

Church News - January 2019

Review:

Christmas Fayre: The fayre went particularly well this year thanks to Santa in his grotto (and the mulled wine and refreshments probably helped too!). Thanks to all who helped out, especially Tracie and helpers.



Christmas tree festival: Back by popular demand, there were some extremely creative displays this year on the theme of "All things bright & beautiful" Many thanks to Hazel for organising this enjoyable event.

Christingle service: This year's service was well supported, although there were disappointingly few children (though plenty young at heart)! Let's hope for a younger audience next year.

Carol service: A well supported service meant the church was full and joyful singing filled the air with particular thanks to the Benefice choir. The Christmas hamper raffle was won by long term village local, Alison Sheehan who was delighted!

As we go to press, the Carol singing, Crib and Christmas midnight service have not yet taken place but I'm sure they'll be as popular as ever!

Forthcoming events:

Epiphany Family Benefice service: We will be holding our family service at 11am on **Sunday 6th January**. This falls on Epiphany Sunday, "What's that?" you ask.

Sometimes called Three Kings' Day, it is a Christian feast day that celebrates the Wise men's visit to baby Jesus. The visit signified Jesus birth to the world (not just the Jews) and the nature of the Wise men's gifts showed that Jesus would be a king, religious leader and that his death would be significant. The start of Epiphany follows Twelfth Night - the twelfth day of Christmas and the last day of the Christmas season, which is why Christmas decorations are taken down on 5th January. In Europe, Epiphany is celebrated with more significance than in the UK, (although historically it was celebrated more in this country) and there are many traditional Epiphany recipes. Come and see what Frankincense and Myrrh really look like!



Prayer meetings: You don't have to be Church of England to attend our prayer meetings, all denominations welcome! There will be meetings at 8pm on **Wed 9th and 23rd Jan** at **The Birches, Church Rd** this month. If you'd like prayers for someone, or if you'd like to join us, please call John Bowler, as we sometimes change times and dates last minute.

The Bible Course: It's not too late to sign up for the Bible course. The course can be completed by anyone; you don't have to know anything about the Bible! It's an 8 session course produced by the Bible Society in Britain to help participants understand the Bible for themselves. **It aims to show the big picture of the Bible storyline** – from Genesis to Revelation **The course is free**. Each session is structured with informal refreshments before the start. After a brief introduction there

are video talks on the week's theme by Rev Andrew Ollerton (who devised the course) with breaks to discuss a suggested question or topic or two in small groups. The session lasts about 2 hours. There will be a little "homework" which consists of reading Bible passages in preparation for the next session! More information is available online at: <https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/explore-the-bible/the-bible-course/>



If you can't make the introductory session, don't worry, you can join in later. We'd love to see the Methodist Chapel filled to bursting, so even if you're not really sure it's for you, just come to the introductory session, with no obligation on **Tue 8th Jan at 7pm for supper and 8pm start in the Methodist Chapel, Newton Rd. Contact John, Diane or Harry below**. For the first session, we're having a light supper beforehand so if you'd like to come along, **please let us know for catering purposes** (with any dietary requirements).

Community Breakfast: We will be holding our Community Breakfast again on **Saturday 12th January**, serving breakfast **from 8.30 till 10.30am**.



There's no charge, but you can make a donation if you wish (but we appreciate that after Christmas that could be difficult!) We're also hoping to start a regular collection for the **food bank** at Community Breakfast, so please bring your donations with you.

Bible verses of the month: Matthew 5 v 16: *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven (KJV)*

What does it mean? One interpretation is that Christians are called to be active in their faith by doing charitable or community work for others so that people recognise that their actions are a testament to their faith and a reflection of God's munificence.

Those of you who are eagle-eyed will notice the letters KJV at the end of the Bible quotation. This means that I have used the older King James version (or translation) of the Bible. There are many translations of the Bible, and those of you who are bilingual will recognise that you can translate things in many different ways – often subject to the translator's interpretation. You can read the full passage at:



<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+5+&version=KJV> (after the Sermon on the Mount), then scroll back to the top to change to the modern NIV (New international version) to compare.

Church Benefice Website: www.brickhillchurches.org.uk.

If you want to come to a service, all church service times are listed on the website, along with contact details for the Rector. His phone goes straight to an answerphone but he will reply as soon as he's able. The Rector's day off is Monday.

Church news articles are available to read on the benefice website (click on Stoke Hammond in the list and scroll down to Stoke Hammond Newsletters)

If you would like to come to church but have mobility problems please ring John (see below) regarding transport. If you would like to volunteer to help, have a prayer request or enquiry, please ring **Churchwardens: Harry, on 07773065271; Diane, on 270409 or Treasurer: John, on 270202**. There will be a free bottle of wine for the first person to call Diane saying that they have read this report online! **Yes, really!**