

Hello Everyone

What a hive of pre-Christmas activity there is around us. Last weekend we had the wonderful light up Toddington Community event on the Green and St George's church was illuminated beautifully again. Thank you so much to the Parish Council for organising such a lovely village event. There were so many special touches including the reindeer, Santa, entertainments, stalls, and refreshments. Thank you so much to everyone who contributed. It was a wonderful village gathering.

The schools have been busy preparing for Christmas with concert rehearsals and colourful creative displays decorating the Hall and classrooms, and on Thursday we had an impromptu singing of Little Donkey, in readiness of the school visit to church on the last day of term. Nigel and I enjoyed a special visit to Parkfields Middle school yesterday to view their wonderful Christmas tree festival and were inspired by the creativity, thought and care which had gone into each tree's presentation. Thank you for inviting us. On Saturday, the school hosts the annual Rotary Club Christmas afternoon event for local folk from neighbouring villages. I look forward to seeing some of you there. This evening I'm off to watch the Lion The Witch and The Wardrobe at Tads Theatre.. a wonderful book and play by C S Lewis.

I am excited that this weekend will be St George's Church's Christmas Tree Festival, which has had many long hours poured into its organisation and preparation with Dee, and Malcolm, at the helm, it will be a delight to see the trees in all their splendour tomorrow and on Sunday. The festival opens at 11.00 am on Saturday and runs until 5.00 pm, and opens again on Sunday 1.00 – 5.00 pm, finishing with carols amidst the trees at 5.00 pm. Do please pop along to join us. Entrance £2.50 and children are free. There will be refreshments and some stalls in Wilkinson Hall.

I've attached a list of December events, including all the Christmas Services, for your diaries. It is going to be a busy month.. but a special month! I've copied this week's services and events below.

The Toddington Community Fridge will continue to open on Saturday mornings at Wilkinson Hall at 9.30 am. I offer a huge thank you to Cllr Andy Snape for organising these deliveries and to all the volunteers who collect the food from the supermarkets, sort it and transport it up to us at the Hall, and to our volunteers who help each Saturday. I have heard several comments about how valued this food supply is. Thank you so much.

This Christmas we plan to offer Christmas Hamper bags again to families who are in need of some support, and we will organise this through Toddington St George School and Parkfields School. If you would like to contribute to the cost of providing these hamper bags, we will be so very grateful of any financial or food donations you can make, please. Please link with me or Dee for more information.

The Food bank is anxiously in need of food supplies and help. As the weather gets colder the needs increase. Dee puts a list in church of the current key food supply needs and at this time of year it is good to also include some items for the festive season. Any donations can be left at Dee and Malcolm's at 22 Leighton Rd, or in church. Malcolm takes deliveries to the food bank each week.. bless him! Thank you so much Malcolm, and thank you so much for any donation you can offer. Perhaps you may like to buy a Christmas pudding from the Foodbank Christmas tree to support their cause.

On Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> we have another busy day ahead, starting with the Fridge at 9.30 am, probably Coffee Morning at 10.00 am, and a Christmas Concert by All Saints Choir, Leighton Buzzard at 2.30 pm, followed by an evening with Gram Seed and Nigel sharing inspirational stories about God on the Move. Gram is coming down from Middlesbrough to share his amazing testimony on Saturday evening at 7.30 pm and also on Sunday at 2.30 pm. Anyone who has done the Alpha course will already have heard a little of his story, which includes a miraculous healing which brought him to faith, and he is now so keen to share the love of God with those he meets. He visits numerous prisons and schools to tell his story and is the first person to have been given the key to the prison where he served sentence to now go back and tell of Jesus's love and healing. Combined with Gram's visit, comes the release of Nigel's book 'Splashes of Colour' sharing reflections from 24 years in ministry at Westoning Church. Proceeds from the book sales will raise funds for the Foodbank and Westoning Church. Do please put these dates in your diary and join us to be inspired and encouraged.

On Monday 9<sup>th</sup> we look forward to hosting the Brownies Carol Service at 5.30 pm and the Scouts Christmas Carol Service on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> at 7.00 pm. Messy Church Christmas time is on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> at 3.15 pm (with Christmas crafts, story, songs and fun, all followed by a hot meal).

Copied below is a diary of this coming week's services and events.

<b>Sat 7<sup>th</sup> Dec</b>	<b>Toddington Community Fridge 9.30am – 11am</b> <b>Christmas Tree Festival 11 am – 5pm</b> <b>Refreshments</b>	 Wilkinson Hall Toddington Church Wilkinson Hall
<b>Sun 8<sup>th</sup> Dec</b>	<b>Holy Communion Service 9.30am</b> <b>Holy Communion Service 11 am</b> <b>Christmas Tree Festival, Toddington, 1- 5pm</b> <b>Refreshments</b> <b>Carols amongst the Trees 5pm</b>	 Chalgrave Church Toddington Church Toddington Church Wilkinson Hall Toddington Church
<b>Mon 9<sup>th</sup> Dec</b>	<b>Morning Prayer, 9.30am</b> <b>Brownies Carol Service, 5.30pm</b>	Toddington Church Toddington Church
<b>Tue 10<sup>th</sup> Dec</b>	<b>Knitting Group 10.30am – 12.30pm</b>	Wilkinson Hall
<b>Wed 11<sup>th</sup> Dec</b>	<b>Christmas Messy Church 3.30pm- 5.30pm</b>	Wilkinson Hall
<b>Thurs 12<sup>th</sup> Dec</b>	<b>Afternoon with Friends 2pm - 3pm</b>	Wilkinson Hall
<b>Fri 13<sup>th</sup> Dec</b>	<b>Painting for Pleasure 10.30am – 12.30pm</b> <b>Scouts Carol Service, 7pm</b>	Wilkinson Hall Toddington Church
<b>Sat 14<sup>th</sup> Dec</b>	<b>Toddington Community Fridge 9.30am - 11am</b> <b>Coffee Morning 10am – 12noon</b> <b>Christmas Concert (All Saints Choir) 2.30pm</b> <b>Inspirational Stories of God on the Move with Gram Seed (and Nigel) 7.30pm</b>	Wilkinson Hall Wilkinson Hall Toddington Church Toddington Church
<b>Sun 15<sup>th</sup> Dec</b>	<b>Holy Communion Service, 9.30am</b> <b>Christingle Family Service 11am</b> <b>Inspirational Stories of God on the Move with informal worship, Gram Seed, 2.30pm</b>	Chalgrave Church Toddington Church Toddington Church

Wishing you joy, peace, good health, and energy!

With every good wish

Linda

Rector

Toddington and Chalgrave