



St Hilda's
Ashford

St Hilda's News

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We are looking for more contributions from the St Hilda's community, if you would like to contribute, please either call, email or send an article to the Parish Office.

If you would like help or to speak to a member of the ministry team please contact:

- Parish Office Tel 01784 253525
 Email office@sthilda.org
- Father Joseph can be contacted on 01784 254237

www.sthilda.org



Christmas Services at St Hilda's

13th @ 9.30am - Eucharist (3rd Sunday of Advent)

13th @ 4.00pm - *Christingle*

16th @ 9.45am - Wednesday Eucharist

20th @ 9.30am - Eucharist (4th Sunday of Advent)

23rd @ 9.45am - Wednesday Eucharist

24th @ 3.00pm - *Crib Service*

24th @ 11.00pm - *Midnight Mass*

25th @ 9.30am - *Christmas Day Service*

27th @ 9.30am - Sunday Eucharist

30th @ 9.45am - Wednesday Eucharist

All services MUST be pre-booked to ensure we comply with Track and Trace regulations

Tickets for all services in Red are available for booking now,
please call the Parish Office to book a seat or book via the Website

Vaccination in churches not that easy, guidance warns



A care-home worker, Pillay Jagambrun, aged 61, receives one of the first Pfizer-BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine doses at Croydon University Hospital, south London, on Tuesday

CHURCHES and cathedrals that have offered to become temporary vaccination centres should be aware of logistical issues that might make it difficult, new Church of England guidance says.

It was announced last month that the first effective coronavirus vaccine, developed by Pfizer and BioNTech, had been found to be more than 90 per cent effective in protecting people from infection. The first doses of the vaccine were administered in the UK on Tuesday.

Updated coronavirus guidance for churches, published on the C of E website on Tuesday, says that it is “admirable that so many churches and cathedrals have suggested that they may be able to provide space for vaccination centres”. It sets out, however, “some of the logistical issues that churches might consider when deciding if their buildings could be appropriate centres”.

The guidance notes: “Most of the vaccination hubs being set up are expecting to process upwards of 1000 people a day — they need large spaces that are not needed for any other purposes, and that can be kept for the purposes of vaccinations for up to a year. If you do not have a dedicated space that can be given over to this purpose, it is likely to be difficult for you to offer your church.”

Factors that churches and cathedrals should consider include:

- The size of the space that they can offer for vaccinations. “Are you sure you won’t need it for other purposes for as long as the vaccination centre remains in place? Are there adequate toilet facilities and easy access to water and electricity supplies? Does what you can offer fit with what your local NHS Trust or resilience forum needs?”
- How easily health staff and the public will be able to travel to the building. Transport routes and parking availability should be considered, as well as whether vans can get near enough to the building to deliver medical supplies and collect clinical waste. There also needs to be enough space on site for vaccine patients to wait, and a one-way system should be set up across the site to aid social distancing.
- How accessible the building is. Questions to consider include whether the building has had an access audit; whether it can be accessed by wheelchair users, people with buggies, small children, and those who have difficulty walking; whether there is an operational hearing loop and, if not, whether one could be installed; what visual markers need to be installed to enable people who are blind or visually impaired to

access the building; whether there is at least one accessible toilet, in working order and free of clutter. Online information should be available for people to plan their visit.

- The need to adapt the space. “Most vaccination centres need to set up a number of individual cubicles for the administration of vaccines, plus secure areas for storage of records, computers, medical waste, etc. Assuming that such interventions are temporary and do not have an impact on historic fabric, does the layout of your building allow for such a layout?”
- The need for permissions. A licence or hiring agreement should be agreed between the PCC and whoever runs the vaccination centre, which includes information on fees and payment, insurance and liability arrangements, and agreement over access to and use of the space. Furthermore, churches and consecrated church halls will require a faculty, since running a vaccination centre is “a secular use rather than use of the church as a place of worship”, the guidance states. “However, Chancellors may issue Additional Matters Orders disapplying the need for faculties in their dioceses; but the position will, in each case, need to be checked with the DAC” (Diocesan Advisory Committee).

Churches that consider themselves suitable, and which have been invited by the NHS to set up a vaccination centre, should contact their DAC or archdeacon for advice, the guidance says. Cathedrals should contact the Cathedrals Fabric Commission, who “will work with your Fabric Advisory Committee to get you the right advice and get appropriate permissions in place”.

Separate to the guidance, a vaccines update published on Tuesday by the C of E's Recovery Group notes that the requirements “are likely to be quite demanding. While some church properties might be suitable, many will not”.

Surrey church to become full-time vaccination centre

A church in Haslemere, Surrey will become a vaccination centre from 15th December.

This comes as the Pfizer and BioNtech vaccine is being rolled out in hospitals across the UK.

St Christopher's church will open its doors for four months and will receive up to 300 people per day, including some of the most medically vulnerable groups.

Rev Chris Bessant, the Rector for the church, told Premier this initiative gives the church a unique opportunity to serve the community having been unable to do so freely during the last few months.



“We've been rather restricted on how we can do something that allows us to gather together, something which is a kind of big set piece offering to the community. And so now, it seems with the vaccine station, that does provide us with that opportunity.”

St Christopher's is one of the two churches that form the Parish of Haslemere. From next week, St. Christopher's will effectively be “taken out of worship ministry” and will remain so throughout the duration of the vaccine rollout scheme.

“On a normal Sunday, we would have split the services across the two churches. In this case, now all the church services will focus on the St. Bartholomew's church” Rev Bessant said. “We will get a little opportunity, just over the Christmas days, to be doing some services” he continued.

The church was approached by the NHS given the building satisfied many of the requirements necessary for a vaccination centre. Rev Bessant explained how the congregation initially reacted with “shock” - as the church would no longer be used for worship services - to “unreserved unbridled enthusiasm” when they realised it was a great thing for them to be doing.

Talking about the benefits the vaccination centre would bring, Rev Bessant said it would provide an opportunity for missional work.

“It reaches out to the farthest extents of the community, both in drawing people into the church to receive this wonderful blessing plus also the opportunity for people to volunteer. And that goes way, way beyond the people that we know within the church and out into the community.”

Rev Bessant continued by encouraging other churches that might be thinking of becoming a vaccination centre. He said that churches should be “taking it slowly and thinking about [it] carefully” to ensure the right balance between responding quickly to the needs of the community and taking appropriate precautions.

Given many churches and cathedrals are being approached by the NHS or have offered their space to become vaccination centres, The Church of England has responded by issuing safety guidelines.

Father God,

We thank you for the resources you have given us to serve our communities and share who you are with those around us.

We pray that people would be able to see you through these efforts and that you would continue to support all of those affected.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

1.7 million people expected to spend Christmas alone, new poll reveals

At least 1.7 million people are expected to spend Christmas Day alone according to a new poll by The Observer.



In a 'normal' year, the figure would usually be around four per cent of the UK. However, this year, because of the pandemic, the number is expected to be as high as eight per cent.

The issue is particularly severe among adults aged 64 and over. Louise Morse from The Pilgrims Friend Society said this Christmas will be "very difficult and very dark" for the elderly, especially for those aged over 80 and others who suffer from chronic disabilities.

Only 23 per cent of adults surveyed said they will spend Christmas with their parents this year compared to 35 per cent last year.

Last month, Health Secretary Matt Hancock promised a flagship government testing scheme to be rolled out in care homes across England to allow visitors during the Christmas season, but this hasn't reached all care homes yet. Louise Morse believes that getting fast testing in care homes will help reduce isolation.

"If we can get hold of [the test] before Christmas, that would be wonderful," she said. "Within 35 minutes, it will tell you if you're positive or not...because this virus produces [many] asymptomatic people."

Morse wants to encourage Christians to get involved with campaigns to combat loneliness and to be proactively engaging with neighbours or people around us that might be feeling lonely.

"It's finding out what's already there, so you can take advantage of it and pray," she said. "Prayer is so powerful; we forget that when we come up with our human tactics. Pray about it. Pray that the vaccine will come quickly. Pray that the fast test will be here from Liverpool, so we'll know within 35 minutes whether or not [we are positive] because people want to touch each other this Christmas. They want to hug."

A national campaign to combat loneliness backed by the Archbishop of Canterbury will start on 14th December and will run until 18th January.

Christmas Together calls on the public to reach out to someone and to sign up to bring Christmas cheer as an NHS Volunteer Responder.

13-year-old boy becomes Salisbury Cathedral's chorister bishop for a day

In a tradition dating back to medieval times, a schoolboy has been chosen to take on the role of Salisbury Cathedral's chorister bishop.

Unlike their predecessors, though, who held office for three weeks between the Feast of St Nicholas and Holy Innocents, 13-year-old Sebastian Kunzer will only be in post for a day.

Chorister bishops were traditionally chosen by the cathedral's director of music but this year each chorister was asked to suggest a name.

Sebastian was elected by his peers due to his talent as a singer, his leadership qualities and his kindness.

David Halls, the cathedral's director of music, said: "(Sebastian's) a really nice boy - kind, thoughtful, hardworking and a talented singer.

"He would have been my choice if it had been my choice to make this year and all credit to his fellow choristers because they have selected very wisely in my opinion."



Sebastian lives in Salisbury and was admitted as a full chorister in 2017 after a short stint as a probationer.

The topsy-turvy chorister bishop ceremony echoes the medieval practice of holding festivals in which the "high" became "low" and vice versa.

The elected chorister bishop held office from St Nicholas Day on December 6 until Holy Innocents Day on December 28.

They could make decisions on church

appointments that fell vacant within this period, as well as presiding over all services.

The practice continued right up until the reign of Henry VIII who put a stop to it, declaring it a distraction from proper church business.

It was revived in its present form in Salisbury during the 1980s and the service takes place on December 6, during the Feast of St Nicholas.

During the service, as the choir sing the words of the Magnificat, the Bishop of Salisbury descends from his throne and is stripped of his robes and emblems of office.

The chorister bishop is then robed and equipped as a bishop before taking his place on the bishop's throne to conduct the service, deliver the sermon, receive the collection and lead prayers.

The role was originally known as the Boy Bishop but the title changed when the choir began admitting girls and the first female chorister bishop was elected in 2015.

Meanwhile, the cathedral is launching a virtual choristers tour narrated by TV star Alexander Armstrong to recruit the next generation of singers.

The choir has 10 places to fill, five for girls and five for boys, and the virtual tour replaces recruitment events cancelled because of Covid-19.

Christmas Traditions – Part I

A few bits and bobs looking at some Christmas Traditions. You may have other answers and information, and I am happy to be contradicted!

Advent

In the 19th Century, German protestant Christians counted down to Christmas by marking 24 chalk lines on a door and rubbing one off every day in December.

There are various stories about source of Advent Calendar but I like this one:

One December a mother cut a cake into 24 pieces and put them onto a piece of cardboard. Her little boy got to eat one piece each day until Christmas. That little boy grew up to be a printer. He always remembered what his mother had done, and in 1903 he produced the first Advent Calendar. It had 24 little windows. Behind each window was a picture of something he had wished for as a child – mostly toys.



Advent Wreath



There is evidence of pre-Christian Germanic peoples using wreaths with lit candles during the cold and dark December days as a sign of hope in the future warm and extended-sunlight days of Spring. In Scandinavia during Winter, lighted candles were placed around a wheel, and prayers were offered to the god of light to turn “the wheel of the earth” back toward the sun to lengthen the days and restore warmth.

The circular shape represents never-ending life: the immortality of the soul; the eternity of God

Crib scene

The first and authentic reconstruction of the crib in "3D" was made by **St. Francis of Assisi** in 1223. The saint, deeply affected the previous year by a trip to the Holy Land, decided to propose the reconstruction of the sacred episode to Pope Honorius III. . And then, given the ban on representing sacred episodes in churches, the pope authorized St. Francis to

represent the sacred event with an outdoor mass in Greccio, in Umbria. Here, thanks to the help of a natural cave, all the characteristics of that night were reconstructed: in the presence of a large number of farmers and friars, the first living nativity scene in history was born.

In medieval and pre-medieval times, in parts of England, there was an early form of Nativity scenes called 'advent images' or a 'vessel cup'. They were a box, often with a glass lid that was covered with a white napkin, that contained two dolls representing Mary and the baby Jesus. The box was decorated with ribbons and flowers (and sometimes apples). They were carried around from door to door. It was thought to be very unlucky if you haven't seen a box before Christmas Eve! People paid the box carriers a halfpenny to see the box.

Candles



During the Jewish Festival of Hannukah which is celebrated at this time, a candle is lit each day for 8 days. In the second century BC, the Holy Land was ruled by the Seleucids (Syrian-Greeks), who tried to force the people of Israel to accept Greek culture and beliefs instead of mitzvah observance and belief in God. Against all odds, a small band of faithful but poorly armed Jews, led by Judah the Maccabee, defeated one of the mightiest armies on earth, drove the Greeks from the land, reclaimed the Holy Temple in Jerusalem and rededicated it to the service of God. When they sought to light the Temple's Menorah (the seven-branched candelabrum), they found only a single cruse of olive oil that had escaped contamination by the Greeks. Miraculously, they lit the menorah and the one-day supply of oil lasted for eight days, until new oil could be prepared under conditions of ritual purity.

To commemorate and publicize these miracles, the sages instituted the festival of Chanukah.

Christ – the light of the world- come to dispel the darkness

Carols

They were pagan songs, sung at the Winter Solstice celebrations as people danced round stone circles. The Winter Solstice is the shortest day of the year, usually taking place around 22nd December.

The word Carol actually means dance or a song of praise and joy.

Carols used to be written and sung during all four seasons, but only the tradition of singing them at Christmas has really survived.

Yule log

A holiday celebration that began in Norway, on the night of the winter solstice it was common to hoist a giant log onto the hearth to celebrate the return of the sun each year. The Norsemen believed that the sun was a giant wheel of fire which rolled away from the earth, and then began rolling back again on the winter solstice.

As Christianity spread through Europe, the tradition became part of Christmas Eve festivities. The father or master of the house would sprinkle the log with libations of mead, oil, or salt. Once the log was burned in the hearth, the ashes were scattered about the house to protect the family within from hostile spirits.



Rosalyn Young

St Hilda's Parish News

Rotary Club Santa Sleigh



In what has become a new St Hilda's tradition, a group from St Hilda's church supported the Staines Rotary Club with the Santa sleigh collection, collecting for local charities around the streets in Staines.

A huge thank you to Kelly, Chrissie, Lily, Frances, Kieran, Denise and Darran.

Salvation Army Foodbank Appeal

In place of the Christmas Hamper raffle that we ran over the last couple of years, we will be supporting the mission of The Salvation Army with both their foodbank appeal as well as their Christmas Day afternoon tea delivery.

Below is a list of the items that they are most in need at the moment.

- Tinned meats
- Tea and Coffee
- UHT Milk
- Toilet roll
- Christmassy chocolate bars
- Tuna
- Sugar
- Biscuits
- Cereal

Christmas services – help required

Over the festive period, there will be a number of services held in the church often on consecutive days, and to ensure we maintain our high standard of being covid safe, there is a need for a 'clean' after each service (this will involve wiping touch points and chairs). If

you are able to spend 15-20 minutes after any of the services to help out with this, please let Denise know.

Memorial Tree

Waitrose has again very kindly donated a wonderful Christmas tree that will be used as our Memorial tree this year (picture on front cover).

As in previous years, we will be inviting everyone/ anyone to dedicate a 'star' with a message to a loved one to be hung on a branch of the tree.

This year, however, we will need to do things a little different to ensure we comply with covid guidelines. We will still supply the stars and these will spread out on a table close by so that you only touch the one(s) that you would like to dedicate, we request though that you bring your own pen. Donations are voluntary.

We will be opening the church on the 2 Saturday's before Christmas between 10.30 - 11.30am for anyone who is unable to come to church on Sunday's.

Alternatively, you can either send your message by email or phone the parish office and we'll complete one on your behalf.



Christmas Wishes

We would like to invite everyone to send in any Christmas wishes that we can publish in the newsletter. These will be printed in the last newsletter before Christmas.

Please send your Christmas wishes by email or post to the parish office.

Pantomime

Unfortunately, this year we will not be able to enjoy the magnificent pantomime productions that St Hilda's Entertainers perform, however, there is an alternative way for you to enjoy pantomime season in 2020.

The National Theatre is to stream *Dick Whittington*, for free via the National Theatre and The Shows Must Go On YouTube channels on the **23 December at 3pm**. The stream will then be available on demand until midnight on 27 December. The production will be filmed live during the performance in the Olivier theatre on the 19 December, in front of a socially distanced audience.

Following the limited-window YouTube streams, it will then be made available on the newly launched **National Theatre at Home** platform from the **11 January** for six weeks.



How can we serve those who are not online?

To support those who do not have internet access, here is a helpful tool to try:



Daily Hope offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line. The line – which is available 24 hours a day on 0800 804 8044 – has been set up particularly with those unable to join online church services during the period of restrictions in mind.

If you have any Parish News you would like to share, then please send them into the Parish Office.

A Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

With Father Steve Gayle
& Father Joseph Fernandes
15–24 March 2022



If you are interested in finding out, there are brochures at the back of the church, alternatively speak to Fr. Joseph.

Tea and Chat after Sunday Service

With new lockdown in place, this is a great opportunity for you to have a cup of favourite brew whilst have a chat amongst the St Hilda's Community.

We would like to invite you to join us for a virtual Tea and Chat after the service on **Sunday 13th December 2020 at 11.15am**. See below on how to join. Any queries please call the Parish Office.

The meeting is hosted by Zoom.

There are 2 ways in which you can join the Tea and Chat session



1. Join via a computer or tablet, for a video style experience (like Skype)

- Download the Zoom app – www.zoom.us
- Click – Join a Meeting
- Enter the Meeting id – **924 8825 6135**
- Enter password – **583890**

2. Join via telephone – cost of a local call.

- Dial – 0203 051 2874

More Tea ... – Weekday Tea and Chat

The second of the weekly Tea and chat sessions where you are able to 'meet up' over a cuppa.

If you haven't yet joined one of these sessions – give it a try, you can connect either on-line or via the telephone, we would like to see or hear as many of you as possible and encourage you to join us. We encourage all those who haven't yet joined one of the sessions to do so, and if you have any apprehension in doing so, please call the Parish Office and Denise will guide you through the process – it is quite simple once you've done it once.

This week the Tea and Chat will be held on **Tuesday 15th December @ 10.30am**

The codes are as per the following, to join follow the instructions above

- Meeting id – **946 9035 3710**
- Password – **553537**

Canaan Ministries are now fully re-open (with normal shop hours). HOWEVER, if you are unable to get into the shop, they are able to deliver anything you require. Just simply phone or email them and they will look after you. They sell a vast and diverse number of products; it is difficult to keep everything they sell on their website. They would like to thank you all for your much-needed continued support. In addition, please join the (Canaan) Facebook group, as it will be the best way for them to keep everyone up to date in this fast-changing situation that we find ourselves in! Any other information can be found on their website www.canaanchristianministries.co.uk/

Psalm 18 v28
It is you who light my lamp;
the Lord, my God, lights
up my darkness.

Crossroads

Please email Rosemary at crossroads_ashford@hotmail.com if you have anything to be included in the parish magazine. The December edition is now available on our website.

This weeks services

Sunday Eucharist – 13th December @ 9.30am

This service can be viewed via our Facebook page, our new YouTube channel (St Hilda's Ashford), and Twitter.

Wednesday 16th December @ 9.45am

To attend either the Sunday or Wednesday service please book a ticket on Ticket Tailor (link on the website), or call the Parish Office.

Please remember that face coverings are mandatory in Church.

Please see our website (www.sthilda.org) for updates and the weekly service sheet.

Vacancy – St Hilda's

We have 2 vacancies for cleaners on a job share basis for the Church Hall, the requirement will be 2 hours per day 7 days a week. The hours will be either early mornings or late evening. References will be required. If interested please contact the Parish Office.

Please hold in your prayers and thoughts this week those who are affected by the Corona Virus as well as the family and friends of those below.

The Sick

James Bedford	Jim Hennessey	Delphine Scrivener	Peter Wilson
Michael Browne	Jean Iddiols	Riley Shaw	Jo Wood
Robb Clarke	Jane Johnson	Anne Shenton	Erin
Rebecca Cohen	Libby Mills	Elsie Stone	George
Ann Considine	Raymond Nation	Roy Stone	Joey
Michael Dixon	June Prentice	Sandra Swain	Martyn
Peter Garner	John Radford	Rev. Peter Taylor	Nic
Eileen Gilbert	Elizabeth Savill-Burgess	Chick Wilson	

The Recently Departed

Pamela Claridge

Prayer

O Lord, raise up, we pray, your power
and come among us,
and with great might succour us;
that whereas, through our sins and wickedness
we are grievously hindered
in running the race that is set before us,
your bountiful grace and mercy
may speedily help and deliver us;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit,
be honour and glory, now and for ever.
Amen

Puzzle Page

Castles in the air Wordsearch

(puzzle created by Terry Rickson)

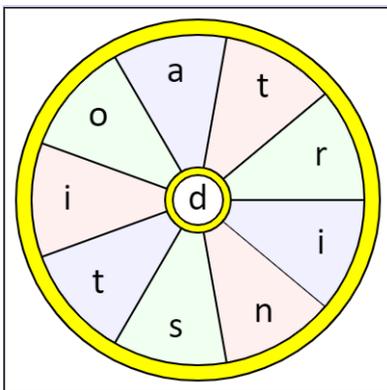
V	L	S	Q	U	C	O	R	F	E	F	J	D	Z	V
Z	A	Y	T	W	P	S	O	T	Z	F	M	E	C	M
S	N	W	L	J	N	U	S	V	D	B	P	T	A	B
D	C	O	U	K	B	O	D	I	A	M	Q	J	R	Z
B	A	N	D	O	J	B	N	Z	F	J	O	A	I	S
X	S	P	L	N	W	T	I	O	W	U	L	B	S	U
M	T	Q	O	C	O	N	W	A	Y	K	N	T	B	W
P	E	C	W	Z	N	L	J	P	N	M	Z	O	R	B
R	R	Z	R	B	I	Z	F	Q	A	P	J	S	O	D
D	T	W	V	C	J	L	P	O	T	N	P	J	O	N
S	Y	M	H	D	H	C	E	L	R	A	H	V	K	X
A	X	I	X	F	B	K	C	E	W	E	Q	Y	E	Y
Z	R	O	N	J	V	A	V	N	Y	R	W	X	M	A
K	E	N	I	L	W	O	R	T	H	C	R	O	P	A
W	Q	P	C	K	D	Z	S	M	X	B	A	B	T	B

- BODIAM
- CARISBROOKE
- CHIRK
- CONWAY
- CORFE
- DOVER
- HARLECH
- KENILWORTH
- LANCASTER
- LUDLOW
- TOWER OF LONDON
- WINDSOR

Futoshiki

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Wordwheel



How many words can you find using the centre letter? There is one 10 letter word, the theme of Rosalyn's article.

Riddle
How many gifts do you receive in the song 'The 12 days of Christmas' if you add them all up?

Answers from last week

Sudoku

9	6	8	7	2	5	3	4	1
2	7	3	8	4	1	9	6	5
4	5	1	6	3	9	7	2	8
1	4	2	5	7	3	8	9	6
6	9	7	4	8	2	5	1	3
3	8	5	9	1	6	4	7	2
7	1	9	2	5	8	6	3	4
5	3	4	1	6	7	2	8	9
8	2	6	3	9	4	1	5	7

Quote Slide

D	O	I	N	G		L	I	T	T	L	E		
T	H	I	N	G	S		W	E	L	L		I	S
	A		S	T	E	P		T	O	W	A	R	D
D	O	I	N	G		B	I	G					
	T	H	I	N	G	S		B	E	T	T	E	R

Word Wheel
10 letter word –
Loneliness

Riddle
Empty
MT!