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December 2024

For me the time of Advent and Christmas is always special. I love the longer and darker nights, but nights enhanced by beautiful coloured lights, Christmas trees and decorations in our homes, streets and town centres. A busy time of the year, as people shop for gifts for their friends and family. A time of parties, and when people prepare their homes to receive family and friends for the Christmas celebrations. A time of carol services, and carol singing and Salvation Army bands playing carols on the streets! A time of course when we can celebrate afresh God's gift of Jesus to each one of us who came to earth as a small baby that first Christmas. A time when we can ensure that we are ready for the time when the adult Jesus will come again in power and glory.

One of my favourite carols is 'O little Town of Bethlehem in which we read the words, 'Yet in our dark streets shineth the everlasting light. The hopes and fears of all our years are met in You tonight.' Jesus came to earth to bring God's love and light into our dark world and so let us ensure that this Christmas time that we truly meet with God, so that we experience God's light and love afresh for ourselves, to ensure that we are truly ready for when He will come again.

Matthew in his Gospel says 'you are to give Him the name Jesus because He will save His people from their sins.....
'the Virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call Him Immanuel'- which means God with us.' (Matthew 1:21-23).

Thank you for all you have done this year and for all that will happen over the next few weeks. And it is my prayer that for each one of us in the busyness of the next few weeks that we not only have a wonderful Christmas time, but one in which Jesus is truly central to all that we do, and that we will all know afresh the truth of word 'Immanuel,' God with us.

God bless you
Major Kevin



Regular Activities will return in January, 2025. Café on the Rec open as usual.

Stowmarket Food Bank are asking for the following items for their Christmas Hampers—can you help?

**Tins of Ham, Corned Beef
Salmon, Fruit and
Rice Pudding.
Jars of Jam and Pickles;
Cartons of Custard & Fruit Juice.
Packets of Gravy Granules, Angel
Delight, Jelly.
Breakfast Cereals (Variety Pack),
sweets (small)
Boxes of sweets, Chocolates,
Trifle mix, Mince pies, Stuffing
mix, Cuppa soup.
Hot Drinking Chocolate;
Christmas Pudding; Selection
Boxes; Biscuits for Cheese;
Christmas Cake (whole or iced);
Stollen;
Chocolate Father Christmas;
Chocolate Christmas Log;
Nuts or Savory Snacks;
Tubes of Pringles or Crisps.**

Anything you can donate will be greatly appreciated.

All items for the January 2025 newsletter: messages, prayers or prayer requests, please let Major Kevin, Caroline, Mags or Bev know by Sunday 22nd December 2024. If you would like the newsletter emailed to you each month, please let Bev know.

CHURCHES TOGETHER

ADVENT SERVICE

At St Peter & St Mary's Church
On 1st DECEMBER 2024 at
6.00PM

ALL WELCOME

Collection of Dry
Goods and
Offeritory to
Stowmarket Food
Bank



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Christmas Day

A dinner is being hosted by the
Jam Community Pot at the United
Reformed Church,
Stowmarket from
12noon –
4:00pm. Book your
place with Michelle
on 07810 456512.



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Tom Stokes is organising a
Christmas Social, at the Hall
on 15th December.

Fun, Food and
Fellowship at
5:00pm. Bring
some food to
share
please see the
noticeboard
for information.



* * *

The Corps has
a Mobility
Scooter that is
available to
borrow –
please see
Mrs Sandra
Ambrose for
details.



A Christmas Prayer: Eternal God, the hope of all humankind, you gave us the greatest gift of all in your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Son of God, you came as God's light to shine brightly in the darkness of minds and hearts; bathe our world in your light. Jesus Christ, Word made flesh, make a way for the Good News of your Kingdom to reach every home and heart everywhere. Be the comforter, defender and provider of the poor, the helpless, the cold, hungry, orphaned, weary, oppressed, the sick, those who mourn, the aged and the little children. Reveal yourself to those who do not know your immense love, Amen.

Diary Dates for December:

Sun 1st 10.30am Toy Service

6.00pm Churches Together Advent

Service at Parish Church

Tues 3rd 2.00pm Over 60's Carol Service

5.00pm all rooms Toy Preparation,

also all day Weds 4th & Thurs 5th

Sat 7th 10.00am Band Carolling at Tesco's

Mon 9th 7.00pm Bury Cathedral Emergency Services
Carol service.

2.00pm-6.00pm all rooms Preparation for Cameo Meal on
Tues 10th 10.00am –3.00pm Cameo Christmas Service and
meal

Sat 14th 10.00am Band Carolling in the Market Place.

Sun 15th 10.00am Carol Service led by the Young People

5.00pm Christmas Social

Tues 17th Over 60's Christmas meal

Friday 20th 4.00pm Carols at Café on the Rec

Sat 21st 10.00am Band Carolling in the Market Place

Sun 22nd 6.00pm Candlelight Carol Service—

Readings & Carols

Tues 24th 10.00am Band Carolling in the Market Place

Wed 25th 10.00am Christmas Day service

Sun 29th 10.30 am Morning Service

Are you interested in attending an Alpha course in January 2025? If you don't know anything about Alpha, it started in 1977 at Holy Trinity Brompton London. In 1990 Nicky Gumbel repositioned Alpha as a course for people outside of the church to explore the Christian faith through a series of talks and conversation with others (taken from Alpha UK Website). Maybe you can encourage someone you know who is searching or has questions about the Christian Faith! Even as a Christian, you might like to explore further. Please add your name to the list in the foyer.

2024 Christmas Present Appeal: unwrapped toys and gifts for children needed. Collection points: Tesco, Asda, The Works, Hays Travel or The Salvation Army, Violet Hall Road: Tuesdays - Fridays 9am - 2pm (please phone 01449 614133 before dropping off). Also Café on the Rec, (please visit the Café on the Rec Facebook page for updated opening times). Donations required by 2nd December 2024. Please see our Website for gift ideas. We cannot accept second hand gifts. Thank you for your support.



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FOR
UNTO US
A CHILD IS
BORN, UNTO US
A SON IS GIVEN, AND
HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED
Wonderful COUNSELLOR
THE MIGHTY GOD
THE EVERLASTING FATHER
The Prince of Peace
ISAIAH 9:6