St Cuthbert's Parish Church Amble

Parish News

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Rachael's Ramblings

Photo: Puffin Petal

December, the month of tinsel and fairy lights, food and drink, parties and christmas songs, shop windows decorated and mince pies a plenty. As I walk around our area I can see and experience all of these things. Shop windows are filled with decorations, often with themes or particular colours. A great deal of time is often spent on these decorations in shop and home windows. I love looking at all the decorations, seeing how people have spent time in this wonderful celebration of Jesus' birth. Bring on the lights, the trees, the colours and the joy! These windows are a little bit like the windows in an Advent calendar, the ones without chocolate. They are like the different images we have of Christmas. Snowy scenes, sweet treats, Christmas trees decorated with coloured baubles, lights galore, images of a jolly Father Christmas, and perhaps even a nativity scene.

As a Christian minister I love to see all of the colours and lights but what thrills my heart is when I see an image of the nativity, the one that features baby Jesus with his parents Mary and Joseph. This is the heart of Christmas, God's love for everyone as seen in the birth of a baby boy. Jesus birth IS the reason for Christmas, with all the colours and twinkling lights, but also the reality of the birth of a baby to a couple who were far away from home and would soon be refugees.

Whatever your Christmas looks like this year my prayer is that you may know that you are loved by God, who sent his Son to be born as a gift to us all.

God bless you this Christmas

Rev Rachael

Christingle

The history of the Christingle can be traced back to Moravian Bishop Johannes Watteville, who started the tradition in Germany, on 20 December 1747 in Castle of Marienborn, near Frankfurt as "an attempt to get children koi to think about Jesus".

The custom was popularised in the United Kingdom by John Pensom in 1968. He was raising funds for the charity The Children's Society. (https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/).

Each element of a Christingle has a special meaning and helps to tell the Christian story:

- The orange represents the world
- The red ribbon (or tape) symbolises the love and blood of Christ
- The sweets and dried fruit represent all of God's creations
- The lit candle represents Jesus' light in the world, bringing hope to people living in darkness.

Christingle is a joyful celebration that brings families and communities together to share the light of Jesus and spread a message of hope.

This year we will be holding our Christingle service on Thursday 24th December at 4:00 pm. All welcome.

Christmas Present

We all have our own memories of Christmas. Thomas, a very special young member of our church, is no exception. He remembers lots of things about Christmas but particularly he remembers how he used to play a shepherd in his school nativity play, and how he loved dressing up.

For him, the switching on of the Christmas lights and the colourful and lively procession down Queen Street marks the beginning of the season, giving him the chance to dress up again of course!

Thomas enjoys receiving presents but says that for him the kid real meaning of Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Jesus, who brings peace on earth, something we need very much. He points out that Wise Men brought presents for Jesus and this is the reason why we give presents today.
Wednesday, 18 November 2026

This year he is looking forward to the Christingle service on Christmas Eve.

Christmas Elsewhere

A letter from Ukraine

Christmas 2022 was not easy. Should we even be celebrating? How can we? So many are suffering - is it right to delight in the Christmas treats we are used to? But celebration took on a new meaning. It was no longer fluffy and nostalgic. It was an act of resistance. As John 10:10 says "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." If we say we cannot celebrate, the enemy has won - we are already not living.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, writing to his family, from prison during ww2 was also greatly inspiring for me at that time "*We can, and should also, celebrate Christmas despite the ruins around us. I think of you as you now sit together with the children and with all the Advent decorations—as in earlier years you did with us. We must do all this, even more intensively, because we do not know how much longer we have.*"

All celebrations have become important to us, reminders that we must enjoy life while we are still alive. We spend so much time worrying about trivial things, when war comes so much is put into perspective. I encourage you to read the Christmas story with new eyes this year, imagine what it was really like. Not some romantic school play but the dust and the dirt and the discomfort of the birth, and remember that Jesus did not come to live a comfortable life but gave us the gift of a life of service, of suffering, of sacrifice and the promise of resurrection. What is his gift to you this Christmas?

Caroline Yevpak

Church Life

To celebrate Harvest this year, we had a 'bring and share' supper in the Parish Hall accompanied by a Beetle drive. We had a great selection of food supplied by those taking part. There was great joy and laughter as the dice were rolled and beetles constructed. Conversations of about growing up playing games with siblings increased the joy.
The hall looked very welcoming with the wonderful bunting made by members of the congregation recently.

The Parish Hall is central to our social and fund raising events, including family celebrations, fayres, quizzes and visits by a variety of drama groups and musical artists.
These are all advertised on social media and in our weekly newsletter which can be collected from church.The hall is used throughout the week by a number of community groups catering for a variety of ages and abilities.

Longest Night Service

At this time of year some people are struggling, for many different reasons, and don't feel the jollity of Christmas. The Longest Night service recognises this and yet still celebrates the season, but in a short, gentle and quieter manner. Anyone can come and receive the gift of Hope as we move through the Longest Night together.

What's On In December

ALL SERVICES AND EVENTS IN CHURCH UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED

Every Thursday
8.00 am Morning Prayer

Wednesday 2 December
10.30 am Creating soul space

Thursday 3 December
11.00 am Julian Meeting

Saturday 5 December
10.00 am Coffee Morning

Sunday 6 December
10.30 am Parish Communion.

Wednesday 9 December
9.30 am Said Communion

Saturday 12 December
7.30 pm Christmas Concert by Jayess Newbiggin Brass Band

Sunday 13 December
10.30 am Parish Communion.
3.30 pm Cafe Church *(The Helm)*
6.00 pm Carol Service

Tuesday 15 December
2.30 pm Bereavement Group

Wednesday 16 December
9.30 am Amble Links School Nativity
11.00 am Creating soul space

Saturday 19 December
10.00 am Coffee Morning. *A chance to help prepare the oranges for the Christingle Service.*

Sunday 20 December
10.30 am Parish Communion.
4.00 pm Take Time for meditation

Monday 21 December
6.00 pm 'Longest Night' service

Thursday 24 December
Christmas Eve
4.00 pm Christingle
10.00 pm Bethlehem Christmas Communion ('Midnight Mass')

Friday 25 December
Christmas Day
10.00 am Christmas Communion

Sunday 27 December
10.30 am Parish Communion.

CONTACTS

Vicar
Reverend Rachael Dines
07763 211 901
Email: revd.rachael.dines@gmail.com

Churchwardens
churchwardens@stcuthbertsonline.com
Richard Colson – 07724 687 107
Linda Williams – 07720 716 794

Safeguarding Officer
Mari Mander
07855 932975
mari.mander@gmail.com