Pip and Steve and the Gang —

A newsletter for the Parish of All Saints & St Philip, Maidstone, with St Stephen, Tovil.

For the week ending 22nd of November



Our "coffee morning" after church last Sunday, raising money for Macmillan, was a great success and we raised over £300 for cancer care.

A short note only, this week, as I have taken a very light week (as mentioned below). Still, it's worth noting that we had a really successful gathering, thanks to Collette and Richard, raising money for Macmillan, and I think a good time was had by all.

This Sunday is the feast of Christ the King, the last Sunday of the church's year, so it perhaps forms a good day for us to take stock, and I hope we will have a good gathering at St Stephens at the school. Remember to bring lunch, and, ideally, bring a little extra for anyone who comes without lunch.

Bon Dimanche.



I hope this newsletter is useful, sharing information and updates about what is going on in the parish. If there is anything you would like included in this newsletter, or a more useful way to share it, please do let me know. And my thanks to those who have already done just that.

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This Week

I've had my head down, with a diary that's cleared of contact time, building up my batteries ready for next month!

Next Week

Next week sounds like a comedy, as I have a school assembly, the PCC and two funerals — bread and butter parish work!

Coming up

Please put in your diaries the **22nd November,** when you are invited to bring a packed lunch to church, so that over lunch we can begin to discuss our priorities together as a parish. *Over the coming month, it would be really good if you could be thinking about what we do well, and what we need to work on (and what resources we would need so to do).*

On **24 November** our PCC meets. Please hold our PCC members in your prayers as they prepare to meet to examine and ensure good governance of our parish.

And on **29 November,** Advent Sunday, we will be having a parish lunch after the service at St Philips Church. See the pew sheet for information about obtaining a ticket.

Then on the **5th December** we are holding a joint prayer breakfast with Maidstone Baptist Church (across the road from All Saints). Come along at 8:30 AM to join our Baptist brothers and sisters in the church hall off Knightrider Street for fellowship, food and a short prayer meeting in time for us to start our 10 AM Eucharist as usual.

Upcoming services:

November:
Sun 22nd- 8 AM holy Communion, St Philip's Church, Waterloo Street
10 AM Service of the Word, St Stephen's at Archbishop Courtenay School
followed by lunch (bring your own) and discussion
Sun 29th – 10 AM Parish Eucharist, St Philip' s, Waterloo Street

Christmas services:

Sat 19th – 4 pm. 9 Lessons and Carols, *All Saint's Church*
Sun 20th - 6 pm. Carol service, *St Philip's Church*
Thurs 24th - 4:30pm Christingle service, *All Saint's Church*
11:30pm Midnight mass, *All Saint's Church*
Christmas Day 10am Service of carols and readings, St Philip's Church

10am - Eucharist, *All Saint's Church*

Sun 27 – 10am. Eucharist, *St Stephen's - in the school*

For Prayer

Please pray for vocations and discernment, again - not only for priestly vocations, but also for more everyday leadership and community engagement through the life of this parish, as we look ahead to exploring together our vision for the life of the church in this place.

I am looking for people who are able to commit themselves to praying at a set time every day, in their own homes, for the work of the parish. Please get in touch if you're interested.

As a matter of course, please pray for those whose lives touch the ministry this parish through their Life Events (see below), but particularly Mervyn Penry Stanton and Hayley Janur, late of this parish, recently departed.

Please note the names of those on our prayer list will be refreshed each month, so do remember to let us know if you want us to keep someone in our prayers this month.

For Action

I'm conscious there is a solid group of people who work hard both in the community and maintaining our buildings and grounds, and I'm very grateful. We do need volunteers, however for:

Keyholders, available to unlock for events, and respond to minor queries. In particular, next year, I want to be opening both churches every Sunday at 10 AM, so I need a rota of people to open the church where the service *isn't*. On which, more anon.

Members of our working groups — we need *your* wisdom and experience! In particular, I need to build a communications team to think about noticeboards, pew sheets, social media et cetera.

Do get in touch if you think you can help.

Please come along to St Stephens at the Archbishop Courtenay School, on the 22nd November, and share with us your insight into who we are, and what we are growing towards.

Life Events

During the service this week we will be welcoming and celebrating our recent baptism and confirmation candidates: Luca (baptised), Kelsi and Summer (baptised and confirmed), and Zoryana and Jacqueline (confirmed). It is a great joy to see the Body of Christ swell, as the hymn says, *soul by soul, and silently…*

We are beginning to build up a list of couples looking to get married with us in 2027. Please pray for Laura and Sean and Gary and Katriel as they prepare for their weddings next year.

Look forward to more banns of marriage being read in the spring!

We will be holding the funeral for Mervyn Penry Stanton on 23rd November at 12 PM at All Saints Church, and for Hayley Janur on 27th November at 11 AM. Please hold their grieving spouses and families in your prayers.

Discipleship and Training

There are moves afoot to reboot our **prayer and study group**. Do get in touch if you are interested. I'll keep you updated here, but Claire James and Jane Stevens will be actively seeking your input after church particularly regarding time and place.

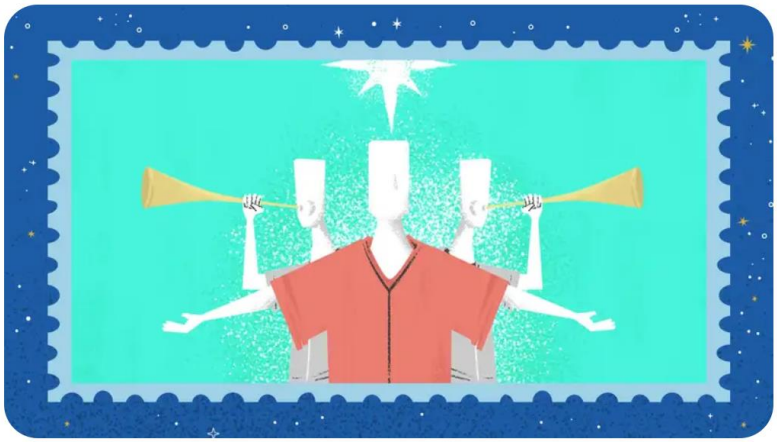
In the wider diocese:

Prayers for peace and reconciliation

🗓️ Every Tuesday starting 15th September the
⏰ 12:30pm
📍 Canterbury Cathedral crypt

Jonathan Arnold, Director of the Social Justice Network, will be leading a weekly service of prayer and silent reflection for peace and reconciliation. All are welcome to join in praying for the needs of the world, our communities and our own lives.

Take a look at the **Bible Project' s advent series** -



https://bibleproject.com/guides/advent/

I have a lot of time for the people who run this project, which has material pitched at people at pretty much any level. This year's advent series will give you food for thought as we travel through advent, preparing for the *One who is, and was, and is to come*.

Odds and Sods

Maidstone Borough Council says, *"Calling all Faith Groups – We want your views*

Maidstone Borough Council would like to better understand the valuable work taking place across our faith communities and explore how we can strengthen communication and engagement between the Council and local faith organisations.

We are seeking views from faith organisations on how they would like to receive information from the Council, opportunities for engagement and consultation, and whether there would be value in developing a regular forum for faith groups to come together, share experiences, raise issues and hear about matters affecting local communities.

If you are part of a faith organisation or are connected to people who are please complete or share the survey that can be found at the link below.

https://maidstone-gov.welcomesyourfeedback.net/abmgf4"

Please do take part in the survey so that the voices of the people of faith in this town are well represented.

Keep in Touch

https://www.stphilipschurchmaidstone.co.uk/

(parish): https://www.facebook.com/p/All-Saints-with-St-Philip-St-Stephen-Maidstone-100069767707374/
(bells): https://www.facebook.com/AllSaintsMaidstone

(café): @allsaintscafemaidstone
(Bells): @allsaintsmaidstoneringers

Bluesky: @allsaintsmaidstone.bsky.social
@maidstonevicar.bsky.social

office.allsaintsmaidstone@gmail.com | Vicar@dunelm.org.uk

donate: https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/all-saints-maidstone

Giving

Finally, owing to the hard work of our treasurer, Terri, it's now easy to make both one-off donations and to set up a direct debit to give to the work of the parish. **Go to parishgiving.org and set it up there** — you can even stay anonymous if you would like. More on this, anon.