

The Buzz



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

December 2024
Monthly information for the
Parish of Ifield



Thought for the Month



The light of the Advent candles we will light in church, the Advent themes of hope, peace, joy and love, can seem intermittent or like flickering torches rather than blazing lights when we look around us at the state of the world. Whether our thoughts go to the personal difficulties and sadness's in our own lives, or to the rise in living costs, or to the people of the Ukraine and the Holy Land, facing winter with much of their energy network destroyed, such things can seem like wishful thinking.

A few weeks ago, I was struck by a commentary I read on a Gospel passage, which said that realism is to accept the world the way it is. I have been pondering since what it means to be realistic and what it means for us, as Christians, to be realistic.

The readings which are set for us throughout Advent and, indeed, Christmas are filled with realism. In Isaiah, for example, we read of wars and conflicts. On 26th December we think of the Feast of St Stephen, stoned to death for witnessing to Jesus. Two days later there is the feast of The Holy Innocents, the children murdered by King Herod's soldiers. The Bible appears to confirm what the world tells us, that life is, indeed, brutal, tragic and hard.

So how can we talk meaningfully about those Advent themes in the face of all this?

One thing that has only struck me this year is that three of these – peace, joy and love – are among the 'fruits' of the Spirit listed by Saint Paul in Galatians 5. In other words, these are the behaviours or qualities that result from God the Holy Spirit dwelling in us.

Sunday 24th November was of course, Stir-Up Sunday, when the famous collect (prayer) encourages us to bestir ourselves to live in accordance with the way of Christ, not to carry on drifting through our lives.

Hope, according to Saint Paul, is one of the three key Christian virtues (1 Corinthians 13) and Advent is very much a season of hope and expectation, as we both look ahead to the gift of the Incarnation (God ‘pitching his tent’ with us) and to what we know will happen, but of which we have no experience, the Day of Judgement.

In many ways, going back to those thoughts about realism, hope makes no sense whatsoever. The rationalist will tell you to base all your decisions on so-called facts. It does not take a genius to state that in our country, and around the world, there are many people who are concerned, anxious and confused. To speak of hope currently is surprising, perhaps even for us. Yet we must, for that is the only distinctive thing we have to offer the world – the hope that we find in the cross and the empty tomb.

Perhaps as we go through Advent and into the great season of Christmas, let us echo that well-known song, “*All I want for Christmas*” and say to God the Holy Spirit, ‘all I want for Christmas is hope and peace and joy and love’ and let us invite him into our hearts, into our families, into our communities and into our world.

I wish you a purposeful Advent and a blessed and joyful Christmas!

Christine

SUNDAY SERVICES AT ST. MARGARET’S

1st Sunday	9.30 am Sunday Celebration	11.00 am Parish Communion	2.00 pm Baptisms	3.00 pm Baptisms
2nd Sunday	9.30 am FiiSH Service	11.00 am Parish Communion		
3rd Sunday		11.00am Parish Communion		??? 3.30pm service
4th Sunday	9.30am Family Service	11.00 am Parish Communion		
5th Sunday	9.30 am Service of the Word	11.00am Holy Communion (BCP)		

Wednesdays

9.30 am

Said Eucharist

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS SERVICES 2024

At St. Margaret's Church, Ifield.

Dec 1st	9.30am	Sunday Celebration
	11am	Parish Communion
		(Toys / Toiletries & Gift Tokens collected for FSW)
Dec 8th	9.30am	FIISH Service
	11am	Parish Communion
Dec 15th	11am	Parish Communion
	4pm	Carol Service
Dec 22nd	9.30am	Family Service
	11am	Parish Communion
Dec 24th	4pm	Crib Service
	11pm	Midnight Mass
Dec 25th	10am	Christmas Day Service
Dec 29th	9.30am	Service of the Word
	11am	BCP Communion



We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

www.ifieldparish.org

PARISH HOUSE GROUPS



Mondays 10.30 am–12 noon at Tree House, Rusper Road

Please contact Jill Bell on 521699 for details

Tuesdays 7.30-9.30 pm

Venue may vary.

Please contact Jo Strutt jo@bridgeham.com for details

New members are always welcome.

EASTER TEAM FOODBANK

Current particular needs are for toiletries and household cleaning products.

Please leave items in the basket in church or contact sue@ifieldparish.org for collection.

200 CLUB

The latest 200 Club Building Fund draw took place on 17th November. The results are set out below:

- 1st Mary Pedlow
- 2nd Jean Eida
- 3rd Michael Briggs

The next draw will be on 8th December.

Thank you for your valued and continued support - new members are most welcome!

Sing Along
Sing Along

Sing Along

Sing Along

**MAMMA
MIA!**™

Saturday 18th January 4pm

Hot Dogs, Popcorn glass of wine or soft drink
Dressing up as a cast member is optional
Prizes for best costume & 'Dancing Queen'
Raffle

Tickets £10

Children under 12 £5





Like every charity that is reliant on an employed professional staff, we will be hit by the increase in the NI changes when they come in and we think that means we will need to raise an extra £30,000 a year just to continue as we are.

On the positive side we constantly see improvements in the lives of our families; we keep experiencing the generosity of our supporters, so we stay positive,

confident that our work will continue for as long as our families need us. Our Board meet later this month and we will be looking at what we want to achieve over the next five years. It won't be as ambitious as the growth we have experienced over the last five years, but it will focus on what we need to keep doing and how we can strengthen our teams to make sure that the families get the best that we can deliver on your behalf.

So once again please accept our heartfelt thanks for all that you do,

Martin and the FSW Team

For more information, or to donate, please visit: www.familysupportwork.org



LITTLE DRAGONS

It's church, it's messy, it's for little ones, their parents and carers!

In church, 9 till 10.30am every Monday in term time

OUR YOUTH GROUP

For more information, please contact the Rector

WHO'S WHO IN IFIELD PARISH

Rector	Revd Christine Spencer	561283	rector@ifieldparish.org
Curate	Revd Dominic Desouza-Campbell	01444 247388	curate@ifieldparish.org
Reader	Jill Bell	521699	reader@ifieldparish.org
Parish Wardens	Andy Ironside	07758 168411	andy@ifieldparish.org
	Kevin Lawler	07792 809165	kevin@ifieldparish.org
PCC Secretary	Clare Wilson	416438	pccsecretary@ifieldparish.org
PCC Treasurer	James May	529146	treasurer@ifieldparish.org
Safeguarding	Heather Woolsey	07584 010576	safeguarding@ifieldparish.org
DBS Lead Recruiter	Andy Ironside	077581 168411	dbsleadrecruiter@ifieldparish.org

REST DAYS

Please note that Friday is our Rector's rest day
Our Curate is only in the parish on Wednesday mornings (and Sundays)

PLEASE NOTE

St. Margaret's weekly notices can be viewed on the parish website

IFIELD PARISH WEBSITE

www.ifieldparish.org

Please send any information/photos for publication on the website to
Carl Peirce carl@ifieldparish.org

Follow us:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/stmargaretsifield>

IFIELD PARISH OFFICE

1 Lychgate Cottage, Ifield Street, Crawley, West Sussex, RH11 0NN
Tel: 537578 Email: office@ifieldparish.org

Please send any updates for the January 2025 issue to Jill Bell
reader@ifieldparish.org by 20th December