

Church News

SERVICES THIS WEEK

30 November 1st Sunday of Advent 10.00am Benefice Communion (CW) 11.00am Benefice Communion (CW) Bowerchalke Nunton

Alison Waterhouse Ruth H-S



We are in Advent, heading for Christmas, the children at school are already excited, the tinsel and Christmas foods have been on offer since the end of September, and at the end of Christmas the crème eggs will be back on the shelves.

Then there are the numerous advertisements encouraging people to spend money catalogue shopping and then pay for it all the next year, this makes me sad and angry in equal measure, although I know some families find it difficult to manage any other way, because of the pressure of consumerism and the need to keep up with the latest trends.

It is sickening that some one is making so much money from others who are caught in the current hike in most prices, where it is perhaps, not which presents shall we buy but shall we eat or have the heating on.

Whoa!! Stop!! Let's get off that sad hamsters wheel and ask, What is Christmas really meant to be about?

What are our favourite memories and traditions? Why do we give each other presents?

When Mary said 'Yes' to God and the Angel Gabriel, Mary was young woman and must have been afraid, a young, unmarried person about to have a baby and engaged to someone to whom she had not yet slept with, these were very unusual circumstances.

Joseph, Mary's fiancée, also had a visit from an Angel whom calmed and reassured Joseph, Joseph became an amazing earthly Dad to Jesus.

It is this framework of family which is so very important to us all today. Families come in all shapes sizes, adoptive, same sex, foster, long distant, neighbourly, big, small, extensive.

I am fortunate enough to know the love of family, gathering together, laying the table, helping dish up and then helping to clear afterwards doing things as family, then sitting together to enjoy watching others open their presents, then opening my own.

Joseph out of love for Mary took her somewhere safe to have the baby Jesus and a stable with animal's hay and a crib would have been warm, it would have smelt earthy.

Whilst in the Stables, Shepherds and Wise Men came bearing gifts to honour this baby whom they had been told by angels and led by stars, to be important and remarkable and here we can see where the tradition of giving gifts came from the shepherds bring a lamb, the Wise Men, the kings, precious metals and spices. **cont...**.

Readings for the First Sunday in Advent:

Old Testament: Isaiah 2 v 1 - 5 **New Testament:** Romans 13 v 11 - end

Gospel: Matthew 24 v 36- 44 **Psalm:** 122

cont... So here when Jesus was born, God himself gave us the most precious gift of all, Jesus Christ himself, who was to die upon the cross so that the sin of the whole world may be forgiven.

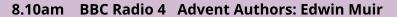
Today more than ever we need to hang on to these gifts of love, Justice and grace, in the power of collective prayer and in love, so that where there is evil in the world we can pray in faith.

So let us pray together, may all people have shelter, food and warmth this Christmas, let us celebrate together, so that his world, which we have been given, becomes the place God always intended it to be and celebrating the gift,

the birth of Christ. Hallelujah!!

With warmest Christmas Blessings. The ministry team in the Chalke Valley.

If you are unable to attend a service in church this Sunday, there are services on the radio ...

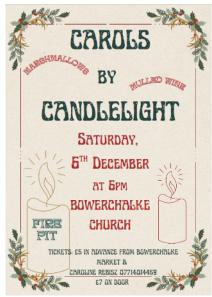


A service from St Salvator's Chapel, University of St Andrews

6.30am - 4.30pm BBC Radio 3 Carols Across the Country
10.00pm - Compline for Advent 1

from St Mary the Virgin, Tetbury







'THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD'

A FESTIVAL OF CHRISTMAS CAROLS AND READINGS

7PM - MONDAY 22ND DECEMBER ALL SAINTS' CHURCH – BROAD CHALKE

> CHOIR – THE MANOR SINGERS ORGANIST – CHRIS MAHON CONGREGATIONAL CAROLS





Nativity from Scratch

no rehearsals - just turn up & be part of the Christmas story

Candlelit Carol Service at Alvediston

Tuesday, 23rd December at 6pm for a carol service for, and involving, all ages, to be led by the Rev. Dr. Ruth Howlett-Shipley.

If you would like to join the short procession, we will meet at the Manor, (thanks to Rodney and Sue Heath,) at 5.30pm, bearing torches, but otherwise go straight to the church and enjoy our new, effective heaters. Afterwards mulled wine and soft drinks will be provided, and if you'd like to bring a plate of mince pies or other festive food to share, that will be very welcome.



St Martin's, Fifield Bavant ADVENT SERVICE

Sunday 14th December 3pm

We will hold our usual Advent service, with poems, prayers, readings, music and hymns based on Advent Antiphons.

Do join us for this special, contemplative service midway during Advent.



Services in Chalke Valley Benefice – December 2025

BCP = Book of Common Prayer (Traditional Language), CW = Common Worship (Contemporary Language)



7 December 2 nd Sunday of Advent	9.30am 9.30am 11.00am 11.00am 11.00am	Holy Communion (BCP) Family Communion (CW) Parish Communion (CW) Morning Prayer (BCP) Parish Communion (CW) Family Service Carol Service	Berwick St John Broad Chalke Britford Ebbesbourne Wake Coombe Bissett Odstock Stratford Tony	Alison Waterhouse Kate Woolven Ruth H-S Biddy Trahair Ruth H-S Adrian Taylor Ruth H-S
14 December 3 rd Sunday of Advent	9.30am 10.30am 11.00am 11.00am 11.00am 3.00pm	Holy Communion (BCP) Family Communion (CW) Worship Together Parish Communion (CW) All Age Service Carol Service Advent Carols Christingle	Bowerchalke Nunton Broad Chalke Hub Homington Alvediston Bishopstone V Hall Fifield Bavant Charlton All Saints	Kate Woolven Maggie Metcalfe Janet Roe Alison Waterhouse Biddy Trahair Ruth H-S Biddy Trahair Ruth H-S
19 December	6.00pm	Carol Service	Britford	Maggie Metcalfe
21 December 4 th Sunday of Advent	11.00am 4.00pm 5.00pm 6.00pm	Parish Communion (CW) Family Communion (CW) Nativity Carol Service Carol Service Carol Service	Bishopstone Ebbesbourne Wake Bowerchalke Odstock Coombe Bissett Berwick St John	Alison Waterhouse Ruth H-S Kate Woolven Maggie Metcalfe Ruth H-S Alison Waterhouse
22 December		Carol Service	Broad Chalke	Alison Waterhouse
23 December	6.00pm	Carol Service	Alvediston	Ruth H-S
24 December CHRISTMAS EVE	4.00pm 5.00pm 6.00pm	Carols round the Crib Scratch Nativity Carols at War Memorial Carol Service 'Midnight' Eucharist (CW)	Bishopstone Charlton All Saints Broad Chalke Homington Fifield Bavant	Ruth H-S Maggie Metcalfe Alison Waterhouse Ruth H-S Ruth H-S
25 December CHRISTMAS DAY	8.00am 9.30am 9.30am 9.30am 9.30am 11.00am 11.00am	Holy Communion (Said BCP) Family Communion (CW) Parish Communion (CW) Parish Communion (CW) Family Communion (CW) Family Communion (CW) Family Communion (CW) Family Communion (CW)	Fifield Bavant Bowerchalke Charlton All Saints Bishopstone Broad Chalke Ebbesbourne Wake Coombe Bissett Nunton	Ruth H-S Kate Woolven Maggie Metcalfe Ruth H-S Alison Waterhouse Kate Woolven Ruth H-S Maggie Metcalfe
28 December 1 st Sunday of Christmas	10.00am 10.00am	Family Communion (CW) Parish Communion (CW) Holy Communion (BCP) Morning Prayer (BCP)	Berwick St John Homington Alvediston Berwick St John	Alison Waterhouse Alison Waterhouse Ruth H-S Lay Led

Clergy Contacts & Working Days

Please note that the clergy team is available throughout the week and a member of the team is always available in an emergency or for an immediate pastoral need.

Revd Ruth Tel: 01722 697022 - Revd Ruth's non-working day is a Monday.

Revd Alison: 01722 697404 or 07904 034221 - Revd Alison's non-working day is a Friday.

Revd Kate: 07754 582395

Revd Maggie: 01722 325825 Revd Maggie's non-working days are Mondays and Fridays.