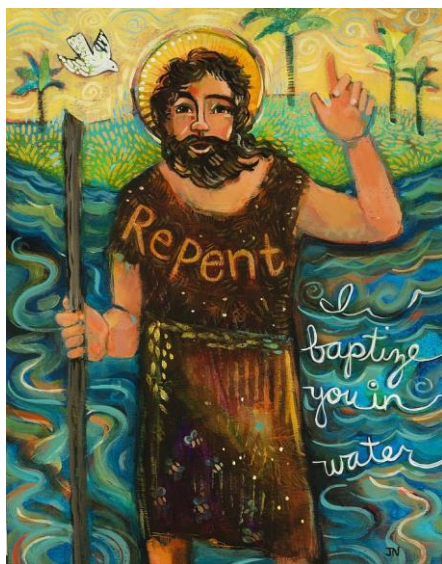




Registered Charity Number: 1134149

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

SUNDAY 15th DECEMBER 2024



'What must we do?' People asked John, having been told to repent. His answers were all about behaviour - what we now call social and economic justice. How much easier if they had been told to pray! Christianity is not just a religion of theory and inward spirituality – but is a way of life.

Many people in our congregations quietly get on with it – volunteering in community groups, conducting their professional lives with integrity, treating everyone with equal respect. When you do this,

the Kingdom of God has come near to those people you encounter. This is our faith.

DIARY

Sunday 15th December ADVENT 3

- 9.30am Morning Prayer at
Langley Vale Village Hall
- 10.00am Holy Communion at St Martin's
- 4.00pm Advent Study Course – see below*
- 6.30pm Evening Prayer at St Martin's

* Continuing on Sunday 15th and 22nd December
The Long Journey to Bethlehem

4pm - 6pm in the Lady Chapel (15th) and Hall (22nd)

Come and join us on our Advent course this year.

We are exploring the first chapter of Matthew's Gospel, the very beginning of the New Testament and full of surprises!

Session 2 – who are the men and women mentioned in Jesus's ancestry?

Session 3 – how will the promise be fulfilled – a virgin birth, dreams and angels!

Lots to discuss, all are welcome.

John Padwick, Lynne Scholefield

Christmas Jumpers - Sunday 15th December



Cast aside sartorial good taste, wear your Christmas jumper to church and support Save the Children. You can donate here:

<https://www.savethechildren.org.uk/>

Thank you!

Sarah

Tuesday 17th December

Centering Prayer and Time to Talk

During Christmas and New Year we will NOT be meeting on Tuesdays at 4.00pm. Our meetings will resume in January at 4pm in Church. Tea and biscuits from 3.45pm.

Tuesday 7th January - Centering Prayer

Tuesday 14th January - Time to Talk - our subject will be Epiphany.

Looking forward to seeing you then.

Wishing you many blessings in the coming weeks.

Lynne

Wednesday 18th December

10.00am Holy Communion

Carols in Epsom Hospital: Weds Dec 18: 4:30-6:30pm

CTiE and the Hospital Chaplaincy have organised to sing carols around the Hospital wards. We will meet at 4.15pm outside the Chaplaincy Office, located on the left as you enter Epsom Hospital foyer from Dorking Road. Carol sheets will be provided. Come and give some Christmas peace and joy to staff and patients! Please email chair@ctie.org.uk so that we know numbers and can plan to have enough resources.

David Williams

Sunday 22nd December ADVENT 4

**9.30am Holy Communion at
Langley Vale Village Hall**

10.00am Holy Communion at St Martin's

4.00pm Advent Study Course

6.30pm Carol Service at St Martin's

St Stephen's Update

Work on repair to the west gable end is now planned to begin on 6th January. Our thanks also to the many who have responded to the survey on our future mission in Langley Vale. The survey closed on 24th November and the results are being analysed.

The Christmas Tea, 8 December 2024

The Tea this year was, we think, a great success, with an (unexpected) attendance of about 40 people. (Last year I think we only just made double figures.) The Church looked lovely with the Christmas tree lights, the star on the altar, and poinsettias and some mini trees on or near the tables. There was plenty of food, much chat, some prayers from Adrian, and then carols sung round the piano. We should like to thank all those who came and also those who helped, including those from the Sunday morning congregation who moved chairs and put up the tables, and the valiant ones who helped clear up and wash up, particularly Sue, Judith and Meg. Thank you all, and we wish you all a joyful and holy Christmas.

Mary Gilbert and Elaine Snook

Ukrainian Social and Music Evening, Saturday 21 December, Epsom Methodist Church, 5pm-7.15pm.

This event marks the 10th in an enterprising series organised by the Epsom Methodist Church to support and showcase refugee Ukrainian musicians. The evening begins with a finger buffet (bring and share) at 5 o'clock and is followed at 6 o'clock by performances which include a pianist, an opera singer, violinist, brass ensemble and choir. A collection is taken at the end. If you've booked a ticket for Epsom Choral Society's Christmas Concert at St Martin's the same evening, this event will finish in time to attend both!

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

24th December Christmas Eve

3.00pm Carol Service at Langley Vale Hall

4.00pm Crib Service at St Martin's

6.00pm Christmas Communion at St Martin's

11.15pm Midnight Mass at Epsom College

25th December Christmas Day

8.30am Holy Communion at St Martin's

10.00am Family Christmas Praise at St Martin's

Sponsor sought for a Ukrainian refugee

Olga is 28 years old, a trained hairdresser with administration experience. She is currently housed in temporary accommodation in Poland after abandoning her home in Kharkiv (Kharkov) when the city became a battle zone.

Her sister and brother-in-law are here in Epsom and would dearly like her to join them. Can anyone help by offering a room on a temporary basis? The Homes for Ukraine scheme pays hosts a monthly allowance in recognition of their kindness, but asks for a minimum commitment of six months.

Whilst living here, Olga would be fully supported by the Ukrainian Hub in Epsom and financially supported by the Government until such time as she finds employment. Details of the scheme can be found at [Homes for Ukraine: record your interest - GOV.UK](#)

In the first instance you might like to talk to me, at lj.impey@gmail.com, otherwise Olga's sister Luba on 07469 276247, or friends Julia and Grahame on 07450 169394.

Email: gubanova1987qwer@gmail.com.

Olga's Facebook page is www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100001745371447

Thank you for troubling to consider this request. Any response, however tentative, would mean so much to Olga's family.

Laurence Impey

Buying well

Did you know that St Martin's has an Eco Policy? The policy was agreed by the PCC and gives guidelines and encouragement to make decisions to make our footprint on earth as light as we can. The Church Office now has a subscription to 'Ethical Consumer' to help guide purchasing choices. Ethical Consumer has done the legwork in grading products and companies according to criteria including environment, people, animals, politics, product sustainability and company ethos, which helps cut through some of the greenwashing we can all fall for. It's a bit like a green 'Which?'. While we can't necessarily go for the most ethical options, we can choose the least worst possible we are able to, and will be informed about some of the story behind what we're consuming. You, too, can subscribe -

<https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/>. How about buying a subscription for your household for Christmas? It will be one of the most enlightening presents you give or receive, I'm sure!

Helen Williams, Eco Rep

Doing well, as a church and as individuals

You may have seen our Bronze Eco Church certificate at the back of church. We are currently 'Going for Silver' and hope to be ready by the end of January. As part of this, we are encouraged to look at our impact as a church and at our own personal impact and influence on the world around us. Many of us are doing a lot already... are there things we are missing? Are there larger steps we could take? Creation Care is a lovely, simple resource to help you see where you are, developed and managed by St Paul's, Dorking. If you find yourself worn by advent preparations, have a look to see how you are caring for creation - <https://creationcare.org.uk/> . If you don't have internet access, let me know, and I may be able to help. In the New Year, I'll be encouraging us all to have a look at the scheme - a sort of 'fresh year, fresh look' at how we are doing, individually and collectively. We're all caring together...**Helen Williams, Eco Rep**

PRAYING FOR OUR CHURCH AND OUR COMMUNITY

Please remember in your daily prayers this week:

Sunday 15th

Our Discipleship and Fellowship Team. Our Premises and Gardens Team. The Emergency Services: Fire, Police and Ambulance. Those living and working in Headley Road, Heathcote Road, Hereford Close, High Street and Highridge Close.

Monday 16th

Our Choir, and our vision for a new Worship Band. The growth of our Life Groups, Study Groups, WhatsApp Groups. Our Missions: Redress (justice against torture). Those living and

working in Hillcrest Road, Hook Road, Hylands Close, Hylands Road, Jackson Close and Kilcorral Close.

Tuesday 17th

Our Livestreaming Team led by Rob Jeffrey. Our Sacristan Mary Holloway-Neville and chalice assistants. University of the Creative Arts, Laine Theatre Arts staff and students. Those living and working in Kiln Lane, Kingsdown Road, Laburnum Road, Ladbrook Road, Leighton Way and Leith Road.

Wednesday 18th

Vocations to Ministry, ordained and lay. Churches Together in Epsom: Russell Holding (Chair); Revd Judith (Secretary). Our Missions: AMECA (for Malawi, Epsom based). Those living and working in Langley Close, Langley Vale Road, Links Road and Lintons Lane.

Thursday 19th

Our Home Communion Team and those to whom they take Communion. Our Flower-Arranging Team: Yvonne Parish. Staff at local Citizens' Advice Bureau, Age Concern and Job Centre. All those seeking their help and/or in need of work. Those living and working in Longdown Lane South, Longdown Road, Lynwood Avenue, Lynwood Road, Mannamead, Mannamead Close, Middle Close and Middle Lane.

Friday 20th

Our Deanery Synod: Howard Bluett and John Padwick. Our Eco Church Team: Helen Williams. Our Missions: A Rocha (caring for creation). Those living and working in Milburn Walk, Mill Road, Millers Copse, Milton Gardens and Mospey Crescent.

Saturday 21st

Our vision and work for Social and Racial Justice. Our Readers and Intercessors. Local schools and nursery schools. Those living and working in Oak Hill, Oakmead Green, Old Barn Road, Pikes Hill and Pine Hill.

Christmas cards and calendars

There are a wide variety of cards both in design, size and cost, in packets of 10 or 20 cards. The Christmas candles come in their own container with a variety of nativity scenes.

Payment may be made in a variety of ways:

- Cheque: made payable to “The PCC of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Epsom” (please either hand in to the office or place in the wall safe in church)
- Donation Station: contactless payments – please use the “Cards” button
- Cash: via the wall safe in church.

I will keep all items topped up but once a design has sold out, I may not be able to get any further stock. Please ask me if you are looking for something in particular.

All profits for the sale of items goes to help the church.

Thank you for your custom.

Mary Holloway-Neville

FOOD BANK

This is the list of most needed items for the Foodbank:

Tinned Potatoes
Tinned Vegetables
Cooking Sauces
Beans/Pasta with Meat (we have none)
Noodles
Instant Mash
Powdered Milk (we have none)
Instant Coffee
Squash
Long life Juice
Ketchup/Brown Sauce/Mayonnaise
Jam/Marmalade/Honey/Chocolate Spread
Sugar (500gr) (we have none)
Rice Pudding
Custard
Tinned Fruit
Long life Sponge puddings

Deodorant (Male/Female)
Shampoo/Hair Conditioner
Adult Toothbrushes
Shaving Foam
Sanitary Towels
Loo Roll
Washing Up Liquid

MISSION FOCUS

Our mission partner for November is Love Me Love My Mind. This is a small registered charity based in Epsom which aims to promote better understanding of mental health and to support the wellbeing of everyone in the community. It is run entirely by volunteers and funded by grants and donations.

The charity has just held its 17th annual Epsom Mental Health Week, and is running free art and craft activities for children at Epsom Social. Love Me Love My Mind will open its regular Monday drop-in as a Warm Welcome Space on Monday 4th November at St Barnabas Church. The charity also has a volunteer gardening group at a local care home.

Our vision - the world we want to see:

- A world of stable climate and abundant nature, where oceans, rivers, air and soil are free of human pollution.
- Where human society lives in balance with the rest of nature and protects the Earth's natural systems which sustain all life
- Where all people and communities have access to healthy nature locally
- Where the Church worldwide understands the biblical mandate to care for all of God's creation as a core part of its mission and manifests this how it treats its land, buildings, investments and other assets.

- Where Christians play their full role, in collaboration with others, to protect and enhance the diversity and abundance of life on Earth, and to restore and maintain the health of our planet's life sustaining systems
- And where, through Churches and Christians adopting a right relationship with the rest of Creation, others are drawn to a closer, life-giving relationship with our Creator God.

THE POWER OF POETRY – DECEMBER



This month I have chosen a poem by Cecil Day Lewis, *The Christmas Rose*. Day Lewis, 1904-1972, was born in Ireland, the son of a Church of Ireland rector, but after the death of his mother when he was two years old he was brought up in London, though spent summer holidays in County Wexford. He was

educated at Sherborne School and Wadham College, Oxford and later became a school master. In 1946 he became a lecturer at Cambridge and later Professor of Poetry at Oxford. In 1968 he was appointed Poet Laureate, succeeding John Masefield. From 1935 he also wrote detective novels under the pseudonym of Nicholas Blake.

*What is the flower that blooms each year
In flowerless days,
Making a little blaze
On the bleak earth, giving my heart some cheer?*

*Harsh the sky and hard the ground
When the Christmas rose is found.
Look! Its whiter star, low on earth,
Rays a vision of rebirth.*

*Who is the child that's born each year
His bedding, straw:
His grace, enough to thaw
My wintering life, and melt a world's despair?*

*Harsh the sky and hard the earth
When the Christmas child comes forth.
Look! around a stable throne
Beasts and wise men are at one.*

*What mean are we that, year on year,
We Herod-wise
In our cold wits devise
A death of innocents, a rule of fear?
Hushed your earth, full-starred your sky
For a new nativity:
Be born in us, relieve our plight,
Christmas child, you rose of light!*

In this poem Day Lewis is comparing a flower that blooms in winter when conditions are harsh with the birth of Jesus. The flower and the Holy Birth recur each year and the birth gives hope to individuals and the world in the darkest of times: “His grace, enough to thaw...and melt a world’s despair”. Day Lewis once embraced communism, but renounced it when he saw the terror that had arisen in Russia and elsewhere, and he alludes in the fifth verse to mankind’s ability to bring misery and fear to millions. We have seen this recently: the horror of the conflict in Gaza, the war in Ukraine and many other places, some rarely reported. We have also seen violence and the death of innocents on our own streets. And we despair. But the message of our Christian belief is one of hope, and one which we must hold on to in the darkest of times, though this is often extraordinarily difficult. This is the message of the last verse: “...relieve our plight, Christmas child, you rose of light!”

Mary Gilbert

STEWARDSHIP

For general and stewardship giving you can give online via the Charities Aid Foundation. Donations can be either a one-off donation or a regular donation using direct debit. To make a donation either:

1. Click on the following link:

<https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/13377>

OR

2. Use your Smart Phone and Scan the QR Code below:



Christmas Services

1st December, 6.30pm

Advent Carol Service

24 December, 4pm

Family Crib Service

22nd December, 6.30pm

Nine Lessons & Carols

24 December, 6pm

Communion Service,

24 December, 3pm

**St Stephen's Carol Service,
Langley Vale**

24 December, 11.15pm

**Midnight Mass at
St Luke's, Epsom College**

25th December - Christmas Day

8.30am - Communion Service

10am - Family Service

**St Martin
of Tours**

Church Street
Epsom, KT17 4PX

**St Stephen
on the Downs**

Rosebery Road
Langley Vale, KT18 6AF

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**Submitting an item for the newsletter:
Please ensure that all items are emailed to the office marked
'For Newsletter' in the title by
12 noon on Wednesday, to be included for that week.**

**Parish Office:
The parish office is open from 9.30am – 12.30pm every
Monday, Wednesday and Friday.
Church House, Church Street, Epsom,
KT17 4PX Phone: 01372 722567
E-mail: office@stmartinsepsom.org
Website: www.stmartinsepsom.org**

If you would like to be added to our mailing list so that you receive the newsletter and orders of service weekly, please email the parish office. Please contact clergy and lay ministers via the office.