

Life News @ St Mary's



DECEMBER 2023
JANUARY 2024



Christmas Services

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| Sunday 3rd | Christingle event (tickets required) | 3.30pm |
| Thursday 7th | Christmas Lunch (tickets required) | 12.30pm |
| Sunday 10th | Instant Nativity Play Service | 10.30am |
| Wednesday 13th | Afternoon Carol Service | 2pm |
| Sunday 17th | Carol Service | 6pm |
| Christmas Eve | Traditional Christmas service with Holy Communion | 9am |
| Christmas Eve | Family Carol Services | 3pm & 5pm |
| Christmas Day | Family Service | 10am |
| Sunday 31st | Family Celebration | 10am |

Merry
Christmas



A Word from the Vicar

How good are you at waiting? If it's something positive you're waiting for, the anticipation often builds up and adds much excitement. In contrast, if it's something concerning or negative that one is waiting for, one can feel as if they are in a state of flux.

On the 3rd December, the season of Advent begins in which the church reflects on the promise of Jesus' second coming – the time when Jesus will one day return in all his heavenly splendour to banish sin, evil and death forever! Are you looking forward to this day?

For those already trusting in Jesus, this will be a time of great rejoicing, but for those who haven't taken that step of faith yet, it is a time of apprehension.

The question is what does your waiting look like?

After Advent we enter the season of Christmas in which we are reminded that God has chosen to show us who He really is by sending his Son, to be born into squalor, with a borrowed animal's feeding box as a crib. On the surface of it, an unassuming, ordinary event, yet it has eternal implications because Jesus who came as a baby would live, grow and die for each of us, showing us how much God truly loves each of us.

May this Advent and Christmas season be a time for us all to pause, reflect and renew our lives to the King of kings.

With every blessing, Tim



Concert at the United Reformed Church St Neots

Saturday 9th December 6.30pm

All welcome.

There is no charge and no need to get tickets beforehand.

There will be a retiring collection for the URC Tower Repair Fund.

SERVICES AT THE HILLINGS



A small team are continuing to hold monthly services at The Hillings Care Home, one Communion service and a service of worship. We hope to hold a Carol Service on 19th December that will need some extra voices. Please contact David Ferris or Pam Branch if you would like to be involved.

St Mary's Eaton Socon

Christmas Lunch 2023

Thursday 7th December

@ 12.30pm

Tickets £17 per person

With entertainment from St Neots Handbell Ringers

Contact Frances on 01480 472891 for tickets



Wildlife Walk - 10th December at 3pm

Join us outside church and we will take a walk, looking at the local wildlife. We will finish up at the boat Dragonfly where we will be able to warm up with a cup of tea and try some willow-weaving, using stems freshly cut from the Pocket Park.



Calendar for DECEMBER 2023

MONDAY

Café on The Green - 4th, 11th, 18th - 10am

Youth Café (For Years 7-11) - 4th, 11th, 18th - 3.30pm

TUESDAY

Morning Prayer - 5th, 12th, 19th - 9am

Craft Group - 5th, 12th, 19th - 10am

Alpha Course - 5th, 12th, 19th - 7pm

WEDNESDAY

Holy Communion - 6th, 13th, 20th - 9am

Little Stars - 6th, 13th - 10am

Wednesday Welcome - 13th, 20th - 3pm

Bell Ringing Practice - 6th, 13th, 20th - 7.30pm

THURSDAY

Prayer meeting - 7th, 14th, 21st - 9am

Church Christmas Lunch - 7th - 12.30pm

FRIDAY

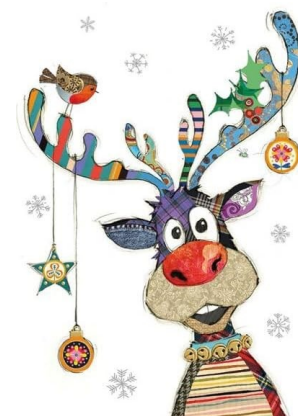
Food bank 10am - 12noon

Fusion - 1st, 8th, 15th - 7.30pm

SATURDAY

Church Decoration Day - 2nd - 9am-1pm

The Stables Christmas Sale - 2nd - 10am-2pm



SUNDAY

3rd - Christingle Event - 3.30pm

10th - Instant Nativity Service - 10.30am

10th - Wildlife Walk - 3pm

17th - Carol Service - 6pm

24th - Family Carol Services - 3pm and 5pm

Calendar for JANUARY 2024

MONDAY

Café on The Green - 10am (Not 1st)

Youth Café (For Years 7-11) - 3.30pm (Not 1st)

8th - Creation Care Working Party - 9am (weather permitting)



TUESDAY

Morning Prayer - 9am (Not 2nd)

Craft Group - 10am (Not 2nd)

Alpha Course - 7pm (Not 2nd)

WEDNESDAY

Holy Communion - 9am (Not 3rd)

Little Stars - 10am (Not 3rd)

Wednesday Welcome - 3pm (Not 3rd)

Bell Ringing Practice - 7.30pm

THURSDAY

Prayer meeting - 9am (Not 4th)

25th - Lunch Club - 12noon

FRIDAY

Food bank 10am - 12noon

Fusion - 7.30pm



SUNDAY

14th - Hive - 2pm

28th - Sharing Life through Learning - 6.15pm

4th February - 3:16 Service - 3pm (a new initiative)

Happy New Year!

**'THREE PILLARS' CHARITY FOR THE HOMELESS
NEED WARM COATS, JOGGERS, HOODIES,
TRAINERS & MEN'S UNDERWEAR.**

**IF YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO DONATE THERE IS A
LABELLED BASKET IN THE CHURCH PORCH.**



World Mission News

Thank you for your great response to fill the Samaritans Purse boxes. 33 boxes have been filled and have now gone to be distributed and will bring joy to many children this Christmas.

We have heard from Teresha in Uganda with news of the encouraging results they are seeing through the development of the nutritional supplement they are producing. Please look at Triumph Heart website where there is lots of information and 'alternative Christmas Gifts' are available to buy which could have a life changing effect for the recipients.

Please continue to remember and pray for all our supported Mission partners, the McClymonts and OMF, Mano in Sri Lanka, and Jen working for ACTIOS here in St Neots. We pray that they will all be blessed at Christmas and that the year ahead will bring good development in their organisations and security in their personal situations as they share the Gospel message in so many different ways.

Teresa Bryant

Verse for 2023/2024 2 Corinthians 13:11

“Finally, beloved friends, be cheerful! Repair whatever is broken among you, as your hearts are being knit together in perfect unity. Live continually in peace, and God, the source of love and peace, will mingle with you.”

Save the Date

actios CONCERT

Sat 13 January 2024 | St Mary's Eaton Socon



More information to follow

YOUTH WORK AT ST MARY'S

The last month or two has been a busy time for our Youth. The Youth Alpha Course has been going well with a regular 8-10 attending and we had an enjoyable Away Day during Half-Term at the Art & Soul Cafe in the town. The theme for the day was 'Who is the Holy Spirit?' and 'How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit?' Board games were also played as well as drinking hot chocolate and Bubble tea.

The Youth Cafe continues to grow and a few are now beginning to attend our Friday night Youth Club, Fusion.

On Saturday 11th November the church was transformed into a night-club as Soulbox, a Christian Soul Duo, came to perform for our young people from across the town. About 50-75 youngsters turned up from the churches and youth cafes in St Neots, all inappropriately dressed for the freezing weather!

We started with a couple of games and competitions then advertised the youth cafes before the music began. The duo were slick and very professional with an excellent sound system and lighting. Quite a few of our Youth Cafe year 10's came and were really surprised at how good it all was. They all had a good time and at the end the one of the singers gave a short talk about her journey of faith and appealed for people to show their interest in knowing more for themselves. To my surprise quite a few of our group said yes. We then got into groups to sit down and Isla, one of our Youth cafe girls, asked if we could say a prayer! It was so encouraging. They all went home with a goody bag which included a bible, sweets and info about all the youth events that take place around the town. There were about 20 adult volunteers and it's fantastic to see how all our churches work together as one when it comes to the youth work.

This model has been a roaring success during 2023. It has managed to get new youngsters through our doors making meaningful friendships in a safe space and enabling us to share our faith with them. I'm excited to see what's in store for 2024!

As ever, thank you so much for all your prayers, please keep praying as it's really working!



NEW TO ST MARY'S?

It's great to have you here and we hope you enjoy being with us. If you would like us to contact you with more information about the church and what we offer, please fill in a 'Keeping in Touch' card and give it to one of the Welcomers.

How can we support the Ministry at St Mary's?

The best way is by using the Parish Giving Scheme
Alternatively, Gift Aid envelopes are available in church.

For more details please contact our Treasurer, Roy Notley on

01234 589308 or
finance@eatonsocon.org



Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals

How to contact us

The Church office is open
Tues, Weds & Thurs
9am -11.30am

(01480) 352154
office@eatonsocon.org

Details of all events can be found on our website:
eatonsocon.org

