Newsletter - December

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Service times

Sundays 6th & 20th at 9.00 am;
13th at 4.00 pm
27th: Patronal festival of St John the Evangelist: Eucharist & Baptism at 10.00 am.
Wednesdays at 10.00 am but there will be no services on 23rd or 30th.

Other services in December

Churches Together
Ecumenical service of carols and readings in St John's on Sunday 13th December at 6 pm.

Christingle service
On Sunday 20th at 6 pm

First Mass of Christmas
On Thursday 24th at 8 pm

What else is on in December

Moorside Community Meal
On Tuesday 1st, 8th & 15th in St John's Church Hall from 11.30 am. The meal on the 15th will be a Christmas dinner. If you wish to come to that, please let Megan know either on the St John's church hall Facebook page or in person so that she has some idea of how much food will be needed.

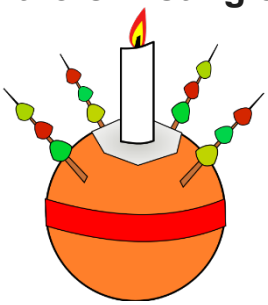
Christmas Dinner
At The Anchor Inn, Whittonstall on Friday 4th at 1 pm

Christmas Dance in St John's Church Hall
Friday 4th from 7.30-11 pm

Christmas selection boxes

Megan Sinden will be delivering these to youngsters who would otherwise not receive them. If you would like to donate a selection box, please bring it either to church by 6th December or to St John's Church Hall by 8th December

Meaning of the Christingle



The orange: the world
The candle: Christ bringing light and hope to a world living in darkness
The red ribbon (tape): the blood of Christ shed in love for humanity
The sweets/dried fruits: God's wonderful creations

O come O Come Emmanuel



O come, O come, Emmanuel
Redeem thy captive Israel
That into exile drear is gone
Far from the face of God's dear Son.
Rejoice, Rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to You, O Israel.

As advent approaches most of us will look forward to singing, at least once during the four Sundays of Advent, this wonderful hymn.



But I wonder how many of us realize that this invocation of Christ as our Emmanuel, a word meaning ‘God with Us’ is just one of the seven names for the Son of God invoked in the Great Antiphons of Advent.

The words O come, O come Emmanuel is one of a series of short verses or antiphons which count down the days to Christmas Eve. Sung at the beginning and end of the Magnificat during Evensong, starting on 17th December and ending on the 23rd, each antiphon begins with a different name for Jesus. They draw on Scripture to help us learn about who Jesus will be, each verse telling us one of his traditional names drawn from the Old Testament.

O Sapientia (O Wisdom)
O Adonai, (O my Master or O my Lord)
O Radix Jesse (O Root of Jesse)
O Clavis David (O Key of David)
O Oriens (O Dawn of the East)
O Rex Gentium (O King of the Nations)
O Emmanuel (God with us)

The antiphon texts are believed to have originated in Italy in or before the sixth century and have been used in worship for over 1500 years.

Today we in the Church of England know them best in their amalgamated form as the hymn ‘O come, O come, Emmanuel’, translated into English in 1851 by John Mason Neale.

So as we sing this hymn both during our Sunday eucharists and at our carol service, see if you can spot the words of the antiphons, the names of Jesus, as we join in the praise of his name and realize that in our hymn singing we join with Christians throughout the ages and throughout the world who have prayed for and still pray for the coming of our Emmanuel, God with Us.

Christmas

The bells of waiting Advent ring,
The Tortoise stove is lit again
And lamp-oil light across the night
Has caught the streaks of winter rain
In many a stained-glass window sheen
From Crimson Lake to Hookers Green.

The holly in the windy hedge
And round the Manor House the yew
Will soon be stripped to deck the ledge,
The altar, font and arch and pew,
So that the villagers can say
'The church looks nice' on Christmas Day.

Provincial Public Houses blaze,
Corporation tramcars clang,
On lighted tenements I gaze,
Where paper decorations hang,
And bunting in the red Town Hall
Says 'Merry Christmas to you all'.

And London shops on Christmas Eve
Are strung with silver bells and flowers
As hurrying clerks the City leave
To pigeon-haunted classic towers,
And marbled clouds go scudding by
The many-steepled London sky.

And girls in slacks remember Dad,
And oafish louts remember Mum,
And sleepless children's hearts are glad.
And Christmas-morning bells say 'Come!'
Even to shining ones who dwell
Safe in the Dorchester Hotel.

And is it true? And is it true,
This most tremendous tale of all,
Seen in a stained-glass window's hue,
A Baby in an ox's stall?
The Maker of the stars and sea
Become a Child on earth for me?

And is it true? For if it is,
No loving fingers tying strings
Around those tissued fripperies,
The sweet and silly Christmas things,
Bath salts and inexpensive scent
And hideous tie so kindly meant,

No love that in a family dwells,
No carolling in frosty air,
Nor all the steeple-shaking bells
Can with this single Truth compare -
That God was man in Palestine
And lives today in Bread and Wine.

John Betjeman, 1954