth the focus of the nation's favourite time of year. Our vision is for the message "Christmas starts with Christ" to be visible amongst the busy-ness of the season, to act as a reminder that although there are many ways that we mark the celebration, Christ is the true meaning.



**stand  
by  
me**  
project

Open to people aged over 50, living in St Johns and Dines Green who want to become involved in their local community.

**This month to celebrate the Christmas season we are inviting residents of St Johns and Dines Green aged over 50 to bring their friends and family to our film session. Join us to watch a film for all ages that many will remember from their childhood.**

\* Refreshments £1

**St Johns Wednesday December 9<sup>th</sup> 12.30pm - 3pm**

St Johns Working Men's Club  
3 Church Terrace, Worcester, WR2 5BX

**Dines Green Wednesday December 16<sup>th</sup> 12.30 pm - 3pm**

The Green Centre,  
Gresham Rd, Dines Green, Worcester, WR2 5QS

For more information and to book a place please contact:

**Lisa Owen,**

**Stand By Me,**

**Worcester Volunteer Centre 01905 24741 /**

**[Lisa@wvc.org.uk](mailto:Lisa@wvc.org.uk)**



*St. John-in-Bedwardine  
Parish Church*



## *From The Magazine Archive, December 1950*

*Two extracts from the letter from the Vicar (John Mort):*

All the year round the world unconsciously pays its homage to the fact of Christ and His lowly cradle; for there is not a newspaper, or a cheque, or a letter that does not bear a date upon it. The world reckons its time from the first Christmas Day. Not only our reading and writing, but even our trade carries that hidden Name upon its documents and records. But who when he writes 1950 or 1951 ever thinks what these figures mean?

It is strange, when you think of it, that the angel-choir should have chosen shepherds for their audience. One might have expected that the good news of a Saviour's birth would be proclaimed first to a priest at the Altar or to some select company of holy men who waited eargerly for His coming. Instead of that, the message came to ordinary men, representatives of the world's workers, the reason being that God's Christmas Gift was meant for the whole world—not merely for the devout and expectant, but for its humble, toiling millions.

And not only was the Gospel preached first to the common people, but it was preached to men at their work. We are all inclined to regard the day's work and religion as things apart. Yet here at the very beginning, the message of the Gospel enters the sphere of daily duty and claims a hearing there—a symbol surely of the fact that it comes to redeem the world's work and turn its toil to worship.

*And something completely different:*

### ST. JOHN'S CHURCH CRICKET SECTION

THROUGH the good offices of Mr. G. A. Lewis the Bromwich Road ground will again be available for next season.

A number of attractive fixtures have already been arranged, and we look forward to making 1951 the best-ever season.

The Annual General Meeting and election of officers will take place during January, and it is not too early to start compiling an agenda. Anything you would like discussed will be gladly included—just drop a note through the letter-box or hand it to a Committee Member.

## *Church Flowers*



It's time that the flower arrangers got a little publicity.

Here is a photograph I took recently of the lovely flowers on the pulpit in church.

*Edward Reeves*

---

## *Decorating the Church for Christmastide*

We will be decorating the Church for Christmas on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> December, 9am to 1pm. Refreshments will be available mid-morning and we welcome anyone who wishes to help. If you have any variegated greenery, holly etc., this will be most helpful and please leave it in the Porch if you are unable to get to church on the Saturday.

If you wish to remember loved ones, family and friends by giving a donation towards Christmas flowers this will be most gratefully received. Please print the names of those to be remembered on an envelope with your donation and hand it to a member of the clergy, churchwardens, or myself. The Memorial List will be put on the table by the main door at Christmas.

Thank you all for your continued encouragement and generosity over the past year. All the Flower Team join me in wishing you a blessed and joyful Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

*Eileen Cantrill*



## Christmas Festival programme of events.

Thursday 3rd December- all trees will be positioned around Church ready to be on show all weekend



Friday 4th December - 5pm Santa will arrive at St John's Church, in his sleigh, to open the fete. He will retire to his grotto where the children will be able to visit him and then join in the Singalong a Santa, lit by the trees and candlelight. Outside there will be stalls selling hot food and mulled wine and inside the now famous cake and provisions stall will be set up. Games and fun to be had by all surrounded by the beautiful sounds and smells of Christmas.



Saturday 5th December- from 9 - 11 am, Santa will be back to have breakfast with the children of St John's and take part in the magic show. All this will be free for the children. Craft activities and photograph opportunities will also be available at a small cost.

In the afternoon invited guests from the local community will be treated to songs by St Richards Hospice choir followed by afternoon tea.

The evening will see the popular Colla Voce singing group perform a special Christmas concert for us. Tickets £5 on the door. Cheese, wine and soft drinks will be available in the interval.



Sunday 6th December - a quieter day of Thanksgiving for the festival. An afternoon concert by the Worcester Brass Ensemble will be followed by a service of thanks to include everyone who has kindly helped in the hard work of the weekend. This has proved to be long list of guests from the local community, charities and church groups.



Charity no. 1152583



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## *Raise money for the church – at no cost to you!*

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To see how it works and, if you wish, request your Everyday Shopping Card visit [www.raisewithsainsburys.com/charity/sjib](http://www.raisewithsainsburys.com/charity/sjib)

(Editor – I've got one and it was very easy to sign up and use the card)



## *Sudoku Puzzle*

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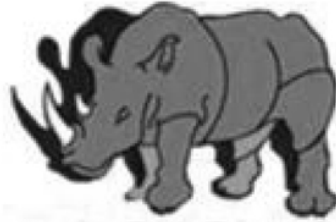
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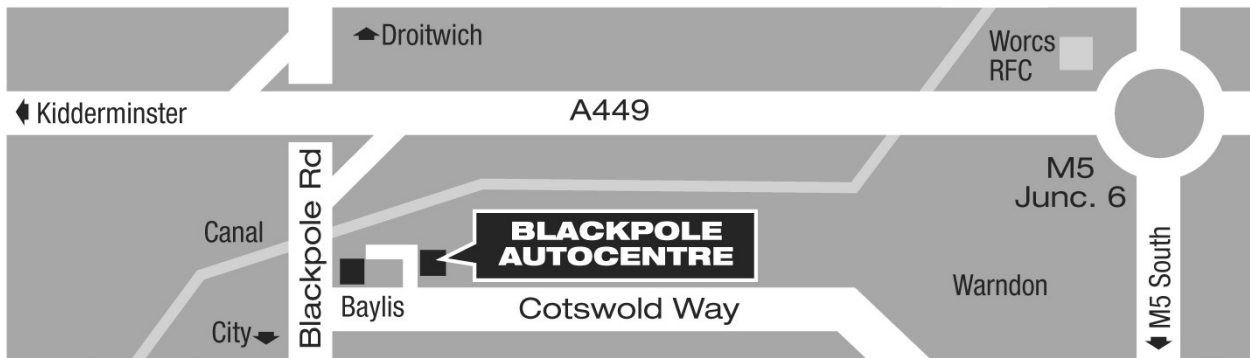
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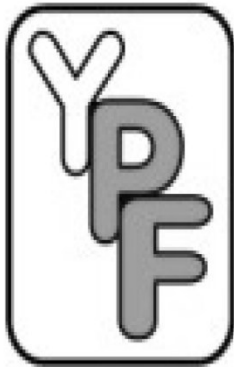


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The Parish Magazine is published A5 in size, in black and white. There are eleven issues during the year, July and August being a combined issue.

An advert can be full page / half page / quarter page in size and the booking can be from one month to one year.

If you wish to advertise, please contact Sue Hussell on 01684 893397 or by email at [sue.hussell@talktalk.net](mailto:sue.hussell@talktalk.net)

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## *To subscribe to the magazine*

The magazine costs 40p to purchase and can be obtained from the back of church. Subscriptions are available at the discounted price of £4 per year. We encourage you to subscribe as this means that we know more closely in advance how many copies to print and this makes things easier for our printing team.

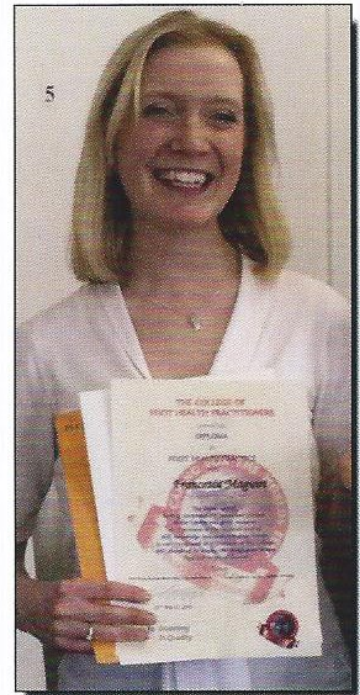
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- ◇ Getting washed or dressed
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- ◇ Preparing food
- ◇ Taking medication
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**Website:**

[www.trucareworchester.co.uk](http://www.trucareworchester.co.uk)

**Email:**

[karenspeak@btinternet.com](mailto:karenspeak@btinternet.com)



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## SOME OF OUR CHURCH GROUPS

To avoid disappointment, in case the arrangements are different in any particular week, please contact the person shown before turning up at one of the groups.

### BELLRINGING

St John's has a fine peal of eight bells. If you are interested in ringing, or learning to ring, please contact the Ringing Master, John Bower 07792 574554.

### CHOIR

The choir practises on Thursday evenings and sings at most Sunday services. If you can sing (or are prepared to learn) do speak to the Choir Master, John Brierley, 358474.

### MUSIC GROUP

This meets on Fridays in church at 7.30 pm to play contemporary Christian music, and provides music for worship on a regular basis. Contact Peter Yates, on 422565.

### LITTLE LAMBS (TODDLER GROUP)

Birth to 4 years old and carers. Here at the church; Mondays 10.00 am to noon in term time. Free! Come and join the fun, or contact Amy Rees via the Parish Office.

### BIBLES, BUMPS and BABIES

An informal bible study group. Contact Sarah Cottrill on 426257 for more details.

### BIBLE STUDY FELLOWSHIP

Meets in the Burroughs room at 10 am every Wednesday for prayer and study. Contact Sylvia Render on 422654 for further details.

## PARISH OFFICE

1a Bromyard Road  
St John's, WR2 5BS  
Tel: (01905) 420490

From the church car park, walk up the Bromyard Road side of the church to the green door.  
Answerphone outside office hours.

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e-mail: [office@stjohninbedwardine.co.uk](mailto:office@stjohninbedwardine.co.uk)

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**Normally open for general enquiries and messages (please ring to check)**

Monday: 10.30am to noon.      Wednesday, Thursday, Friday: 10am to noon.

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**For booking baptisms and weddings:** Please visit or telephone the office during the normal opening hours on Monday, Wednesday or Friday. Also open specifically for these bookings on the first Thursday of each month from 6.30pm until 7.30pm

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Parish Website: [www.stjohninbedwardine.co.uk](http://www.stjohninbedwardine.co.uk)

Group Website: [www.westworcesterchurches.org.uk](http://www.westworcesterchurches.org.uk)

The church of St John-in-Bedwardine is a registered charity, number 1152583.





## Sunday services in the West Worcester Group, December 2015

|   | <b>St. John's</b>  | <b>St. Clement's</b>                                      | <b>St. David's</b>                    | <b>St Michael's</b>   |
|---|--|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>6<sup>th</sup><br/>December</b>  | 8am Holy Communion (BCP)<br>10.30am Parish Eucharist<br>with Children's Participation<br>5pm Service to close the Christmas<br>Tree Festival | 9am Holy Communion<br><br>10.45am Worship<br>for Everyone | <br><br><br>4pm Evensong              | At the time of writing, St<br>Michael's Church remains<br>closed following the flood<br>of sewage it suffered.<br><br>Services will resume at<br>10.30am each Sunday<br>morning as soon as<br>possible.<br><br>Please contact Margaret<br>Jones on 421594 for<br>further information. |
| <b>13<sup>th</sup><br/>December</b>   | 8am Holy Communion (BCP)<br>10.30am Parish Eucharist<br>with Children's Church<br>5pm Café Church  | 9am Holy Communion<br><br>10.45am Worship<br>for Everyone | <br><br><br>11.15am Holy Communion    |   |
| <b>20<sup>th</sup><br/>December</b>   | 8am Holy Communion (BCP)<br>10.30am Parish Eucharist<br>with Children's Church<br><b>6pm</b> Candlelit Carol Service                         | 9am Holy Communion<br><br>10.45am Worship<br>for Everyone | <br><br><br>11.15am Morning Prayer    |   |
| <b>27<sup>th</sup><br/>December</b>   | No service at St John's<br>Group service at<br>St Clement's 10.30am  | <br><br><br>10.30am Group Service                         | <br><br><br>4pm Carols round the tree | No service at St Michael's<br><br>Group service at<br>St Clement's 10.30am  |
| <b>3<sup>rd</sup> January<br/>2016</b>  | 8am Holy Communion (BCP)<br>10.30am Parish Eucharist<br>with Children's Church<br>5pm Evensong (BCP)   | <br><br><br>11am Family Service                           | <br><br><br>4pm Holy Communion        | See note above about the<br>situation at St Michael's.  |
| <b>The information above is correct at the time of going to press, but please watch the weekly church newsletters and website for the latest information.</b> |  |   |                                       |   |