



THE GANDER



THE MAGAZINE OF ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, GOOSE GREEN
DECEMBER 2022

Christmas at St John's East Dulwich

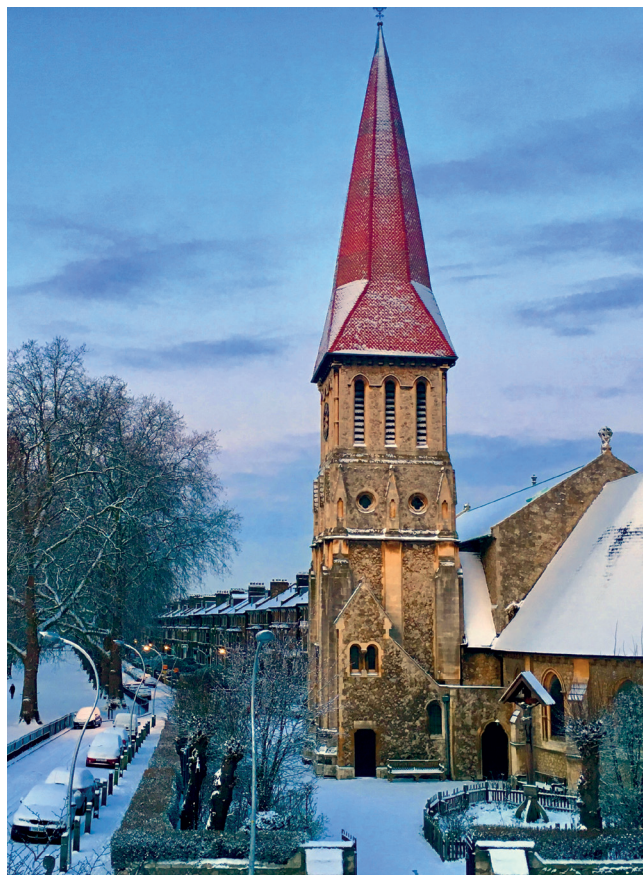
One of my favourite things this time of year at St John's is welcoming local children for their school nativity plays and Christmas services. The church is abuzz with tinselled stars and tea-towelled shepherds. Parents juggle phones to capture the perfect shot of their adorable angel, whilst quietly dabbing a proud, teary eye. Even I've learned to make sure there's a hanky in my pocket on such occasions. I never got to play Mary in my school nativity play; I had the non-speaking 'second child in pyjamas' part, who, on Christmas Eve, heard the story of that first Christmas, sitting by a cardboard fireside. I'm over it now, but it was a source of private envy for some years; I longed for the starring role!

Once again we will create the nativity scene under the altar



at the front of church, and once again we will tell the Christmas story at our Christmas services; the story of Jesus who came to bring peace on earth and whose birth brings people together from tired, poor shepherds to travelling kings. We too are drawn to the sight of the scene in the stable, gathered at the crib, we realise we are all bound to one another, all involved in humankind. It's why we might shed a tear with the foster dad on the skateboard in the John Lewis advert. Just like the big-hearted man who makes room in his life for a lost child at Christmas time, we know that no one is supposed to be forgotten and isolated; we are made to be with each other.

That's why every Christmas we support the work of the Children's Society, a national charity working to transform the hopes and happiness of young people facing abuse, exploitation and neglect. For years now, you have given so generously at our Christingle services, and this year your care and generosity are needed more than ever.



The nativity might seem sentimental in a world with more serious concerns, but its message rings true; we are family, and Christmas really is all about love. We might not all have the starring role, but there is room for us all in this story. The story of the little child who tells us that each child, and each person, is precious, created in the image of the divine. May this ring true here in East Dulwich and Peckham; in our homes, our schools, and in Bethlehem this Christmas.

Revd Gill O'Neill
Vicar of St John's East Dulwich

CONTACT DETAILS

Visit our website: www.stjohnseastdulwich.org

Read our parish magazine, The Gander, online here: <https://stjohnseastdulwich.mailchimpsites.com>. It is published five times a year and includes news, pictures, interviews, articles, book reviews, recipes and much more!

You can contact the Parish Office on 020 8693 3897 or office@stjohnseastdulwich.org

The people of St John the Evangelist, East Dulwich wish you a very Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year!



See a full list of our Christmas events on the back page



CHRISTMAS AT ST JOHN'S



Messy Church



Our Messy Church services will continue in 2023 and our next service will be on 29 January from 3.45 pm to 5 pm. You are very warmly welcome!

Over the last 18 months we've been holding a different kind of service at St John's. It's called "Messy Church". We have these informal and multi-generational services once a month on a Sunday afternoon from 4 pm to 5 pm.

The Messy Church team is made up of members of the St

John's congregation, lay and ordained. We meet regularly to plan and explore the ways in which we can explore Bible passages and tell the story of God's love for us through crafts, multi-sensory activities, cooking and science experiments. It has been a joy to see so many people, young and old(er) coming along and participating in this form of worship!

Although it may all sound Messy, we have also come to appreciate times of stillness and peace in our Messy Church worship, such as when we gathered around the altar in the Sanctuary and looked at our village and homes of hope that that we had crafted.

In October this year, as we gathered hugging mugs of hot

chocolate around the bonfire that we had built in the Church garden we sang "This little light of mine....". It was a good way to remember God's love for us, embodied in the birth of Jesus Christ. Particularly as we look forward to Christmas in these uncertain times, we are reminded that "The light shines in the darkness and did not overcome it" (John 1:5).

Black History Month



St John's celebrated Black History Month in October with a series of talks focusing on Black civil rights leaders, the legacy of the slave trade and the role of Black servicemen and women in the wars. The talks were led by Laura Williams and Joy Taylor, and prompted wide-ranging discussions. We also welcomed Revd Canon Joyce Forbes, a member of the Windrush Generation, as a guest preacher and we held a Harvest Festival and BHM Lunch on 2 October.

A recipe for Lebkuchen

Lebkuchen is a famous German Advent and Christmas cookie that is a little bit like gingerbread, ginger cake and parkin combined. Here is a simple recipe that we have found and translated from the German website Backen mit Christina. Give it a try and let us know what you think.

Ingredients for the dough

320 grams of rye flour
2 eggs
70 g honey
140g icing sugar
8g bicarbonate of soda
3g cocoa powder
3g mixed spice (or if you can get it "Lebkuchen spice mix")
1 tablespoon of apple puree (from jar is fine, e.g baby food type)

For the icing decoration

1 egg white
250 g icing sugar (sieved)

To glaze

1 egg
1 splash of milk



Method

Put all the ingredients for the dough into a bowl and mix well until it becomes a crumbly dough. Then using your hands, work it into a smooth dough. Leave this to rest, covered, in the fridge for 24 hours.

The next day, roll the dough out to 5mm thickness. Cut out into desired shapes using cookie cutters.

Glaze with the egg and milk mix and bake at 170°C for

about 8 minutes. Leave to cool.

Mix the icing ingredients together to the consistency you are happy to work with and then put it into a piping bag.

Have fun decorating.

TOP TIP: The Lebkuchen should be very soft when you take them out of the oven (not crunchy like a Gingerbread biscuit). That way they will be nice and juicy when they cool.

Image taken from www.backenmitchristina.at

St John's midweek activities

Lunch Club

The Lunch Club meets every Thursday during term-time at 12.30 pm in the Goose Green Centre. All are welcome. Lunch consists of a nutritious two-course meal prepared by our chef, followed by tea or coffee. It costs just £5 and you don't have to do any preparation or washing up! To find out more, please contact Barbara Deller on 020 8693 2090 or Martin Howell on 020 8249 7411.



Coffee Morning

Coffee morning is for people of all ages and meets every Wednesday in church from 11 am to 12:30 pm. We serve coffee, tea and home-made cake, and there is no charge, although donations are welcome. Sometimes we have guest visitors, such as musicians, artists and community workers who come along to offer workshops and talks.

Strong and Steady

The Strong and Steady exercise group takes place in the Goose Green Centre every Wednesday morning and is a part of what we do at the Coffee Morning. The exercise group is led by a Level 4 postural stability trained exercise instructor. Sessions are designed for older people who are starting to experience

unsteadiness or who are losing confidence in their ability to stay balanced. The sessions take participants through a set of exercises that research has shown improves muscle strength and balance.

Each sessions costs £4 and you will need to contact the Coffee Morning team for a self-referral form as well as asking your GP to fill out a health clearance form.

Contact details for Coffee Morning/Strong and Steady: www.stjohnseastdulwich.org/goose-green-coffee-morning;
Tel: 07961 580920; email: goosegreencoffeemorning@gmail.com

Special collection for Alzheimer's Society



Our special collection on Sunday 20 November raised funds for the Alzheimer's Society. Their research shows that 900,000 people in the UK have a form of dementia. By 2025, one million people will be living with the condition in the UK, and many millions more carers, partners, families and friends will be affected. Sadly too many face dementia alone. The Alzheimer's Society wants everyone affected by dementia to know that whoever they are, whatever they're going through,

they can turn to them for expert support through practical advice, emotional support, and guidance for the best next step.

During our talk Rachel Mills gave a personal account about what living with Alzheimer's means for her father, Andrew Whitaker, who had been coming to St John's for over 50 years, was a member of the choir and had also been a Churchwarden. It was heartrending to hear a daughter relate that her father, who has a PhD in

virology and worked on the polio vaccine, now thinks he's back at boarding school and sometimes confuses Rachel with his mother. Andrew is now being cared for in The Elms.

Thank you to everyone who has made a donation. Our JustGiving page will be open for a couple of months. Please donate what you can – the next diagnosis may be for someone you love: [Justgiving.com/page/anne-coates-1667230134132](https://www.justgiving.com/page/anne-coates-1667230134132)



CHRISTMAS AT ST JOHN'S



Christmas at St John the Evangelist, East Dulwich

Saturday 17 December:

Carols by the Green, 11 am to 1 pm: come along and sing your favourite carol. With refreshments, crafts, toy stall and fabulous music.

Sunday 18 December:

Christmas Carol Service in church, starting at **6 pm:** a service of music and readings, hear the Christmas story once again, and stay afterwards for mince pies and mulled wine.

Saturday 24 December:

Christingle services at 3 pm and 4.30 pm: especially suitable for children and families, this service retells the nativity story, and children receive their own Christingle to enjoy. Little ones are welcome to come in nativity costume!

Saturday 24 December:

Midnight Mass at 11.30 pm: a beautiful Eucharistic service celebrating the wonder of this night.

Sunday 25 December:

Christmas Day Festival Mass at 10 am: join us as we celebrate the birth of Christ.



At the Christingle services, we hold collections in support of the Children's Society: www.childrenssociety.org.uk



Other Christmas services in East Dulwich and Peckham

St Clement with St Peter, Barry Road/Friern Road

Candlelight service of Carols and Readings

Sunday 11 December, 5 pm, stay afterwards for mince pies and mulled wine

Sunday Mass with Nativity Dress Up

Sunday 18 December, 10 am

Midnight Mass

Saturday 24 December, 11.30 pm

Family Mass for Christmas Day

Sunday 25 December, 10 am

Amott Road Baptist Church

Christmas Day Sunday Gathering

Sunday 25 December 10.30 am to 12.30 pm



Christmas Day Crisis?

We all know the key emergency numbers to ring, such as **999** (Fire Brigade, Police, Ambulance, Coastguard) and **111** (medical advice and help). Here's some other contacts that might be useful.

Chemists: The Vale Pharmacy (104 Grove Vale, near the Goose Green roundabout), Tel **020 8299 1103**, is open from **10.00 am to 6.00 pm** on Christmas Day. (If a 111

GP prescribes for you, they'll usually tell you the nearest open chemist to you, and email the prescription there)

Mental Health crisis: The South London & Maudsley NHS Trust helpline, telephone **0800 731 2864** and select Option 1. If you're having suicidal thoughts and desperately need someone to talk to, ring the Samaritans on **116 123**.

Pet needs a vet: The South London Animal Hospital (Medivet, in Camberwell) is open 24 hours a day, including Christmas Day: Tel **020 3816 1010** or try The South London Emergency Veterinary Clinic (Streatham), Tel **020 8677 0976**.

Power cut? Ring **105** (a national free number) to be put in touch with local services for information.

Smell gas? Ring the National Gas Emergency helpline, **0800 111 999**.

Find out more

For more information about Christmas services, or to be added to our mailing list, please contact our Parish Administrator: office@stjohnseastdulwich.org



The Diocese of Southwark



Being With

The Being With course is a ten-week course that is aimed

at helping people explore the Christian faith afresh. It is based on the belief that to find the meaning of life we need to understand who we are, and how we are present and attentive to others who are different to us. As we do this we can discover a way to be attentive to God and

discover that God is present to us.

Each session holds space for the sharing of stories large and small, and then puts them in the context of stories from other cultures and times. There is no judgmentalism, no wrong answers, and no

proscribed path for you. We are planning on running the Being With course online on Tuesday evenings from 24 January 2023 (with a break at half term). If you would like to receive further details, please email Revd Gemma Birt: curate@stjohnseastdulwich.org