

Hello Everyone

I hope you are keeping well and have had a good week.

We have had a special week with wonderful singing and Christmas Lights as a theme. On Monday we went to a 'Singalong with Gareth' Malone concert at Oxford which was great fun... singing alongside members of the Military wives, the Sing Choir, and Gareth's lockdown online choir in the audience. It was so special to sing with such beautiful voices and for a moment dream that your voice too was a beautiful voice as you were taken up in the sound! On our way across to the concert we stopped off at Blenheim Palace to see the Christmas light exhibition in the Palace.. this was stunning!

On Tuesday evening Youth group met with Rebecca, Doug, Bridget and me at the Hall, and learned about the good news of Jesus, coming over the mountain (Isaiah 52 v 7) ... emphasised with the help of Toblerone, biscuits, green icing and a flower! The children also contributed to an imaginative Christmas tree for next weekend's Christmas Tree Festival.. which came alive with twinkling lights. Wednesday was Winter Warmer Day at the hall with a good turnout of folk gathering for a natter over soup and a baked potato.

On Thursday morning Malcolm and I lead an Advent Collective worship at the lower school and lit the first Advent candle, telling 2 stories about Angel Gabriel's visits to Mary and Joseph (to be continued next week) and we gave out Nativity Advent Calendars to each class.

St George's Church hosted the special funeral for Rita Stares on Thursday with the church resplendent with beautiful flowers and the sound of splendid choir and congregational singing and music as we honoured God and Rita.

Yesterday evening as we were preparing a lit Christmas Tree, the church door opened and lots of beavers, cubs, scouts and parents gathered in church for the first carol service this year. It was a delight to see them all and we had fun as we unpacked the Christmas parcel, told the story of Jesus' birth with carol singing and the beavers and cubs singing songs and reading the story. Such a wonderful start to the Christmas season.

So today continues with 2.00 pm Rotary Club Afternoon tea at Parkside school so I may see some of you there. There is also a Christmas Tree Festival at Harlington Church this week end if you would like a preliminary warm up for our own Christmas Tree Festival next week!

Tonight, there is another opportunity to enjoy singing and music at the Toddington Music Society concert of festive music in church at 7.30pm. Poster attached. £6. Tickets on the door, cash payment.

On Sunday we have a visiting speaker from Compassion Charity coming to speak at our morning services to update us on the work of Compassion and about some of the children we are sponsoring.

I thank everyone involved in any of the activities and for the amazing support teams who have served refreshments, arranged flowers, or have helped in any other way. I look forward to sharing the coming week with you.

This Sunday 4th December services

9.30 am Holy Communion with a visiting speaker from Compassion, Chalgrave

11.00 am Holy Communion, with a visiting speaker from Compassion, Toddington

Services and events this coming week:

Monday 5th December

9.30 am Morning Prayer, Toddington Church

Tuesday 6th December

Knitting Group 10.30 am Wilkinson Hall

Wednesday 7th December

Winter Wednesday Warmer gathering in Wilkinson Hall 10.30 am- 3.00 pm

Preparations for Christmas Tree Festival in church

Thursday 8th December

Preparations for Christmas Tree Festival in church

Friday 9th December

Painting for Pleasure group 10.30 am, Wilkinson Hall.

Christmas Tree Festival Preview Evening at Toddington Church, 7.00 pm, with wine and canapes, £10 a ticket.

Saturday 10th December

Christmas Tree Festival weekend: 11.00 am – 5.00 pm Saturday Toddington Church.

Sunday 11th December

Christmas Tree Festival weekend 1.00 – 5.00 pm Sunday - finishing with carol singing at 5.00 pm, Toddington Church

Carols By Candlelight Service, 7.00 pm Chalgrave Church (NB Sunday instead of Saturday this year)

Toddington and Chalgrave churches both collect food donations for the **Foodbank** which is seeing increasing need. If you are able to make a donation, these can be dropped off during daylight hours at St George's Church, Toddington which has collection baskets in the South Porch, or to 22 Leighton Road by the back door.

This year, we are collecting Christmas and essential food items for **Christmas Food Hampers** to bless some local families. The hampers will be issued through the schools so will be anonymous, but we would welcome donations towards these, if you feel able. There is a box in Toddington Church labelled for families for such donations. Thank you.

And so, another busy week draws to a close and we look forward to what God has in store next week.

May you all be richly blessed and know the Peace of Christ during this Advent season.

Best wishes

Linda
Rector at Toddington and Chalgrave