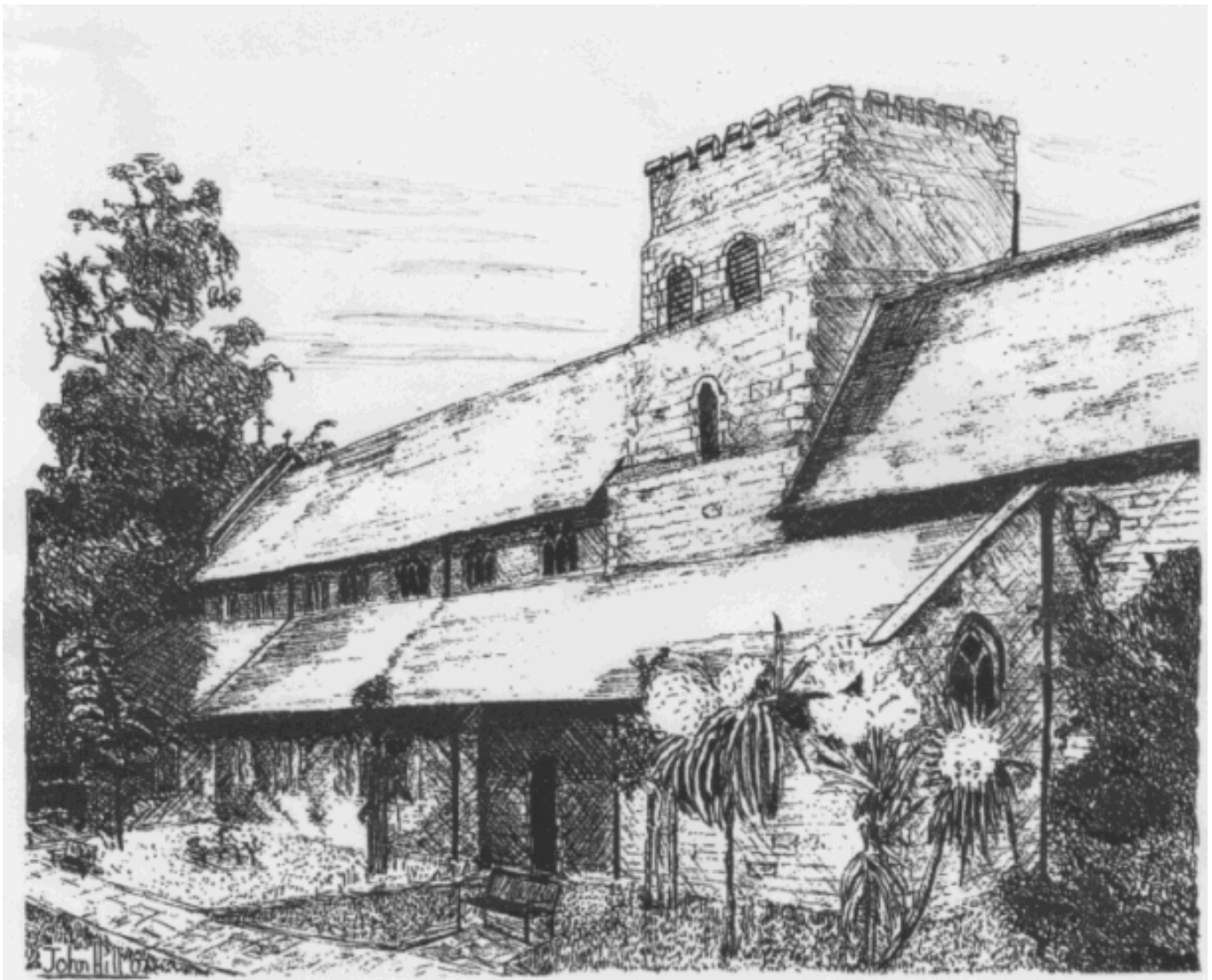


CHRIST CHURCH

MILTON-NEXT-GRAVESEND

PARISH MAGAZINE



John Hill 2007



December
2008

Vicar	Sue Brewer	352643 suec@brewer86.plus.com
Hon. Ass. Priest	Jacqueline Littlewood	560106
Pastoral Assistant	Pam Kilby	
Church Warden	Christine Sewell	745443
Church Warden	Peter Shearan	566215
PCC Secretary	Julie Hill	568265
PCC Treasurer	Stanley Bond	534510
Reader	Rosemary Austin	358702
Reader	Sheila Brown	356339
Reader	John Hougham	352138
Reader	Betty Martin	352696
Reader	Martin Sewell	745443

Deadline for January magazine: Sunday 21st December .
 Put on peg in the vestry, or hand to a Churchwarden,
 or email: ianbbrown@phonecoop.coop

Inside this month's magazine

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**Christ Church Hall
 is available for hire.
 Contact: Mrs Joan Bennett
 01474 568585**

**Well equipped. Very
 suitable for meetings
 and children's parties.**

Welcome



The picture on our Christmas card, delivered to all the houses within the parish, is by Sieger Koder, the artist who's paintings were used during the three hour devotion at Easter this year.

The picture depicts the Nativity, God sharing his son with all the people of the world.

Christ Church will be opening its doors every day during Advent between 9.30am and 12.30pm. This will be an opportunity to welcome you the parishioners who might like to drop in for prayer and quiet space, chat, a cup of coffee, or to look around.

Why not join us at one of our Christmas Services, details are on page 14.

Editor

An interesting ADVENT CALENDAR can be found on the internet go to:

www.paperlesschristmas.org
watch the videos and have a go on the interactive games.

WISHING ALL AT CHRISTCHURCH
A
VERY PEACEFUL AND HAPPY
CHRISTMAS
AND NEW YEAR



From Audrey Price



This year I am not sending cards. I have sent a donation to Present Aid, connected to Christian Aid, for the purchase of some ducks for Bangladesh.

A CHURCH WARDEN'S NOTES

Apart from a further theft of lead from one of our flat roofs, which caused a flurry of excitement in the early part of last month and entails a further claim on the insurance, life at church has been relatively quiet. We are gearing up for the Christmas celebrations and need the space, I reckon!

My own life has been more hectic. I have been involved, as producer and director, of the latest Cobham Amateur Society Production, which concerned the lives of four Jewish women whose synagogue was to be closed; and their efforts to stop the closure. Apart from the play itself, there was the added interest to me of the speech patterns, and also the need to provide a couple of props. The latter were the menorah - the eight candles lit during Chanukah (Hannakkah), which symbolises the return of the Jews to the Temple after their exile in Babylon - and a memorial candle, lit after one of the characters dies. I am a public speaker, and among the venues I go to regularly is a retired club in the synagogue at Catford, south-east London.

Leane Segal, who came to England in the 1930s with the Kindertransport, runs the club, and was only too happy to loan me the items. At the same time she let me borrow a fascinating book - The Idiot's Guide to Jewish History and Culture - which contains some wonderful pieces of typical Jewish humour, and I thought to share them with you. There is the story of the Jew shipwrecked alone on a desert island, for example. He was eventually rescued, and it was found that he had built two synagogues. When questioned he explained that one was for him to pray in regularly: "the other one I shall never set foot in". And there was the Jewish atheist: "My grandfather was an atheist, my father was an atheist, I am an atheist, and please God, my children will be atheists". There are two kinds of Jews, according to one rabbi: religious Jews and not yet religious Jews.

In much the same way that there are Christian commentaries on the Bible, so there are Jewish ones. These, together with much about insights into life and religion in general, have come from rabbis who have put them together over the centuries; they are called the Midrash. They tell, for example, of what God considered when he was about to create Eve from Adam. "If I make her from his head, she will end up being haughty; from his lips, she will be a tattler of tales; from his heart, she will be guilty of envy; from his feet, she will be stepped upon and feel inferior. No - I will make her from his ribs, so they will always be side by side as equals!"

Peter Shearan. December 2008

Blythswood

A huge THANK YOU to all members of Christ Church for your response to our Blythswood Care Shoe Box Appeal. Many of you asked for more information about Blythswood Care, who have a locally based depot on the Medway Trading Estate. Since 1966 Blythswood has combined the Christian message



Blythswood sorting office



Selection of boxes given by Christ Church

with practical help for those in need every day and also in times of emergency. As well as shoe boxes at Christmas Blythswood is committed to long term projects at home, in Europe, Africa and Asia. They collect a wide range of items all year round some of which are sold in their Strood and Snodland Charity shops. The money raised here going towards development and education projects.

Household items are used as humanitarian aid distributed via The Red Cross Social Care teams in Hungary and Serbia. Toys, jigsaws and clothing are sent to orphanages, kindergarten schools and families in Eastern Europe where winters are very harsh and families just don't have suitable clothing. Buckets of Love containing such simple items as duct tape, plasters, needles, cotton and plastic sheeting and of course the bucket to hold fresh water are sent to slums in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Eastern Europe and the Middle East. When disaster strikes families need urgent emergency supplies, toiletries, pots and pans, nappies, towels, buckets and cleaning equipment wherever they may be. So you see it's not just at Christmas we need to remember Blythswood Care; their work continues all year long. I have a list and gift catalogue of some items that can be used all year round for anyone who is interested.

Once again thank you Christ Church for your shoe boxes we did not make the 100 but 60 was a very creditable effort and we did make Christmas very special for those people who will receive them.

Thank you
Veronica.

First Steps

12/11/08

Wednesday 12th November is beautiful, cold and sunny. A lovely day for our First Steps service. Our naughty little sheep has already been in Church this morning to see the children from our Pre-school sing their special songs and say their Thank You prayers. He had a great time and even tried joining in with some of the songs. He said that now that he's been in a couple of times he's beginning to remember some of the words. What a clever little sheep! He particularly enjoyed joining in with the Marching Song though he said that the diving bit made his tummy go funny! At one point I thought that I'd lost him but discovered that Betty Martin was giving him a Cuddle! He said that he did like having a fuss made of him! He'll be expecting it every time! Everyone in Church, including the children sang "Happy Birthday" to Hilary Devereux. It was her 89th Birthday and our naughty little sheep asked me how many years that was in sheep years. I said that I couldn't tell him but thought that it must be lots and lots!



So it is now time for our ty little sheep has had a bit of ment. Rev. Sue is able to be we are joined by a lovely

First Steps service and our naugh- a rest after the earlier excite- with us today, which is great and crowd. There are some new faces

as well as our well-loved regulars Alicia, Sacha and Dominic are with us for the first time and they have brought their Mums with them. There are 14 children all together and they are happy, lively and ready with their jingle bells to make a joyful sound to the glory of God. Our naughty little sheep is excited too and he tells me he can't wait to play with them all in the Hall later. But first we light our candles as we sing "Candle time". We also have got 4 special candles to light today. One for Julie's new grandson Joseph John, one for my niece Rachel's new baby son, one for Daniel and Marta's new cousin in Australia, named Caitlin. There's even one for Lilly's Nanny's dog who has had an operation. It is good to be able to share in times of both happiness and concern for our families. Our naughty little sheep says that he hopes some one would light a candle for him if necessary. "Me too" I told him.

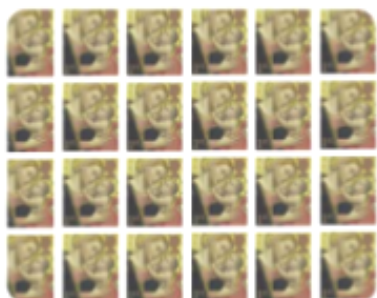
Today we are talking about Noah's Ark and I have borrowed one from our Pre-school. It has pride of place on our little altar. We can't decide whether the animals are waiting to get onto the Ark or have just got off but as they are all looking mighty relieved we think it may be the latter. We think of all the animals that might have been on the Ark and Marian plays the piano for us as we sing songs about frogs, hedgehogs, worms, caterpillars and butterflies and hope all got on well together. We also sing a new song about rain bows but I think it needs a bit more work. Practice makes perfect!

Our naughty little sheep says that there must have been sheep on the Ark or he wouldn't be here and I suppose he has got a point! We gives thanks to God for all the gifts that he gives us each day, the beautiful world in which we live and His undying love for us. When it is time to blow out our candles, Ella and Erin volunteer to help and I must say that they do a very good job

Out into the Hall and time for play, chat and refreshments overseen by Joyce and Marian. Sadly Alicia, Sacha and Dominic and their Mums have to leave because they have other things that they need to do and places to be but hopefully they will join us next time. Everyone else has a lively time in the Hall, including our naughty little sheep. At the end of our last service he felt rather left out because no one played with him but today Lily takes him under he wing, so to speak, and at one stage she, Erin and Ella all want to play with him at the same time! I hope it doesn't go to his head! With yet more pictures to colour (Arks and rainbows this time!) it is time to leave. We have all really enjoyed our time together and appreciate the hard wall done by Julie, Joyce and Marian to make it possible.

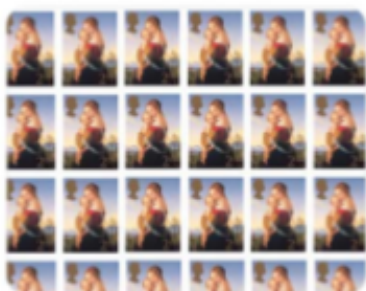
Our next service will be on 10th December when we will be thinking about Christmas and the birth of Jesus. It is our naughty little sheep's very favourite story. He likes the bit about the shepherds coming to worship the baby Jesus because he thinks that sheep might be involved. He's really looking forward to that and so am I! In the mean time I think that he's hoping to see lots of you at our Christingle service at 4 pm on 7th December when he's planning to sneak in to see the Church all bright with candle light and and full of excited children and families. So we both look forward to seeing you all very soon. God bless.

Rosemary Austin.



Christmas Stamps

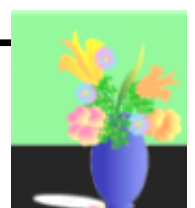
Next time you are in the Post Office buying stamps, why not ask for the 1st or 2nd class stamps depicting the Madonna and Child, rather than the Pantomime theme?



Flower Arranging

Janice Stevens has a few vacancies on the flower arranging rota.

You can offer to arrange the altar flowers on your designated week, or else pay for the flowers which Janice will arrange for you. Many people like to do this in memory of a loved one, or for a special anniversary. Please have a word with Sue or Janice if you can take a slot.



December is a very special time to be a member of a Church Choir. We sing lots of Carols, new ones and old favourites. It takes us back to earlier times and bring fond memories of Christmases past at Christ Church.

Amidst all the practising and polishing of our singing for Christmas itself, there are occasions to spend time learning new music at Diocesan events. This year several members of our Choir will be taking part in the singing of Compline at West Malling Abbey on Saturday December 6th. Compline is a very old form of Worship and such opportunities to sing it are rare these days.

We continue to prepare for our annual Carols by Candlelight concert by the Choir on Dec 14th at 6.30pm. Mince pies will be available as usual during the Interval. We hope that many of you will join for this enjoyable preparation for the Christmas Season.



Gwyneth and the Choir wish you all a Very Happy Christmas!

Pam Kilby

A very happy Christmas from Christ Church Music Group!



We hope you will be able to join us at one of the many Christmas services.

On 21st December 6.30pm we are singing 2 carols at the service of Lessons and Carols and we are also practising for the Ellenor Lights of Love service at 4pm on December 14th.

It is always exciting to sing a mixture of old and new music as the congregation gathers for the Midnight Christmas service - come at 11pm and join in for half an hour! - An oasis of peace after all the preparation for Christmas!

We shall be singing in the community at the St George's Shopping Centre on Saturday 13th for Christian Aid.

Sheila Brown

Christingle
Welcoming children
into the church

7th December 4 pm



The Children's Society



PASTORAL ASSISTANT AUTHORISATION SERVICE AT ST ALBANS

I would like to say a big thank you to everyone who came to support me when I was Authorised recently. It was lovely to see so many of you, it made it a very special occasion for me. It was quite a step to take after so many years. I shall enjoy being part of the Christ Church Staff Team and starting my ministry here at Christ Church.



PAM KILBY

Holy Baptism

Suffer little children to come unto me

5th October	James Robert Wood Sarah Alexandra Ramsdale Thomas Edward Long Abbi Mary Jay
12th October	Anna Marie Lawrence-Lovell Eleanor Amelia Fiona Catherine Lawrence-Lovell
19th October	Kieran McHugh Lucy Charlotte Whitaker Ben Lee Botley Mason William Jessup
16th November	Liam Paul Calvert Isabel Scarlet Marks Leo George James Whittin Keir-Grace Nightingale

Rest In Peace

We commend to our Lord

4th September	Donald Bardoe
17th September	Frank Cheeseman
17th September	Arthur Pickering
20th September	Sylvia Mitchell
26th September	Avis Corby
29th September	Geoffrey Dunlop
19th October	Trudi Spall
28th October	Joanna Cubitt
12th November	Joan Robinson

Julie Hill

Church Garden Update

In our renovations of the church we have made a very good start and have had many encouraging comments made to us from various people. The digging over of the borders has been completed and some areas have already had new plants put in them, including a new rose garden at the front of the church. In the side borders, opposite the hall, we are looking to create something with a sensory theme in it, along with the possibility of providing a wheelchair accessible path along the edge of the border. In the old rose border at the front of the church we will be creating a colourful bed based around the Christian symbol of the fish obviously it will now be the Spring before work begins on these two projects.

In the meantime though we are looking at doing work at the back of the church, in the 'pleasance', the immediate project being the lowering of the tree height and the replacing of the fence just behind the tree line. We can then look at making the area in front of the tree line more appealing and user friendly, especially for the children. I am currently in the process of getting quotes for this work to be done but from those I have had in so far we are looking at around £4500 for those two jobs to be done- the tree height lowered and a new fence erected.

It is also our intention to tidy up the top end of the 'pleasance' with possible new gating etc. once the new pre school shed has been erected. Looking slightly further ahead Sue has mentioned to me that within the next year or two we will run out of space in the Garden of Remembrance, so we are

currently looking at possible ways in which we can enlarge the Garden in an appropriate way. If any of you have any ideas of how best we can do this please jot your ideas down, along with a possible sketch plan and pass them on to me. Whatever we eventually decide on doing it will be another quite costly undertaking.

We are earnestly seeking grants from various places to help towards the cost, and in this respect, if any of you know of any areas that we might tap into for grant aid then please let me know.

John Thrush (on behalf of the Gardening Committee)



Do you recognise the couple in this photograph? A digital camera was given to sell at our Christmas Bazaar - the camera is broken but contains a memory card containing a number of photographs of people on holiday. If you know the people please contact us so we can arrange for the memory card to be returned.



WWI Memorial Stone

In the November magazine we asked if anyone knew anything about a memorial stone found in the ground by John Thrush while gardening.

Well Peter Shearan (one of our Church Wardens) was one step ahead! Having found a hand written list of names amongst some pieces of paper in the vicar's vestry he embarked on a historical journey to find out more. His research can be seen in the booklet in the Warrior Chapel. The Memorial Stone was erected in the original Christ Church and

appears to have been misplaced during the move in 1934, left lying face down in the soil. Time has taken its toll with very little of the inscriptions being visible. Peter's booklet goes further than a list of names, giving details of the young men who gave their lives during World War I.

The Memorial Stone is now in the Garden of Remembrance.

It was Peter's research into the list that led him to write the booklet 'One Hundred and Fifty Years of Service' a history of Christ Church - which is available to purchase at the back of the church.

There are one or two gaps in Peter's research, if you have any information Peter would be delighted to receive it so he can complete this unique list and so honour those whose names are recorded.

Ian Brown

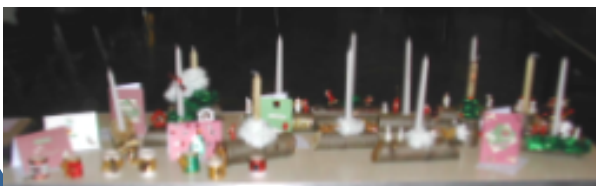
CHRIST CHURCH YOUTH CLUB

Week 4 A normal night at the youth club with table tennis, pool, darts and board games - not forgetting the drinks and sweets.

Week 5 The bowling night was a great success.

Week 6 Crafts for Christmas: See the photograph below of the table decorations; Christmas serviette rings and cards made by the young people ably helped by Sheila Knight, Ian Brown, Debbie Carter and Debra Bardon while Steve Humphries kept an eye on games.

Week 7 Drama and Music night - many thanks to Mark Singer for master minding the drama.



Week 8 Angelspace - held in Rochester Cathedral, an opportunity for young people to worship in a different way.

Ian Brown

FOR PARENTS

Bible reading

Luke 1.26-38

When the angel came to Mary with a greeting from God, Mary was very surprised. When she realised that she really did have a choice, Mary said 'yes' and agreed to be the mother of this very special baby. This week we talked about how Mary changes as a result of saying 'yes' to God and how we can change too.

FRIDGE PRAYER

Say the following prayer at least 10 times a day.

Yes God!

Activity



Add colour to the picture and write 'yes' as often as you can on this page.

Talk about...

How might people recognise angels in their lives today?

What are the stories about people in our own family who have had the courage to say 'yes' to something difficult?

Can you say yes to God when it might mean doing something you don't want to do?

What difference has their courage made to our family?

Living faith

Find out about people who have said 'yes' to God and how it has changed their lives.

Try to say 'yes' each time you have the chance to do or say something helpful.



Book to read / film to watch

Mary Hoffman, *An Angel Just Like Me*, Frances Lincoln Children's Books, 11 Sep 2007, ISBN 9781845078744.

With older children you could watch a clip from *Evan Almighty* where Evan has to say yes to God and knows his life will change.

Gardening Tips for December

It has been a wet November but with odd days of dry weather and even sunshine. I'm sure you will have all the flower beds, shrub beds, containers and grass areas picked over and made to look neat and tidy.

If you are a little behind in this work, don't worry. I am sure that December will have similar weather conditions, although shorter daylight, and you can get up to date.



If you have not pruned Rose bushes and climbing Roses back by a third to stop wind damage, do so now.

Check the condition of any forced bulbs. If they look a bit mildewy, let them dry off a little on the compost surface. They may of course need watering if dry. Do not keep them in the dark once the leaves have reached 2 inches high.

Adam



Girlguiding UK
girls in the lead

First of all I would like to introduce myself.

My name is

Josie Turner and I have just taken over the role of Division Marketing and Recruitment Advisor for Thames Division Girlguiding. Your editor has kindly agreed to allow me to let you know what Rainbows, Brownies and Guides have been doing recently and what we are doing within Girlguiding in the future.

A few years ago each section had their programme updated to introduce a modern programme and badges for the girls to do. In came things like computer, chocolate and circus skills badges and a new mix and match guide and brownie wear came in. The Rainbows, who didn't have badges to work for under the previous programme, found that they could now get a few badges and work on roundabouts which gave them the

opportunity to chose what they wanted to do. They also had new Rainbow wear although girls can still wear the tabard.

Guiding these days gives the girls a much more balanced programme in which they have more input.

We are approaching our centenary and there are many exciting things organised both locally and nationally for the girls so I look forward to letting you know about them as they arise.

Next time I will let you know what the girls in your parish have been doing with hopefully some input by a guide, brownie or rainbow but in the meantime could I wish you all, on behalf of Girlguiding, a happy Christmas and a peaceful new year and if you should wish to have your daughter put on a waiting list for Rainbows (5-7) Brownies (7-10) and Guides (10-14) please give me a ring on 568811. Thank you.

Josie Turner

Christmas at Christ Church

Sunday 7th December 4 pm

CHRISTINGLE

for all the family, we celebrate the love of Jesus for the whole world, and take a collection for the work of the Children's Society.

Sunday 14th December 4 p.m.
Ellenor Lights of Love

Sunday 14th December 6.30 p.m.
CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT
café-style Christmas carol concert by
Christ Church choir, with seasonal refreshments

Friday 19th December 7.00 p.m.
COME AND SING!

Carol singing around the parish... meet in church at 7pm to warm up our voices, then we head out to sing to various members of our local community. Ending with mince pies and wine at the Vicarage. Come dressed up warm and bring any portable musical instruments.

Sunday 21st December 6.30 p.m.

A SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS

we hear and sing of the Christmas story

(During this service, there will be an opportunity to remember loved ones who will be missed this Christmas)

CHRISTMAS EVE 4.00 p.m.

CRIB SERVICE

Especially for children, we tell the story as the Christmas crib is built. Come early to get a good seat! Please bring gifts for children at the Dartford and Gravesham Women's Refuge, or treats for the mums.

CHRISTMAS EVE 11.30 p.m.

MIDNIGHT MASS

CHRISTMAS DAY 8.00 a.m.

A simple said service of HOLY COMMUNION

CHRISTMAS DAY 10.00 a.m.

FAMILY COMMUNION WITH CAROLS

What's on this month?

December

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
<p>30 Nov St Andrews Day</p> <p>First Sunday in Advent</p>	<p>1 Dec World Aids Day</p> <p>Music group Cubs Brownies</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Staff meeting</p>	<p>3</p> <p>MU Christmas social</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Beavers Brownies Choir</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Scouts Office hours CCADS</p>	<p>6</p> <p>9:30 am- Working Party</p>
<p>7</p> <p>Christingle 4pm</p> <p>Youth Club DISCO</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Feast of Immaculate Conception Bodhi Day (Buddist) Cubs Brownies</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Eid-al-Adha (Muslim)</p>	<p>10</p> <p>First Steps MU Christmas dinner Guides</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Beavers Brownies Choir</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Full Moon Scouts Office hours CCADS</p>	<p>13</p>
<p>14</p> <p>Ellenor Lights of Love 4pm Carols by candlelight 6.30pm</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Cubs Brownies</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Guides</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Beavers Brownies Choir</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Come and Sing Scouts Office Hours CCADS</p>	<p>20</p>
<p>21</p> <p>Service of Lessons and Carols</p> <p>Deadline for magazine entry</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Brownies Cubs</p> <p>Hanukkah begins (Jewish)</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Christmas Eve Crib Service 4pm Midnight Mass 11.30pm</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Christmas Day Holy Communion 8am Family Communion 10am</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Boxing Day St Stephen's Day</p>	<p>27</p> <p>New Moon</p>
<p>28</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Muharram (Muslim)</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p>New Year's Eve</p>	<p>Highlights this month !</p> <p>Christingle</p> <p>Christmas Day</p>		

What happens at Christ Church?

Sunday Services

8.00 am Holy Communion (said)

10.00am Communion with crèche & God's Gang

On the 2nd Sunday Uniformed Organisations parade

Evening Service - see inside magazine for details.

Weekday Services

Holy Communion (said)

Monday and Saturday 8am.

Tuesday & Thursday 7.00am.

Wednesday 10.00am

For further information
contact
the Church Wardens

Office hours

Friday 6:30pm until 7:30pm

Clubs

There are a wide variety of clubs for you:-

Daily Christ Church Pre-school (2½ upwards)

Monday Cubs; Music Group; Brownies

Tuesday

Wednesday Guides; Mothers Union (1st Wednesday)

First Steps (under 5's and carers) 2nd Wednesday 1.45pm

Thursday Beavers; Brownies; Choir Practice

Friday Scouts; Amateur Dramatics; Parent and Toddler

Saturday Working party (1st Saturday)

Sunday Christ Church Youth Club