

Pastoral Letter for December

Years ago, when we were particularly strapped for Christmas cash, we received an envelope through the door 2 days before Christmas. It had £300 in it, and a note suggesting we fill the kids' stockings. £100 extra for each child! There were more than a few happy tears. And then the most extraordinary thing happened. I began to feel uncomfortable and explained to my husband that seeing as we had already bought the children's presents and spent what we could afford, we ought not to keep the money.

We ought to give it away. It would be wrong to buy 'too much'.

We had been miraculously given the opportunity to bless our kids with unexpected abundance, and I passed it up. I am ashamed to say I didn't stop to think about what it would have meant to my children to have experienced that blessing.

So, all at my behest, we put some of the money back in an envelope and posted it through what I now realise was the door of the very people that gave it to us! The rest would go to another friend and then to charity. We had Christmas and the boys were delighted with the presents they had. And I felt utterly dreadful.

A couple of years later I was cleaning the house on Christmas Eve and remembering the incident – still feeling the pinch of regret. As I cleaned, I prayed, asking God for another chance. And as I prayed, there was a knock on the door! I was so excited. Could it be??

I ran downstairs and opened the front door, and there stood a lady I didn't know, holding a... huge tray of...

Mushrooms!!!

Well, what could I do? I had to laugh. And I accepted the mushrooms. God was winking at me, I am sure.

The truth is, we might get ourselves all het up about what we do or don't buy; what we can or can't afford; we might even have hoped for £300 and got mushrooms instead... but nothing we could imagine could compare with the gift of the child whose birth is at the heart of this celebration.

In Jesus, God has given us the most precious gift. The gift of himself.

All we need to do is open the door of our hearts to receive him.

'For to us a child is born. To us a son is given...'

Wishing you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas. From Lorna

Contact Details

Revd. Lorna Faulkner Rector 01622 747570

Revd. David Jones Hon. Associate Rector 01622 741474



Last Date for Items for the January News Letter

If you have an item for the News Letter, please contact Marian on 01622 743977 or david.marian@btinternet.com by **28th December**

December 2023

Holy Trinity Church



During Advent all services will be 10.30 am Benefice Services with no Sunday morning service in Coxheath until the 31st December

Sunday 3rd December **Holy Communion** **1st Sunday in Advent**
10.30am at St Mary's, Hunton

Sunday 10th December **Holy Communion** **2nd Sunday in Advent**
10.30am at St Nicholas, Linton

Sunday 17th December **Holy Communion** **3rd Sunday in Advent**
10.30am at the Ancient Parish Church of East Farleigh

Sunday 24th December **Holy Communion** **4th Sunday in Advent**
10.30am at All Saints, West Farleigh

Sunday 31st December **Holy Communion** **1st Sunday after Christmas**
10.30am at Holy Trinity, Coxheath

If anyone would like a lift to any of the Sunday Morning Services in December do please contact Rev Lorna 747570 or Church Warden Sandra 745264

If you are able to offer lifts please let Sandra know – thank you
Thursday 10am Holy Communion at Holy Trinity, Coxheath (no service on the 28th December)

Christmas Services

Sunday 17th December
4.00pm CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

Saturday 24th December **Christmas Eve**
4.30pm CHILDREN'S SERVICE
11.15pm MIDNIGHT COMMUNION

Sunday 25th December **Christmas Day**
10.30am CHRISTMAS DAY FAMILY SERVICE
with HOLY COMMUNION



Diary Dates



Reopening Tuesday 28th November Brew and a Bite is Back at Holy Trinity, Coxheath We will now be open (during school term times) every Tuesday 2.30pm – 5.00pm and Thursdays 11am – 1.00pm. There is no charge but you are invited to give a donation if you so wish.

Saturday 2nd December 4.00pm The Hartlip Singers Concert A Festive Celebration with Seasonal Music and Refreshments at Holy Trinity, Coxheath. The cost is £10 with under 16's free. The concert is in aid of the chancel restoration. To book a ticket please contact Sanda Baker or go the Benefice website as soon as possible.

Sunday 3rd December 4.30pm Carols and Lighting of the Village Christmas Lights. This is a joint venture with Coxheath Parish Council where we as a congregation lead the carol singing around the Christmas tree outside the church. All welcome

Saturday 9th December 10.00am - 12.00noon Church Coffee Morning and the annual 'Christmas Food and Drink Raffle'

A warm and friendly welcome awaits you at the Scout HQ, Westerhill Road. Admission £1 which includes free tea/coffee and biscuits. As well as cakes, savouries and Christmas cards for sale there will be the popular annual 'Christmas Food and Drink raffle'. If you have any donations for the food and drink raffle please give to Margaret Poole or Sandra Baker. All welcome

Saturday 9th December 10am – 5.00pm and Sunday 10th December 1.00 – 5.00pm Christmas Tree Festival at Holy Trinity, Coxheath

This is a community event and everyone is welcome to come and enjoy a beautiful display of Christmas trees. Refreshments will be available. There is no charge but any donations will go towards the restoration of the chancel flooring.

Saturday 16th December 3.00pm Messy Christingle at St Nicholas, Linton followed at 4.15pm Carols with Christingles

A fun afternoon for families. Please let the organisers know if you are planning to take your family along to Messy Christingle so that they can cater for the right numbers. The contact person is Becky Parnham 07949 646865

Thursday 21st December 2.00 – 4.00pm Christmas Crafternoon Christmas crafts and activities with cuppa's and cakes for all the family. No booking required.

Thursday 21st December at any time between 6.00 – 7.30pm Lights of Love at Coxheath Church

A quiet space to light a candle and hang a special star to remember those precious ones who will be missing from Christmas this year.

*'Glory to God in the highest and
on earth peace, good will towards men'
Luke 2 v 14*

Other News and Information

To find out more information about our Benefice and five Benefice Churches go to www.unitedbenefice.church on the updated website which also includes useful links.

Christmas Flowers

We will be decorating the church ready for all the Christmas services. We would appreciate any donations of money towards the cost of the flowers by **Sunday 10th December**. Please give any donations to Sandra Baker. Thank you

Christmas Invitations

At the back of the church there are still a few Christmas Invitation cards to deliver around Coxheath between the 1st – 16th December. If you are able to help with the delivery please do take some. Many thanks to those who've already taken cards.

Christmas Service Charities

The loose monies collected at all the Christmas Services will be divided between the Heart of Kent Hospice and Demelza Children's Hospice.

Giving Sunday Thanks

Thank you to everyone who donated so generously to our Giving Sundays. £250 has been forwarded to Making a Difference to Maidstone and £325 to Making Miracles.

Coxheath School

We will again be welcoming Coxheath school who will be holding their carol services at Holy Trinity, Coxheath.

Christmas Cards - Church Posting Box (No Delivery, Collection Only)

The 'pigeon hole' post box is at the back of the church for your Christmas Cards to friends at church from the 26th November until Christmas Eve. Please note there is **no delivery service** from the box.

Christmas Cards for Sale

Christmas cards which have been made in aid of church funds are available at the back of the church and will also be for sale at the December coffee morning. They cost 30p each or 6 for £1.50

