

St JOHN'S

CHURCH WAKEFIELD

Sharing Christ in the Community



St John's
Square /
Wentworth St
Wakefield
WF1 2QU

Parish
Magazine
December
2025



We have a 10.00am service of Holy Communion each Sunday

We provide hand gel as you come into church and at the entrance to the prayer chapel.

There are candle, shell and leaf prayer stations in the side chapel.

At the communion we offer bread and wine. If you do not wish to use the common cup you may just partake of the bread.

Refreshments are available after the service.

On the 4th Sunday of the month we offer prayer for healing with the laying on of hands, in the side chapel.

The 10.00am service is live streamed and available from 10am onwards on the St John's YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDyIQ-Vbrv-5bikSlpgV2QQ> Just click on the link and select the service for today from the range of videos on the channel.

If you are on email you can receive the weekly newsletter this way. Please let Stephanie know if you would like this.

Tea-Time Service

We also have a service at 4.00pm on the third Sunday.

Everyone is welcome. The service is very relaxed with songs, activities, readings and prayers.

It is for everyone: families of all kinds, children, adults, young and old. Why not come along? Drinks and biscuits (and sometimes cake!) will be available before the service.

Mary's Story..... Mary's Song

As Advent begins and we prepare to celebrate Christmas, I find myself thinking about Mary, the mother of Jesus....

A serene Mary, in a blue robe, is so familiar to us from nativity plays, Christmas cards, religious paintings. This year I am trying to move beyond these images of Mary to reflect more deeply on her whole life and the way in which she responded to God's call.

The first thing which strikes me is Mary's openness to being surprised by God! The angel Gabriel's visit to her must have been a huge shock. Luke, in his Gospel, is honest about the impact on Mary of this unexpected encounter with an angel. Mary is perplexed, bewildered and afraid, but without denying these emotions she responds to Gabriel with words of trust in God and an acceptance of God's call. 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord.' Mary is saying that she is, and will be, God's servant. She goes on to say, '...let it be to me according to your word.'

How can Mary respond like this? Luke, in his Gospel, gives the impression that Mary already has a longstanding relationship of trust in God: she has spent her life worshipping him. The words of the Old Testament have become part of her because she has lived and breathed them through-out her childhood. We see this in the words of the Magnificat – the prayer Mary prays during her visit to her cousin, Elizabeth. The words and themes are all present in the Old Testament, but this is also a new, personal and heartfelt prayer by Mary to the God she knows and worships joyfully.

It begins, 'My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour.' Mary's life is an encouragement that, if we

live a quiet life of worship and prayer, we will be prepared when God breaks into our life at an unexpected time and surprises us! As Mary was used to listening to God, she recognised his voice in the words of the angel. She knew enough of God's goodness and blessing to trust that he would be faithful to her. She believed this even as she stepped out into the unknown.

Mary responded to God's call in trust and worship. She went on doing so as Jesus was born. After the visit of the shepherds, we learn, 'But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.' After finding the twelve-year old Jesus in the Temple we are told that Mary '...treasured all these things in her heart.' We are given an insight here into the life of Mary, the faithful disciple. Mary continues to hold her experiences of God – both the wonderful and the perplexing – in her heart and to reflect on them over the years. This is an encouragement for us to do the same.

I finish with a prayer which is said at the lighting of the fourth candle in the Advent Wreath.

God our Father,
the angel Gabriel told the Virgin Mary
that she was to be the mother of your Son.
Though Mary was afraid, she responded to your call with joy.
Help us, whom you call to serve you,
to share like her in your great work
of bringing to our world your love and healing.
We ask this through Jesus Christ,
the light who is coming into the world. Amen.

Wishing you God's peace and joy this Christmas.

Stephanie

Advent - 4 weeks to prepare for Christmas

You should receive this magazine on 30 November - Advent Sunday. 'Advent' means 'waiting'. Mary, heavily pregnant, was waiting for the birth of her (and God's) son Jesus. Like most Mums-to-be she will have prepared clothes, bedding, toys etc. ready for his arrival.

Are we prepared?

The church sets aside the 4 weeks of Advent for Christians to prepare, spiritually, for this amazing event - the Incarnation - when God becomes a human being. The creator of the world comes as a baby to experience life as we do. We now have 4 weeks to really consider how amazing that is.

From mid-October the commercial world bombards us with their version of Christmas. It can seem overwhelming, and expensive! There are presents to buy, wrap and send; cards to write; parties, concerts, and nativity plays to attend; food to organise; decorations to put up.....

Jesus, light of the world

In the midst of all these distractions, you could use a candle to help you focus on the real meaning of Christmas. In church we have an advent wreath, lighting an extra candle each Sunday until Christmas Day.



At home you could have your own advent



candle. It does not have to be a special candle - you could use tea lights. But each day, find just a few minutes - the time it might take you to drink a cuppa - to light the candle and think of how Jesus can be, perhaps has been, a light in your world. How could you be His light in our world today? You could pray for people who find the world a dark, often threatening, place. Or you could just let your eyes watch the candle flame and let your mind be still, resting in the promise of Jesus' birth.

Those few minutes with a candle, and with God, might be the best present you give yourself during Advent.

DIARY DATES for DECEMBER 2025

Mon 1 9.30am Morning Prayer via Zoom

Wed 3 11.00am-1.00pm Drop In to St John's

Fri 5 9.00am Toddler & Baby group

Sunday 7

Advent 2

10.00am Holy Communion

3.00pm **A SERVICE OF HOPE** (see page 13)

Mon. 8 9.30am Morning Prayer via Zoom

Wed 10 11.00am-1.00pm Drop In to St John's

3.30-5.30pm **MESSY CHURCH CHRISTMAS**

Fri. 12 9.00am Toddler & Baby group

Sunday 14

Advent 3

10.00am Holy Communion

6.00pm **CAROLS IN THE SQUARE,**

Mon. 15 9.30am Morning Prayer via Zoom

Wed.17 11.00am-1.00pm Drop In to St John's.

7.00pm **CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT**

Fri. 19 9.00am Toddler & Baby group

Sunday 21

Advent 4

10.00am Holy Communion

4.00pm **Christmas Tea-Time Service**

Mon 22 9.30am Morning Prayer via Zoom

Tues. 23 2.00pm Making Christingles: all help welcome

Wed. 24 CHRISTMAS EVE

11.00am-1.00pm Drop In to St John's

3.30 & 5.00pm **CHRISTINGLE SERVICES**

11.00pm **Christmas Midnight Communion**

Thurs 25 CHRISTMAS DAY

10.00am **Family Communion**

Sunday 28

Holy Innocents

10.00am Holy Communion

Mon 29 NO Morning Prayer via Zoom

Wed 31 11.00am-1.00pm Drop In to St John's.



Services at St John's

Sunday 14 December

6.00pm

CAROLS in the SQUARE

with the Yorkshire Volunteers Band



Wednesday 17 December

7.00pm

CAROLS by CANDLELIGHT

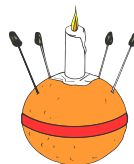
Wednesday 24 December

CHRISTMAS EVE

3.30pm & 5.00pm

CHRISTINGLE SERVICES

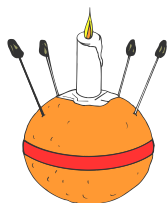
11.00pm HOLY COMMUNION



Thursday 25 December

CHRISTMAS DAY

10.00am FAMILY COMMUNION



2.00pm Tuesday 23 December in church

Everyone is welcome to help us make the Christingles for the Christmas Eve services.



'JJ's' (St John's Juniors) Sundays at 10.00am

*Every Sunday we provide activities for children at the back of church - colouring, crafts etc.
When possible we meet in the Samaritan Room for story, prayer and activities.*

*Learning and growing in faith.
All children 4-11 years old are welcome.*

**Further details from Cath Fox on
cath.s.fox@outlook.com**

In need of company or conversation?

Lonely, or just at a loose end?

Wanting some quiet space?



Each Wednesday St John's is open
11.00am – 1.00pm

Anyone is welcome to 'drop-in' for a cup of coffee or tea.
There will be people to chat to, if you want some company or some local information, but space for quiet if that is what you need.

You might just want a warm space to eat your lunch.

Do come along, we'd love to meet you.



BAPTISMS

*We welcome into
the Lord's family*

14 Sept. Theodore James Peter Wilby
19 Oct. Jake Harry John Taylor

MARRIAGE

May God bless their life together

28 October Fiona Tate & Adam Doggett

FUNERAL

We commit to the Lord's eternal care

3 November Josephine Webb at St John's,
followed by cremation at Wakefield Crematorium

CONFIRMATIONS

*Defend, O Lord, this thy servant
with thy heavenly grace*

16 November by Bishop Malcolm
at Wakefield Cathedral

Nicola Brown

Michaela (Ela) Hazebrouck

Panji Mulipa

George Phambala

Come and join us for an exciting



Wednesday 10th December

3.30pm — 5.30pm in church

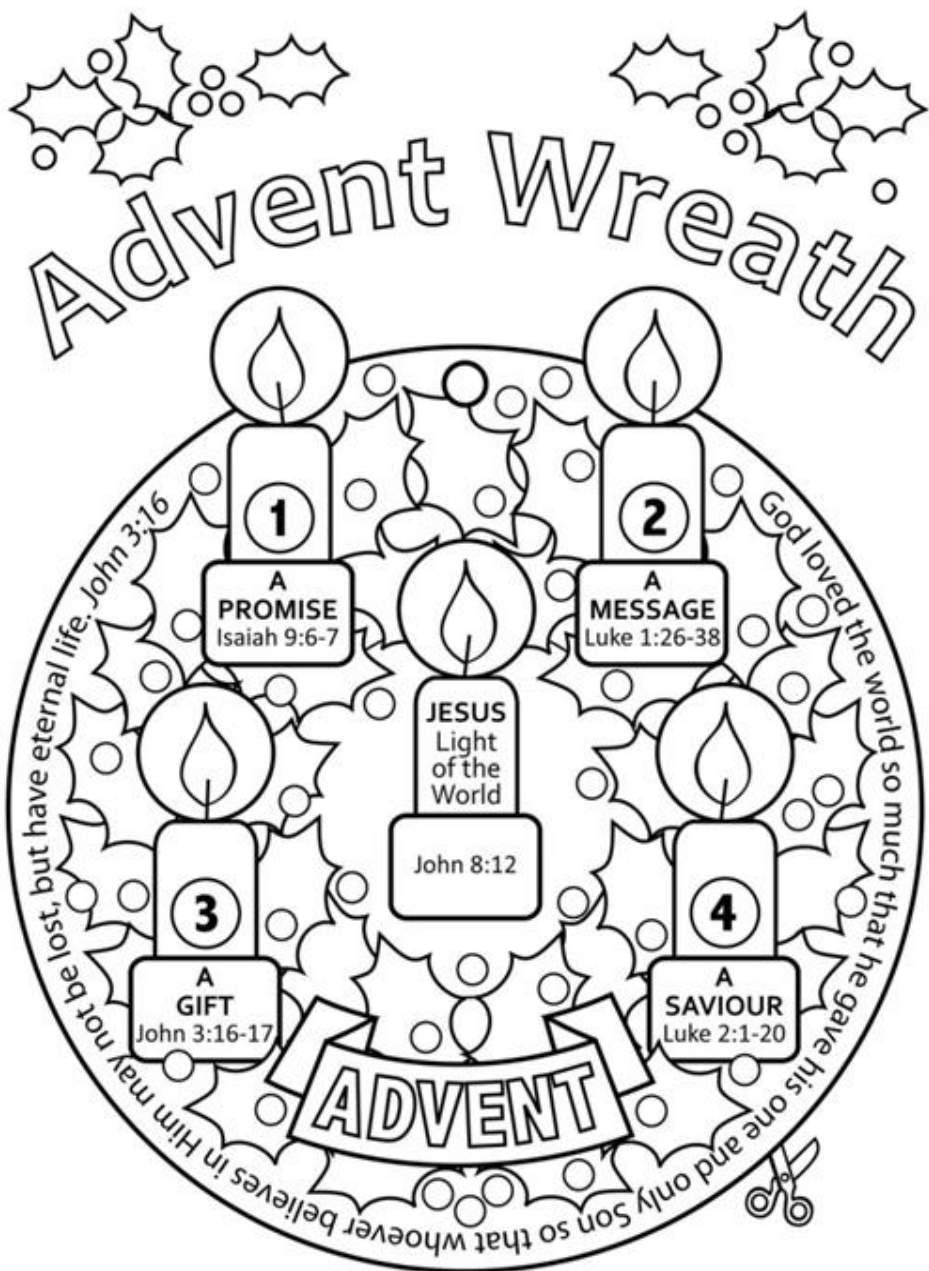
Games, activities and food

Create, celebrate, worship

*Come along and join in the
activities and fun!*

**All children to be accompanied by an adult,
please. (*Food is available for adults
as well as the children*)**

**If you have any questions, contact Cath on
cath.s.fox@outlook.com**



Colour in the green leaves and berries. Cut out and hang up on ribbon.
Each Sunday in Advent colour in a candle and read the Bible verses.

©deborah noble@parishpump.co.uk

A voice in the night

'The Sovereign Lord has given me a well-instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. He wakens me morning by morning, he wakens my ear to listen like one being instructed.' Isaiah 50:4

Listen

Awake in the early hours, and my thoughts fluttering here and there, the name of a friend dropped into my mind, as if from nowhere, together with the words: "Tell her, 'God is aware of you.'"

Act

Eventually I fell asleep again but when I woke in the morning the words were still there. I had a busy day ahead but as I ate my breakfast, I felt I should text her straight away with what I had been given and trust it would make sense to her.

Mid-morning I received a message back. I knew nothing of her circumstances, but both she and her husband were facing major difficulties in their work situations.

As they prayed together the night before she asked the Lord to send her a word of encouragement. As she started her day my text arrived. She was so encouraged, and so was I.



As I **ponder** this event two things stand out to me.

(1) God is intimately aware of each one of us, and knows our circumstances. He *sees* us, He knows what we are going through. He will help us find a way through. And give us the strength and guidance we need. As you read this, He says to you: 'I am aware of you.'

(2) If God drops the name of someone into your mind take it as an indication to pray for them. If words are given to you for them, then share them – either personally, or via a written note or a text message. It may be just what they need to hear.

Memorial Service
'A Service of Hope'
Sunday 7 December
at 3.00pm



This special service is an opportunity for any of us to remember, in various ways, all those people whom we have loved and lost.

It does not matter whether they died recently or many years ago: the pain and sorrow of their loss are still ours.

All are welcome to share in this special time to remember.

God of mission,
You give fresh life to St John's
Send your Holy Spirit to give
vision to our planning,
wisdom to our activities,
and power to our witness,
that we may grow
in love and commitment to you
in number of disciples
and in loving service to our neighbours
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

I spoke in Church about the world-wide family of Christians - . billions of us: about a third of the world's population and the largest religion globally. At St John's we are part of a huge Christian family, all worshipping the same Heavenly Father and believing in the same Saviour, Jesus Christ.

In this country, and many others, we are free to worship, to go to Church and to speak openly of our belief in the Gospel. But many Christians in the world are persecuted for their faith, churches are forcibly closed or destroyed. People are driven from their home, village or job and some, sadly, are killed.



I belong to an organisation called Open Doors which supports Christians worldwide. I want you to understand the struggles and persecution of our brothers and sisters in Christ and to ask you to pray for them. Here is an example:

Roukaya is one of about 6 million Christians who live in Chad, in Africa, out of a total population of 18.8 million, most of whom follow Islam. She was raised a Muslim, but when Roukaya heard about Jesus, from other

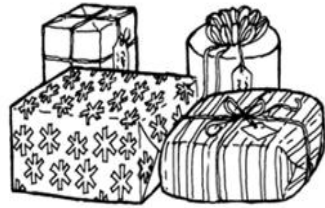
believers or the Internet, she decided to become a Christian. She was immediately disowned by her family.

Islamic Extremist gangs like Boko Haram are destabilising neighbouring countries, and also come over the border into Chad. This makes following Jesus very risky, particularly in rural areas where fear often keeps believers from attending church. Last year many Christians in Chad had their homes and farms destroyed or burned to the ground.

As a single woman living alone, Roukaya was very vulnerable, but Open Door's helped her to set up a small business. Their micro-loan enabled her to buy products to sell at the market. Please pray for Roukaya and others who are treated with contempt and disowned, simply because they are Christians. Pray for God's presence to surround and encourage Christians, particularly converts from Islam.

Margaret Kirkham

For many years we have provided Christmas gifts for the residents at Marsh Way House, a centre for homeless people near Lightwaves Leisure Centre.



This year Bridget will organise the purchase and wrapping of suitable presents, on our behalf.

If you would like to make a financial contribution towards the cost of these presents, there will be a basket at the back of Church during December.

Which is correct, Xmas or Christmas?

Well, the answer is both really. Surprisingly, the shortened version of 'Christmas', ie the word 'Xmas', began as an abbreviation for church records and charts.

X is the Greek symbol 'chi', which is the first letter of the word 'Christ'. Therefore, X stands for Christ. For the early Christians, most of whom spoke and wrote Greek, the word 'Xmas' signified 'Christ's Mass'.

The shortening of 'Christmas' to 'Xmas' has been a common practice since at least the 16th Century. The correct pronunciation for the word 'Xmas' is 'Christmas', the same as if the word was written out in full. Xmas is not ex-mas!

A big 'Thank You' from Deidre for all the jam jars, and the plums, damsons, apples, crab apples and quinces also donated to make jams. We had over 100 pots to sell at the Christmas Fayre. There are some spare jars which are suitable for chutney, not jam, so if anyone is planning to make chutney they are very welcome to have them. Speak to Deidre or e-mail her (details on back page)

St John's School Page

Art work
from year 5

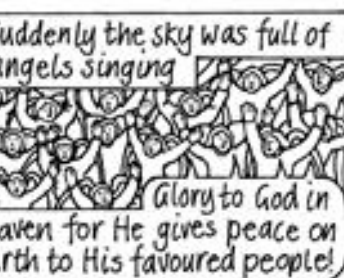


Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Luke chapter 2 verses 8 to 20

Shepherds were paid to look after the flocks
out on the hillside. Uneducated and rough,
they were usually avoided, or overlooked.





Mouse Makes

A baby needs clothes
to keep warm like
a snuggly sleep suit
or a vest and nappy.

What were you dressed in?
Jesus was wrapped in

.....
read Luke 2:7

A baby needs
somewhere
to sleep like
a crib or a cot.
*What did you
sleep in?*
Jesus slept in a

.....
read Luke 2:7

At Christmas we celebrate the birth of Jesus,
God's Son and our Saviour
coming into the world as a baby,
and we look forward to the time
when Jesus will come again,
not as a baby but as the
King of kings and Lord of lords!

read
John 14:3

A baby needs somewhere
to be born like at home
or in a hospital.

Where were you born?
Jesus was born
in a stable in

.....
read Luke 2:1-6

A baby needs
a name.
*What name were
you called?*
Jesus was given
a special name
that had a
special meaning.
read
Matthew 1:21-23



HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

NADOLIG LLAWEN ★ NOLLAIG CHRÏDHEIL ★ NOLLAG SHONA
JOYEUX NOËL • FELIZ NAVIDAD • BUON NATALE • GOD JUL • FROHE WEIHNACHTEN

My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. Psalm 139:15-16



You began life as a single cell. For a few hours you were a miniscule, highly complex blob of jelly. It divided into two cells, four, eight, sixteen, a ball, a hollow ball, and then, still tiny, developed nerves, a head, a body, arms and legs.

Until recently I hadn't thought about Jesus being an embryo. Somehow, I find that thought more shocking than His birth. How could God, who made the universe, become something so completely and utterly vulnerable? Maybe in the past, when the development of a child happened in 'secret', it was possible just to let that part of the Christmas story go untold.

Today, with images of embryos at all stages of development, it is harder to ignore the process of Jesus developing into a baby. The incarnation meant that God's Son went through all the developmental stages of any human being, from egg to baby. .

Jesus was there in the beginning, and all life owes its existence to Him. But instead of remaining aloof, He chose to become one of us, knowing what it feels like to have a body, to feel hungry and thirsty, pain and pleasure, dark and light.

The transcendent God is also immanent, longing for us to relate to Him as Father. He became as fragile as we are so that He could rescue us from the messes we so often find ourselves in. With His help, we can remember what it means to be fearfully and wonderfully made.

Reproduced by permission from [Merry Christmas Everyone: A festive feast of stories, poems and reflection](#), Edited by Wendy H. Jones, Amy Robinson & Jane Clamp ([Association of Christian Writers](#), 2018)



Light hearted views of Christmas!

Christmas is weird – at what other time of the year do you sit in front of a dead tree and eat sweets out of your socks?

Many people will stop everything at 3pm on Christmas Day to listen to His Majesty's annual address to the nation. But did you ever wonder what the King himself calls his Christmas Broadcast? Could it possibly be 'The One Show'?!

What do you call Santa's helpers? Subordinate Clauses.

At Sunday school, the younger children were drawing pictures to illustrate a biblical story. The teacher was startled to see one little boy was drawing an airplane. "This is the Flight into Egypt," the little boy explained. "See, here is Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus. And this," he said, pointing to the figure in the front of the plane, "is Pontius. He's the Pilot."

A young couple began to assemble a special Christmas gift they had bought for their children. They had bought a kit for a tree house, but it didn't make sense. Then they realised that the materials were for a sailboat, so they wrote to the company to complain. The company's reply was brief: "While we regret the inconvenience this mistake must have caused you, we are more concerned about the man who is out on a lake somewhere, trying to sail your tree house."

The nativity play was going as planned and Joseph and Mary were going from 'house' to 'house' knocking on the doors and asking if there was any room for them.

As they continued to get 'no room' answers, a little voice called from the back of the church: "You should have booked!"

Community Use of St John's Church

Wentworth St, Wakefield, WF1 2QU

The church building is fully accessible, with ramp access to the main door, and two ramps giving access to the staging.

Our accessible toilet also provides baby change facilities.

For further information, or to enquire about hiring our facilities, please e-mail: stjohn.churchbookings@gmail.com

Comfortable chairs in the nave offer flexible seating for up to 200 people. There is a dais, a keyboard and a sound system. Cost is £30 an hour. WiFi, sound system, computer projection equipment, electric piano and organ can be included, subject to an additional charge, on request



The Samaritan Room has space for up to 15 people. It costs £15 an hour.

Our fully equipped

kitchen opens onto a café area with 6 tables + 24 chairs. The tables can be removed to make a larger, more flexible, meeting space. The café



area costs £18 an hour, including the kitchen. The kitchen costs £15 per session (half day or evening) when hiring the nave or Samaritan room.



Steward £10 per hour (negotiable for regular bookings)



A picture to colour in

YOUR **PARKING** SPACE

This company operates our car park, on the corner of St John's Avenue and Wentworth Street WF1 2QU. You can pay for parking on an hourly, daily, monthly basis. You pay with your mobile phone: either call 0330 333 8434 (local rate) or download the YourParkingSpace app. (available on the app store or Google play) For either method you need to enter St John's Church location ID: 11173. This ID is displayed at the car park, along with all other details. You will be advised of the rate being charged once you have input your preferred option. The car park has 24/7 monitoring of number plates. Any car parking without payment may be issued with a Parking Charge Notice, so that only paying or permitted vehicles use the area.

Full terms and conditions are on their website:

www.yourparkingspace.co.uk/company/terms-conditions

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Any revenue from the car park goes to the church.

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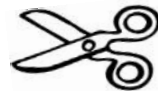
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Readings at the 10.00am Communion Service

Date	Day	1 st Reading	2 nd Reading
30 Nov.	Advent 1	Isaiah 2:1-5	Matthew 24: 36-44
7 Dec.	Advent 2	Isaiah 11:1-10	Matthew 3:1-12
14 Dec.	Advent 3	Isaiah 35:1-10	Matthew 11:2-11
21 Dec.	Advent 4	Isaiah 7:10-16	Matthew 1:18-end
24 Dec.	Christmas Eve	Hebrews 1:1-4	John 1:1-14
25 Dec.	Christmas Day	Titus 2:11-14	Luke 2:1-14
28 Dec.	Holy Innocents	1 Corinthians 1:26-29	Matthew 2:13-18

*The views expressed in this Magazine
are those of each writer and are not necessarily held
by the Editor, Vicar or PCC.*

Magazine Contributions

The Editor is always pleased to receive news of events, to come or which have taken place; reports of church activities; original articles, stories, etc. We cannot guarantee that they will be included, and they may be edited before inclusion.

**Please send contributions for the
January 2026 issue**

By 7 December 2025

All copy should be sent to the editor: Deidre Morris
at 263 Park Lodge Lane, Wakefield WF1 4HY

Or e-mail to: **bandmorris@btinternet.com**

Mission Statement

St John's is here to be a living, loving and serving witness to Christ; worshipping, learning and growing in our faith together, reaching out to share God's love in the community and bringing His Word to all

PARISH ACTIVITIES / ORGANISATIONS

Parish Morning Prayer Mondays at 9.30am on Zoom
A Psalm, a Bible reading and some prayers. All welcome.
The Zoom link to join in is: [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89866690323?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89866690323?wd=NHZXaEc2TkJEcFBXbmtPOE5WTEpadz09)
[wd=NHZXaEc2TkJEcFBXbmtPOE5WTEpadz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89866690323?wd=NHZXaEc2TkJEcFBXbmtPOE5WTEpadz09)

Church Drop-In 11.00am—1.00pm Wednesday
Everyone is welcome to drop in for tea/coffee, a chat etc.

Toddler & Baby Playgroup 9.00-11.30am Friday in church
(during term time)
A time for babies, toddlers and their carers to play and to share.

Church Choir Practice after the 10.00am service
Join us in helping to lead Sunday worship

UNIFORMED ORGANISATIONS

Purposeful activity in a structured, fun environment.

25th Wakefield Scout Group For boys and girls, held in the Scout Hut by St. John's Parish Centre.

Details: Group Scout Leader Simon Daley, 07814 413401 <https://www.facebook.com/25thstjohnsscouts>

Rainbows

To register an interest, visit www.girlguiding.org.uk & click on join

Rainbows contact Ann Coulson – 07932394020

Sunday Services at St John's

EVERY SUNDAY

10.00am Parish Communion

There will be candle, shell and leaf prayer stations available in the side chapel.

10.00am St John's Juniors - 'JJs' - meet for story, prayer and activities in the Samaritan Room.
All 4-11 year-olds welcome. (Term time only)

We have toys and books in the café area, for younger ones, but parents are asked to supervise them at all times.

3rd SUNDAY EACH MONTH (usually)

4.00pm Tea-Time Service

For everyone: families of all shapes & sizes, singles, children, adults, young and old.

A relaxed service, with songs, activities, readings and prayers, beginning with refreshments.

We have a crèche area for the service.

4th SUNDAY EACH MONTH

In the side chapel, during communion, we offer prayer for healing, with the laying on of hands.

Everyone, of any age, is welcome at all our services.

The entrance door to the church is on the city centre / High School side of St John's Square. There is a ramp access for wheelchairs and pushchairs up to this door.

There is a fully accessible toilet at the church, and a baby-change facility.

There is an induction loop for those who use a hearing aid.

Who's Who at St John's

Vicar **The Revd Stephanie Buchanan**

Tel: 01924 371029

e-mail: stephanie.buchanan@btinternet.com

Assistant Clergy: **The Revd Paul Ellis** 01924 367976

Churchwardens: **Sally Jones** 07712 989714

Liz Oldroyd 07975 839277

Licensed Lay Ministers (Readers)

Cath Fox 01924 386422

Brian Morris 01924 369437

Treasurer: **Geoff Lockyer** 01924 368972

To ask about booking any of the following - Church, Church Reception Area, Samaritan Room -

e-mail: stjohn.churchbookings@gmail.com

Magazine Editor, and Advertising Manager

Deidre Morris 263 Park Lodge Lane, WF1 4HY

01924 369437 e-mail: bandmorris@btinternet.com

Our Website: **www.achurchnearyou.com/church/7365**

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Scan our QR code with your smart phone to make a donation to the work of St John's in this community.