



# THE HERALD

The monthly newsletter from the churches of  
St Nicholas Stevenage + St Mary's Graveley



[www.saintnicholaschurch.org.uk](http://www.saintnicholaschurch.org.uk)

[www.saintmarysgraveley.org.uk](http://www.saintmarysgraveley.org.uk)

Dear friends,

January 2023

“But you Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come from me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from old, from ancient times” (Micah 5:2).

As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, we are celebrating the birth of the King of Kings. The King who has given us new hearts when we were dead in sin. Jesus came to rule not by conquering and making war against nations but to bring us as individuals to be at peace with God and to a restored relationship with Him. Jesus came into the world to bring us forgiveness through His death on the cross, and He is active today praying to the Father for us.

As we step into the new year, we are surrounded by wars, famine, all kinds of disasters, but we enter 2023 knowing we can trust God. We have the wonderful promise of Jesus's return. Knowing this gives us a deep, lasting assurance and hope that's the same in any situation, and this brings joy. As those who are trusting in Jesus, we belong to God's kingdom, we are his children, children of the light. So we can let the hope that the gospel brings shine in our lives in the midst of a sometimes hostile world.

The Bible reminds us that good things are coming for those who trust in Jesus, and it shows us that this future guarantee is worth the wait! We can in all confidence know that God keeps His word,

and He is faithful to fulfil it and we continue to anticipate and celebrate this truth: one day, we will have renewed, transformed bodies and will live in the promised eternal city, marked by the light and presence of our forever King. “I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp” (Revelation 21:22-23).

## Christmas Events St Nicholas

It has been wonderful to see the church being used during December, we held the Four Winds Saxophone Quartet on 2<sup>nd</sup> Dec, Bridge Builders Brass Band Concert on 3<sup>rd</sup> Dec, which was to raise funds for Bridge Builders for their outreach to young children in the local schools, and we had the Stevenage Singers on the 10<sup>th</sup> Dec.

We held carol singing with readings and a talk at Norman Court on 14<sup>th</sup> Dec. This was the first time that we have been able to go into the care home since before the pandemic, so it was fantastic to meet up with the staff and residents again and share in some mince pies.

We held the Women's Faith and Fellowship Christmas craft evening and Christine Chambers did an amazing job helping the ladies make their Christmas decorations.

Classes from Almond Hill School came into church on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Dec and during November we had two school visits by Giles School.

It was encouraging to see a growing number of people coming to our special Christmas services since the pandemic. Our Nine Lessons and Carols with mince pies and mulled wine on 18<sup>th</sup> Dec was encouraging as more people came and sang and heard the Christmas message about Jesus.

Our Christingle service on 24<sup>th</sup> Dec was packed and it was good to see many families hearing about the true meaning of Christmas.

## Christmas Events St Mary's

We held our Christingle service where we welcomed Bishop Alan who led the service on 11<sup>th</sup> Dec.

We had our Carol service on 18<sup>th</sup> Dec.

We held Carol singing at the Waggon and Horses pub in Graveley and raised money for the church.

Please pray that the good news of Jesus that went out this Christmas will lead to many turning from the world to Jesus, and that this will be seen by the more people coming to both churches to find out more about Jesus.

### Going Forward

As we did not appoint a Rector last year, we have now been given the go-ahead by the Diocese to advertise again. The dates issued are to work around the Bishop's availability. The advertisement will be in the Church Times from 6<sup>th</sup> Jan, we will short list on the 8<sup>th</sup> Mar and interview on the 20<sup>th</sup> Mar. Please pray that God will bring to us the Rector He is calling to both churches and that this person will clearly hear that call. Also pray that those interviewing the candidates will know and recognise who God's choice is, and that in both churches we will continue to stand firm in God's truth and united in His word.

Wishing you and your family a Happy New Year

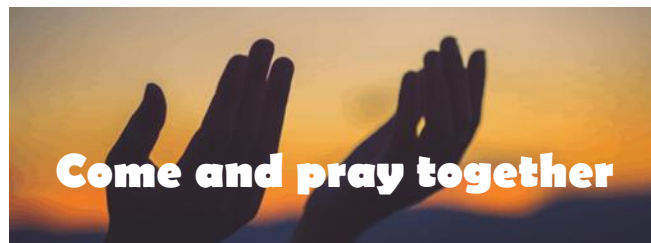
God Bless

**Karen Walker, Church Warden  
St Nicholas Church**

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

**CEILIDH BARN DANCE – Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> February at St Nicholas Church – more details this Sunday and a sign-up sheet will be in church**

**PATTERN OF SUNDAY WORSHIP:** Unless otherwise stated, both churches will have services of Holy Communion on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays, and Services of the Word on 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays. 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays will be joint Services of the Word - starting at 10:30am, with the venue moving between the 2 churches.



Every Wednesday, there will be an Act of Prayer at St Nicholas Church – either a Benefice Prayer Meeting at 7.30pm, or a service of Evening Prayer at 7pm – check the church calendar for details:

[Calendar – St Nicholas Church](#)

[saintnicholaschurch.org.uk](http://saintnicholaschurch.org.uk). Every other Wednesday, on the same week as Home Groups, there will be an Early Morning Prayer meeting on Zoom.

*St Nicholas will also be open for **visitors and private prayer** on Tuesdays from 2-4pm, Wednesdays from 12noon-2pm and Thursdays from 10am-12 noon*



1<sup>st</sup> Jan Luke 2: 8-20      8<sup>th</sup> Jan Luke 2: 21-40

15<sup>th</sup> Jan Luke 2: 41-52      22<sup>nd</sup> Jan Luke 3: 1-20

29<sup>th</sup> Jan Luke 3: 21-22

### **Preachers for January:**

1<sup>st</sup> Jan: Graham Squires (MW)

8<sup>th</sup> Jan: Philip Walker (MW)

15<sup>th</sup> Jan: Ben Epps (MW)

22<sup>nd</sup> Jan: Rev Ray Porter (HC and Baptism)

29<sup>th</sup> Jan: George Whittome (MW)      **NB. Joint Benefice Service of the Word at St Nicholas at 10.30am**

## **KEY CONTACT DETAILS**

St Nicholas Church, Rectory Lane, Stevenage, SG1 4DA  
St Mary's Church, Church Lane, Graveley, SG4 7LY

### **CHURCH WARDENS:**

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St Nicks      Karen Walker – 07427 576870

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St Mary's      Eunice Sirkett – 07709 248625

Enquiries for weddings, funerals and baptisms –  
07733 995779 or [admin@saintnicholaschurch.org.uk](mailto:admin@saintnicholaschurch.org.uk)