



Church News

SERVICES THIS WEEK

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|--|--------------------|--|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 30 November 1 st Sunday of Advent | 10.00am 11.00am | Benefice Communion (CW) Benefice Communion (CW) | Bowerchalke Nunton | Alison Waterhouse Ruth H-S |
|--|--------------------|--|-----------------------|-------------------------------|



First Sunday in Advent

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 ...



8.10am BBC Radio 4 Advent Authors: Edwin Muir

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

GET READY FOR CHRISTMAS!

EVERYBODY WELCOME, ESPECIALLY CHILDREN

Come to make Christmas gifts & decorations or just enjoy a drink & some cake in Berwick St John Village Hall, SP7 0HS, from 10 to 12.30 on **Saturday 13th December**

- Christmas-themed bring & buy sale
- Make jam jar snow scenes, pom-pom tree decorations & paper snowflakes
- Decorate Christmas cards & gingerbread biscuits
- Sew gifts with Libby
- Enjoy coffee, tea & cake

Everything is free, a Christmas present from the Church to the village. All contributions of cakes or items for the bring & buy sale are welcome in advance or on the day & there will be a cash collection for Gillingham Food Bank. More details from Sally on 07939 261895 or Angela on 07770 753886.

Festive Fair
Saturday 6th December
10am - 2pm

BARKER ROOM
ST ANDREW'S CHURCH,
NUNTON

Products to buy from our
CreativiTea Group
and local crafters

Perfect for your gifts, stocking fillers
and tree decorations

Admission free
Donations welcome to support our churches
Refreshments available

CAROLS
MARSHMALLOWS BY MULLED WINE
CANDLELIGHT

SATURDAY,
6TH DECEMBER
AT 6PM
BOWERCHALKE
CHURCH

FIRE PIT

TICKETS: £5 IN ADVANCE FROM BOWERCHALKE
MARKET &
CAROLINE REBISZ 07714014459
£7 ON DOOR

'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



Angels & shepherds needed

Sunday, 21st December, 4pm

Bowerchalke Church

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, Fifeild 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)



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|--|---------|---------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 7 December 2nd Sunday of Advent | 9.30am | Holy Communion (BCP) | Berwick St John | Alison Waterhouse |
| | 9.30am | Family Communion (CW) | Broad Chalke | Kate Woolven |
| | 9.30am | Parish Communion (CW) | Britford | Ruth H-S |
| | 11.00am | Morning Prayer (BCP) | Ebbesbourne Wake | Biddy Trahair |
| | 11.00am | Parish Communion (CW) | Coombe Bissett | Ruth H-S |
| | 11.00am | Family Service | Odstock | Adrian Taylor |
| | 6.00pm | Carol Service | Stratford Tony | Ruth H-S |
| 14 December 3rd Sunday of Advent | 9.30am | Holy Communion (BCP) | Bowerchalke | Kate Woolven |
| | 9.30am | Family Communion (CW) | Nunton | Maggie Metcalfe |
| | 10.30am | Worship Together | Broad Chalke Hub | Janet Roe |
| | 11.00am | Parish Communion (CW) | Homington | Alison Waterhouse |
| | 11.00am | All Age Service | Alvediston | Biddy Trahair |
| | 11.00am | Carol Service | Bishopstone V Hall | Ruth H-S |
| | 3.00pm | Advent Carols | Fifield Bavant | Biddy Trahair |
| | 3.30pm | Christingle | Charlton All Saints | Ruth H-S |
| 19 December | 6.00pm | Carol Service | Britford | Maggie Metcalfe |
| 21 December 4th Sunday of Advent | 9.30am | Parish Communion (CW) | Bishopstone | Alison Waterhouse |
| | 11.00am | Family Communion (CW) | Ebbesbourne Wake | Ruth H-S |
| | 4.00pm | Nativity | Bowerchalke | Kate Woolven |
| | 5.00pm | Carol Service | Odstock | Maggie Metcalfe |
| | 6.00pm | Carol Service | Coombe Bissett | Ruth H-S |
| | 6.00pm | Carol Service | Berwick St John | Alison Waterhouse |
| 22 December | 7.00pm | Carol Service | Broad Chalke | Alison Waterhouse |
| 23 December | 6.00pm | Carol Service | Alvediston | Ruth H-S |
| 24 December CHRISTMAS EVE | 4.00pm | Carols round the Crib | Bishopstone | Ruth H-S |
| | 4.00pm | Scratch Nativity | Charlton All Saints | Maggie Metcalfe |
| | 5.00pm | Carols at War Memorial | Broad Chalke | Alison Waterhouse |
| | 6.00pm | Carol Service | Homington | Ruth H-S |
| | 10.00pm | 'Midnight' Eucharist (CW) | Fifield Bavant | Ruth H-S |
| 25 December CHRISTMAS DAY  | 8.00am | Holy Communion (Said BCP) | Fifield Bavant | Ruth H-S |
| | 9.30am | Family Communion (CW) | Bowerchalke | Kate Woolven |
| | 9.30am | Parish Communion (CW) | Charlton All Saints | Maggie Metcalfe |
| | 9.30am | Parish Communion (CW) | Bishopstone | Ruth H-S |
| | 9.30am | Family Communion (CW) | Broad Chalke | Alison Waterhouse |
| | 11.00am | Family Communion (CW) | Ebbesbourne Wake | Kate Woolven |
| | 11.00am | Family Communion (CW) | Coombe Bissett | Ruth H-S |
| | 11.00am | Family Communion (CW) | Nunton | Maggie Metcalfe |
| | 11.00am | Family Communion (CW) | Berwick St John | Alison Waterhouse |
| 28 December 1st Sunday of Christmas | 10.00am | Parish Communion (CW) | Homington | Alison Waterhouse |
| | 10.00am | Holy Communion (BCP) | Alvediston | Ruth H-S |
| | 11.00am | Morning Prayer (BCP) | Berwick St John | 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.