

NEWSLETTER-DECEMBER 2023

St John the Evangelist, Hurst Green

Welcome All | Deepen Faith | Inspire Action

Welcome to St John's!

The month of December is experienced differently in the world compared with the church.

In the world, December is a humming, buzzing, fun month with so much happening. But it can be rather overwhelming because if you are not actually participating in something, then you will almost certainly be busy preparing for something else. In the church, the beginning of December sees the start of Advent, continuing through until Christmas Day. It is a quiet time of spiritual preparation during which self-examination, reflection and contemplation are undertaken so that our hearts will be ready to receive the Christ-child at Christmas.

At St John's, there is lots happening during December that will cover both the worldly and the spiritual elements. Details of events and services are given below in this newsletter.

We hope that you will join us in many of them, and enjoy this holy month.

Christmas reminds us that Jesus came to earth as one of us, and so knows what it is like to live in our world with all its problems, difficulties and sorrows.

His coming brought light and life into our dark world, and showed us what God is like - loving, caring and compassionate, and there for everyone.

May you and yours experience the joy and peace of Christmas this year as well as excitement and fun. Every Blessing, Mary

Services at St John's this month

Sunday 3 December: Advent 1

8.30am: Said Eucharist 9.45am: All Age Eucharist
6pm: Advent Carol Service - *see overleaf*

Thursday 7 December 11am: Funeral of James Malone

Sunday 10 December: Advent 2

8.30am: Said Eucharist 9.45am: Parish Eucharist
11am: Christmas Community Brunch followed by
Café Church Special with carols, crafts and Christingles
(usually 3rd Sunday) Collection for the Children's Society

Sunday 17 December: Advent 3

8.30am: Said Eucharist
9.45am: Parish Eucharist - *with Sunday School*
5.30pm: Nine Readings and Carols, followed by
mince pies and mulled wine. Collection for Crisis

Thurs 21 December 2pm: Rob Chalmers - Thanksgiving

Sunday 24 December: Advent 4 / Christmas Eve

(No 8.30am Eucharist) 9.45am: Parish Eucharist
3.30 & 5pm: Crib services Collection for Welcare
9pm: First Eucharist of Christmas ('midnight')

Monday 25 December: Christmas Day

8.30am: Holy Eucharist 10am: Family friendly service

Sunday 31 December: Christmas 1

8.30am: Said Eucharist 9.45am: Parish Eucharist

Wednesday Eucharist at 12.30pm

Usually on the 4th Wednesday followed by a light lunch, with Pearl's 'Super Soup', this won't take place in December. The next one will be on 24 January.



The photo above shows the recent Autumn Fair in St John's Church - read more overleaf.

The January Newsletter will be available on Sunday 31 December.

Please send anything to be included by Sunday 17 December to Janet Harman at office@stjhurstgreen.co.uk, or phone 715301 (and leave a message if I'm out!) Thank you.

St John's Notices

 facebook.com/stjohnshurstgreen

ADVENT CAROL SERVICE, 3 DECEMBER 6PM: Do join us for a reflective hour of readings and music for congregation and choir, with familiar and well loved Advent hymns and some more unusual music from the choir, including angels singing from different parts of the church! Retiring collection for the work of St John's in the community.

SALE OF HANDMADE GOODS, 10 DECEMBER 10.45am: Some lovely handmade Christmas decorations, knitted items, bags and other beautiful products made by talented members of the congregation will be available for you to buy after the main service on 10 December in the York Rooms. So finish off your Christmas shopping by supporting us and proceeds will go to church funds.

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS FLYER: Please pick up a copy with details of all the special events and services over this period.

COFFEE and a CHAT

St John's Room, 10.30am - 12 noon
Thursdays 30 November, 21 December



If you need a lift, please ring Barbara: 715636

THE AUTUMN FAIR on Saturday 11 November raised £1,400 to go towards community based projects. Over 150 people attended and were able to buy beautiful home made crafts from local people such as cards, pottery, embroidery, jewellery, silk paintings, decoupage, knitted products and lots more. Tea and home made cake plus a raffle with amazing prizes which had been donated by local shops and businesses, all contributed to a marvellous day. There was a wonderful face painter for the children and Creative Community kindly hosted a peg doll making workshop. It was a lovely community event which we hope to repeat next year. Many thanks to all involved who worked so hard to make the day such a success.

REPORT FROM THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL: The PCC met on 16 November and agreed to the Crossing the Threshold's suggestion of a phased approach to the major building works proposed for St John's. Initially it seemed that Your Fund Surrey would cover most of the cost but this is no longer the case. It would also require upfront professional (including architect) fees of around £27,000 and using reserves is deemed inappropriate. Phase 1 might include replacing the old carpet with a hard floor; installing heaters to act independently of the central heating (heating the person not the space); modifications to the porch access and relocating the font. Plans would be reviewed and funding sought at each stage.

It was agreed that the congregation would be invited to share the Peace by waving or shaking hands with immediate effect. Both the Community Hub and Sunday School desperately need more volunteers. Please speak to Mary Seller or Cathy Booth if you could help with either, or with some of the many fabric tasks currently undertaken by Chris Johns.

The Service of Licensing and Installation for Revd Sue Bosley will be held on Tuesday 30 January at 7.30pm, with refreshments afterwards in the York Rooms. The next PCC meeting will be on 1 February, a week later than originally agreed, to enable Sue to attend.

LETTER FROM BISHOP ANNA: Anna has written thanking the people of St John's for the recently installed defibrillator. She says she is delighted to see her hope and dream finally come to fruition, thanks to the generosity and goodwill of many people in Hurst Green, and the determination of a few key individuals. You can read the full letter on the noticeboard in the porch.

OVER THE LAST FEW WEEKS three faithful members of St John's have passed away. Together with their families, we mourn their loss.

Brenda Cole

Brenda died at the age of 94 after years of failing health. In her time, she was a WI member, gardener, dinner party organiser and part of a vibrant social circle of a type that thrived in yesteryear. She was a quiet and friendly person who had a real sense of humour that made her able to laugh at everything. She radiated qualities of 'loveliness' and 'niceness' that made her someone who it was always good to see, and enjoy time with. Her late husband, Bill, was the inspiration behind the re-ordering of the interior of St John's after the fire. It was his idea to remove the screen and use it to make an enclosed area in the north transept, and to place the beautiful carved wooden cross from the top of the screen beneath the west window. Sadly, he died suddenly in 1989, before the restoration was completed.

Pat Conquest

Pat was a quiet, unassuming and modest person, a former teacher of Economics at Oxted School. She is perhaps best remembered on spring evenings on toad patrol in Oast Road. Warmly wrapped up, and armed with a torch and a bucket, she scooped up lovesick toads making their way across the road between the pond on one side, and the little river that flows near her house, to prevent them from being run over by cars. Pat's concern for God's creation was deep, and also included her love of bird watching and membership of the RSPB, her enjoyment of gardening, and of course, her love of dogs; her faithful Percy died not too long before she did. Pat was part of our 8 o'clock congregation, to which she contributed by being a sidesperson and lesson reader. For some time she undertook the task of opening and closing the church each day.

Rob Chalmers

Rob died after a very long illness so nobly borne. How happy we were to see him only a week before, at the Act of Remembrance in the church grounds. Over many years Rob contributed so much to our church life, not only as a faithful member of the congregation, but also putting his many talents at our disposal as PCC member and by looking after the church fabric, and health and safety, and acting as a Server and Crucifer. On a wider front, he was one of our representatives on Deanery Synod. Rob was such a lovely, gentle man, who never sought the limelight, but his quiet personality and dry, Scottish wit endeared him to us all. There will be a Thanksgiving Service for Rob at St John's Church on Thursday 21 December at 2pm, followed by a reception in the York Rooms.

We are so thankful to God for giving these three treasures to us to know and to love. May the sorrow of parting turn into the joy of heaven, and may Brenda, Pat and Rob, all such faithful servants of the Lord, rest in peace for ever. *Mary*

Other Notices

OXTED BAND CHRISTMAS CONCERT: Saturday 9 December at 3pm at St John's Church - Christmas music with carols.

CAROL SINGING AT THE DIAMOND: Wednesday 20 December at 7pm, with a bucket collection for charity. Christmas jumper night so please dress accordingly! All welcome.

FREE CHRISTMAS LUNCH: Monday 25 December, 12.30 - 4pm at Hurst Green Community Centre. Don't celebrate Christmas alone this year! If you live within a 5-mile radius of our centre, join us for food and drinks (non-alcoholic), Santa, music and festive fun. RSVP 07732 952227 or 07592 610449 by 11 December 2023. Disabled friendly, pick-ups and drop-offs available.

www.stjohnshurstgreen.org.uk
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st John's
HURST GREEN