

Notices

Community Café

The opening times for the remaining Saturdays of December are the 2nd, 9th, and 16th from 10-2pm. Conversations following the piloting of the cafe are in hand and details will be released shortly re ongoing openings early in the New Year as well as Lent up until Easter. The Cafe has been well received not only by members of the church but also by those who have joined us with no connections which is over 50% of our clientele. The need is there, and much detailed conversations have been held...and thank you too, to those who staffed the pilot scheme as well as the support that has been given from others. We press on hopefully to the next phase....

Celebrating Life Festival

From Friday June 21st to June 30th featuring a Flower Festival with events for schools, concerts and choirs, workshops, literary days, charities, and professional lectures in the fields of education, health, end of life care and dialogue re Christian ministry in a changing society as well as meals, daily prayer, and special Sunday Services. The detailed programme is now provisional and last-minute events are being planned. This will be confirmed by the PCC at the end of January 2024 before the printing begins if publicity...

Vicar: All saints, Maidstone with St. Philip's, and St. Stephen's Tovil

The Very Revd. John S. Richardson
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Please note Revd John will be on Leave on Wednesdays of each week.

Church Wardens:

Denise Joy – denisejoy@maidstone.gov.uk
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**The Parish of All Saints
With St Philip, Maidstone and
St Stephen, Tovil**

**Sunday 3rd December 2023
Advent Sunday**



**10am Parish Eucharist at All Saints
3.30pm Choral Evensong at All Saints**

Next Week's Service's

**Sunday 10th December
Second Sunday of Advent**

**10.00am Morning Worship
(Making your Christingle)**

**At St Stephens (Archbishop Courtenay
School)**

Collect

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and to put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility; that on the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Reading

Isaiah 64 Verses 1-9

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence— as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil— to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself, we transgressed. We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.

We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. There is no one who calls on your name or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. Yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord, and do not remember iniquity for ever. Now consider, we are all your people.

Gospel

Mark 13 Verses 24-end

'But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see "the Son of Man coming in clouds" with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

'From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

'But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.'

Post Communion

O Lord our God, make us watchful and keep us faithful as we await the coming of your Son our Lord; that, when he shall appear, he may not find us sleeping in sin but active in his service and joyful in his praise; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Book these dates now...

Christmas across the Parish In December At St Philips

- **Wednesday 13th – 6.30pm** Christmas Cheer and Joy!
- **Sunday 17th - 10am** Carols and Readings around the Christmas Events
- **Monday 18th** from 6pm Carol Singing around the streets ending with soup and rolls.
- **Sunday 24th Christmas Eve 5pm** Community and Church Christingle
- **Sunday 31st 10am** Morning Worship to prepare for the New Year

At All Saints

- **Saturday 23rd-** 4.30pm The Carol Service
- **Sunday 24th – Christmas Eve 3.30pm** The Christingle Service
- **11.30pm** - The First Communion of Christmas
- **Monday 25th – Christmas Day 10am** Christmas Family Communion

This week from Monday December 4th until Christmas Day we will be welcoming in our churches thousands of children, young people and adults to concerts, Carol services and other Christmas events.

Please remember all taking part in these seasonal and Christingle activities, that a deeper awareness and understanding of God's love for them and our world, will shine as light into the darkness and chaos that currently surrounds and impacts us, focused on the peace and joy of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem that first Christmas morning.

Special prayers

***Matt 5.3 'Blessed are the poor in spirit,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven'***

*Daphne Holland, Mary Wheeler, Jane Sadler,
Sue Marks, Pamela Hocking, Claire & Family*

Deceased *John Fowler*

*John Fowler died peacefully on Saturday evening
November 4th in his Care Home.
His Committal will be private and for family only.
However a Service of Thanksgiving for his life is
to be held in All Saints Church on Tuesday
December 5th at Noon to which all are welcome
to attend. We reassure Rosemary, Rachel and
Timothy and their close family of our prayers at
this challenging time when so many decisions
have to be made, that God of peace and comfort
will surround them in his love at this time.*