

St Michael's News December 2011

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Waiting in hope

'Are we nearly there yet?' Waiting isn't always an easy activity, when you're at the back of a long queue in the Post Office, or waiting for a bus that never seems to come. But Advent is about waiting. The Jewish people had to wait a long time for their Messiah to come. The people of Eastern Europe had to wait a long time for the Iron Curtain to fall. Today the poor and oppressed of the world are waiting for freedom and the opportunities to take control over their lives.

What makes all the difference to waiting is *hope*. Waiting for a delayed train is made easier by an announcement that it will be here in 10 minutes. Waiting for the results of medical tests is made easier by the support of others who've been through the same thing. People struggling with poverty in Africa gain new hope when their local church (perhaps aided by Tear Fund and our giving) get alongside them with practical help.

As we wait for God's final promises of peace and justice to be fulfilled in his coming Kingdom, could we, who have experienced the goodness of God, be the people to bring hope through practical action?

John Castle



Please pray for: our deanery synod members (Emma Hodge, Kathryn Barton and Jan Herd) and people who may fill the vacancies to represent our church on the deanery synod.

Church Activities

December Coffee Rota Reminder

4th December	Kate Bettison	Jenny Rolfe
11th December	Wendy Grafton	Val Travers
18th December	Ann Homfray Davies	Jenny Thorn
25th December	No Coffee	



Prayer Meetings are on the 3rd Saturday of the month (17th December) at 9.30–10.15 am in the church and the 4th Wednesday (28th December) at 8.00–8.45 pm.

House Groups meet each week at these homes:

Monday	8.00 pm	11 Sylvan Ridge (Rupert & Sheridan)
Tuesday	10.15 am	6 Crowthorne Rd (Doris Saunders)
Tuesday	8.00 pm	28 Wiltshire Avenue, Crowthorne (Elizabeth Ritchie)
Tuesday	8.00 pm	2 School Hill (John & Sue Campbell)
Tuesday	8.00 pm	34 Albion Road (Linda Lemmon)
Tuesday	8.00 pm	25 Templar Close (John & Stephanie Martin)

If anyone would like to join a group, please speak to John White (01344 774349) for more details.

Young Church is part of the 9.30 am Parish Communion Service every Sunday for children aged 3–10. Please register your children at 9.20 in the Pastoral Centre. The children join the adults towards the end of the church service. Parents interested in their children receiving Holy Communion are asked to speak to Rev. John Castle.

REACH runs parallel to the Parish Communion Service, at 9:30–10:45 am.

2nd Saturday Club

Volunteers are required to help tidy up the St Mary's site in Wellington Road on Saturday 10th December starting at 09.30 am. We will be cutting back the undergrowth. Please contact John Campbell 01344 776655



Toddler Time is on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month at 9.30–11 am, except during school holidays.

Stamps

We still value *your* used stamps, which *do* raise money for good causes! Keep them coming. Thank you.

Traidcraft or Supermarkets?

Traidcraft helps grow businesses, and teaches developing countries the skills needed. It also does a lot of campaigning for better trade deals and promotes responsible business practises. However, now we need more people to buy Traidcraft-branded products directly, or from the Traidcraft stall in church to ensure that Traidcraft's voice is not swamped by competition from businesses, which, although larger, are not working with the poor in developing countries in such a direct and effective way.



As many of you will know, Traidcraft was founded in the 1970's as a Christian response to the scandal of world poverty, as a practical action towards the world's poor who are trapped in an unjust economic system. From our first transactions with crafts people in a handful of villages, Traidcraft, with the support of churches across the UK, has grown to deal with over 100 producer groups in 30 different countries. The fair trade movement, which we have helped to establish, now provides support to some seven million producers, bringing hope and opportunity where little existed before. Last year, well over £700 million worth of Fairtrade-marked goods were sold in the UK. This country is now the leading and most innovative fair trade market in the world. Traidcraft was the first plc in Britain to produce social accounts, something now undertaken by many of our largest companies, helping put wider social impacts on board-room agendas in a new way.

But with all this success, should we consider the job done and switch our attention to other causes and priorities? Far from it: when Traidcraft started, 30 years ago, there were 1.4 billion people living below the World Bank poverty line of \$1 a day; today there are still 1.4 billion living below that line. Fairtrade sales are still a tiny proportion of UK grocery sales (well under one per cent).

So, in this anniversary year we need to reinvigorate church support for Traidcraft's work, so that we can continue to grow and develop our

'Traidcraft or Supermarkets' continued from page 3

particular contribution towards the church's commitment to fulfilling the millennium development goals

So may I encourage you to give Traidcraft even more support? When we speak to folk in other churches we should encourage them to have a Traidcraft stall in their church.

Please take a catalogue and see if there are some things you can buy for Christmas presents, or try our rice, spaghetti, or even rubber gloves!

Jill White

Sandhurst Silver Band. If you enjoyed the band's concert in October, don't miss their Christmas concert at St Paul's Church Camberley on Saturday 17th December at 7.30 pm. Contact: 01276 700210.

Closure of the Coffee Spot

It is with deep regret that the management of Sandhurst Coffee Spot announces that the cafe operation is to close.

The churches in Sandhurst commenced running the Coffee Spot in July 2005 after it had been effectively closed due to not being commercially viable. To have proper governance, a company named Churches Together in Sandhurst Ltd was formed to run the operation as a charitable endeavour.

With the support of Sandhurst Town Council, the co-operation of volunteers and input from Sandhurst Residents Association, we been able to provide a community service that otherwise would not exist.

Over the past two years, however, VAT increases, food inflation and difficulties in getting sufficient volunteer help have eroded margins and eradicated surpluses, leaving the company in a difficult financial situation.

In order to ensure that our employees and suppliers are paid all entitlements before funds run out, and that we comply with legal requirements, it has been necessary to make the decision to close the company, and with it the Coffee Spot operation, effective from close of business on 17th December 2011.

Churches Together in Sandhurst Ltd would like to thank Sandhurst Town Council, the volunteers and the community for their support over the past six years.

Christingle Helpers Needed

Saturday 17th December 3-5 pm, Pastoral Centre. Help to make up the

oranges ready for the services on the Sunday. If you are available, please contact Jane Banister, mobile 07851 345263 or Kirsty Dunlop, mobile 07880 540710. Thank you

Church Flowers. Please ring Jennie 01344 775881 for information if you wish to help arrange the church flowers. Thank you.

Blue Envelopes

Please use the gift aid envelopes for even small amounts of cash if you are a taxpayer and have paid enough tax to do so. This is free money from the government and worth doing because it all adds up!

Church Fundraising

If you would like to organise a fundraising event for the church or make a suggestion, please contact John White (01344 774349) or Jan King, via the Parish Office (01252 873030).

Children Receiving Communion

If there are any parents of children aged 8+ who would like to explore the possibility of them being prepared to receive Holy Communion, would they please contact Rev John Castle (rector@stmichaels-sandhurst.org.uk, 01252 872168).

Carol Singing around the Streets

Please join us for carol singing in the streets of Sandhurst on Monday 19th December from 6.30 pm. Children and adults welcome, the more the merrier! This is one of our major fundraising events in aid of the Children's Society, so please try to help! Meeting place will be announced nearer the time.

Betty

Betty Wilson has finally surrendered her role as compiler of the activities and services pages for the newsletter, and has now fully handed over her duties to William Lee, to whom we wish the very best. We owe much to Betty for her hard work and dedication over the years. I know that there have been many times when I have been glad of her experience and her determination to get things done properly when we've been getting out the monthly publication.

Thank you Betty for all your hard work.

Jim

Pakistan flooded – again!

As in 2010, Tearfund and its partners are responding to this year's flooding with food and shelter. They describe what they have found and the help that is needed.

Pakistan is once again reeling after extensive flooding affected millions of people. Monsoon rains have damaged homes, crops and livelihoods in Sindh and Balochistan provinces, in the south of the country. This is another blow to a country that is still recovering from the floods of July 2010, which left 1,700 dead and hit 18 million others.

Many thousands of Pakistanis still need basic essentials three months after the flooding this year, which, according to Tearfund partners, has affected more than five million people. International aid is trickling in but more is urgently needed, as there are many who have received nothing – especially those belonging to the low-caste Hindu community.

Crisis

More cases of malnutrition among children aged under five are being seen by aid agencies, after the floods destroyed not only crops but food stocks. With much land still under water, farmers are unable to plant new crops.

For those able to return to their homes, lack of clean water and good sanitation means disease. Skin and eye infections are rife and increasing.

The Pakistan Humanitarian Forum says there is a critical shortage of funding and not enough international interest in the disaster. The forum is appealing to Western governments to send donations to tackle this grave yet largely forgotten humanitarian crisis.



Flood survivors collect aid from Tearfund.

Photo: SSEWA-Pak/
Tearfund



Retrieving possessions from the flood waters.

Photo: SSEWA-Pak/Tearfund

Tearfund

The Tearfund team and four Tearfund partners are helping more than 45,000 people with a variety of relief aid and have plans to extend this number soon. 1,250 families are receiving cash to provide for household needs.

There have now been three weeks without monsoon rain. But despite this, it is estimated that it will still take up to two months for the flood waters to recede.

It is believed that the floods have damaged 20–25 per cent of paddy fields in Sindh, which is likely to severely disrupt the sowing of the forthcoming wheat crop, exacerbating food shortages.

Relief for the destitute

Until a Tearfund partner turned up at the village of Bheel Colony, Raichand Pretam, a tenant farmer and now a homeless flood survivor, had received no help for his destitute family. 'The village is under three feet of water and my house has totally collapsed,' he said. 'Four animals have died and three acres of my cultivated cotton crop have been destroyed.' His six-strong family is now living on a roadside.

Tearfund partner SSEWA-Pak is providing relief aid to Raichand's community. Raichand said that the team from SSEWA-Pak promptly provided food for a month, mosquito nets and a rain protection sheet. 'We are very thankful.'

Bulbs

A big thank you to everyone who helped plant over 200 bulbs on the bank by the Pastoral Centre car park in November. It was especially good to see so many young people involved after the 9.30 and family services. With a bit of care, we should have a lovely display of colour in the spring. We are hoping to make this an annual event, so please look out for details each autumn.

Catherine Wilkins



Christmas Tree Festival

Sat 3rd (11.00 am – 6.00 pm), Sunday 4th (12.00 – 6.00 pm),
Mon 5th & Tues 6th (11.00 am – 4.00 pm) December

This winter variation on a flower festival invites local groups, charities, schools and churches to decorate a tree to illustrate their role in Sandhurst. At the moment we have 30 decorated trees promised. There will be a Christmas Bazaar in the Pastoral Centre, 11.00 am–4.30 pm on the Saturday and Sunday.

Can you help? We need Stewards for the Festival. (Please sign the rota at the back of church or ring Jennie on 01344 775881.) Also help and donations of cakes etc. for the Christmas Bazaar. Please contact Janet Pilbeam 01252 871386.

South Sudan

Our church's support of the Church Mission Society (CMS) has helped six Sudanese graduates of Carlile College, Nairobi, to return to South Sudan to assist in equipping the Church for its role in transforming the country.

South Sudan, which has an important Christian population, is Africa's newest country and became independent from Sudan in July 2011. Sudan was dominated by its largely Muslim north. There were two protracted periods of civil war – 1955–1972 and 1983–2005

Independence has given the South Sudanese graduates the opportunity of equipping the church in South Sudan for what the head of Carlile College's Sudanese programme called 'transformational mission and holistic discipleship'.

A Carlile College graduate said that his training had expanded his knowledge and skills and had made it possible for him to grow in the service of God

Since 2006, CMS has enabled more than a dozen Sudanese students to attend Carlile College for mission training, believing that a stronger church in Sudan will lead to a transformed society.

During their training the graduates served in the Sudanese congregations in Nairobi and returned periodically to Sudan to provide leadership training and discipleship workshops.

Opera

Local group Opera at Bearwood will be holding their annual New Year opera concert at Bearwood Theatre, Bearwood College, at 7.30 pm on Saturday 7th January, and at 2.30pm on Sunday July 8th. Four members of our choir and one of our vergers will be in the chorus and, this year, our choir director, Lizzie Fulleylove, will be one of the invited soloists and will be singing two pieces.

This year's theme is French opera – a selection entitled 'Ooh la la' that includes items by Gounod, Offenbach, Bizet and Satie. If you would like to know more, speak to Catherine or Ken Wilkins or phone the box office (0118 926 2394).

Regular Activities at the Pastoral Centre

Little Sandhurst Nursery. Daily! Phone Marion for details 01344 7745309

Line Dancing takes place each Monday evening in the hall from 7.00 pm, £5 includes raffle. Just come along and have fun. Tea and coffee available or bring your own drinks. Ring Sue or Arron on 01344 485097 for information.

Rainbows meet on Tuesdays: 5–6.00 pm (5–7 year olds).

Guides meet on Tuesdays: 6.30–8.30 pm (10–14 year olds).

Pilates takes place in the large upper room most days and evenings. For more information ring Carl on 01344 762712.

Zumba with Tiffany. Wednesdays, 6.00–7.00 pm, Seeby Hall, £5 per class. Latin-inspired dance fitness class – feel the music and let loose! No need to book, just come along and join the party!

Zumbatomic after-school classes, 4.00 pm on Thursdays – the crazy-cool dance fitness workout for kids aged 4–12 yrs. Packed with choreographed routines to music such as hip-hip, reggaeton and cumbia, Zumbatomic classes increase focus and self-confidence, boost metabolism and improve coordination. For more information contact Beth on 07976 231896 or go to www.zumbawithbeth.co.uk.

Zumba with Beth. Latin America's dance craze is so infectious you won't realise you're exercising! Easy-to-follow dance moves to energising music, you can tone your body and lose weight in no time! Suitable for all ages and fitness levels – 6.30 pm on Thursdays, £5 a class! Contact Beth for more information on 07976231896 or go to www.zumbawithbeth.co.uk.

Karate Club for Children. Fridays 5.45–6.45 pm. Phone Neil on 07816163845.

Newsletter deadline.

Please email your items for the January edition of the newsletter to me, William Lee, at stmichaelschurch@hotmail.co.uk or hand them in at the Church Office. Written requests can be left in the pigeon holes by the main entrance to the Pastoral Centre. The **Deadline for January 2012 Newsletter is 12th December**. Thank you, William.

Newsletter by email

To help the environment and save paper, you can now receive future editions of this newsletter by Email? These are in colour and are normally sent out a few days before the paper copy is available. To opt in to this scheme please contact PCC member David Hunt david.hunt@bcs.org.uk

Church Calendar

Date & Time	Venue	Event	Contact
Sat 3 & Sun 4 Dec	Pastoral Centre	Christmas Fayre & refreshments	Soc com+ Jenny Thorne + Janet P.
Sat 3–Tue 6 Dec	Church	Christmas Tree Festival	Jennie Hulbert
Wed 14 Dec 6.45 pm	Sandhurst Lodge	Carol singing	Choir
Mon 19 Dec Time tba	Sandhurst	Carol singing	Choir
Sun 15 Jan 12.30 pm	Pastoral Centre	Bring and share lunch	John Castle
Fri 3 Feb 8.00 pm	Pastoral Centre	'Beside the Thames', a talk given by David Hunt	David Hunt
Sat 3 Mar	Pastoral Centre	Annual quiz evening	John & Jill White
Tue 3 April	Pastoral Centre	Passover meal	Social Committee
Sun 15 April 12.30 pm	Pastoral Centre	Bring and share lunch	John Castle
Sun 20 May 10.30–11.30 am	Pastoral Centre	Home-produce stall	

If you would like to organise a fundraising event for the church or make a suggestion, please contact John White (01344 774349) or Jan King (01344 750285).

December Church Services

Sunday 4th December – 2nd Before Advent – Topic: The Prophets

Readings: Isaiah 40:1–11 (p 723), 2 Peter: 3:8–15a (p 1224),

Mark 1:1–8 (p 1002)

8.00 am Holy Communion

9.30 am Parish Communion

11.15 am Family Service

6.30 pm Contemplative Evening Prayer



Sunday 11th December – 3rd of Advent – Topic: John the Baptist

Readings: Isaiah 61:1–4, 8–11 (p 748), 1 Thessalonians 5:16–24 (p 1188),

John 1:6–8, 19–28 (p 1061)

8.00 am Holy Communion

9.30 am Parish Communion

11.30 am Baptism of Emily Boulter, Kinita & Leandro Jansen

5.00 pm Family Carol Service

Sunday 18th December – 4th of Advent Topic: Mary

Readings: 2 Samuel 7:1–11, 16 (p 310), Romans 16:25–27 (p 1143),

Luke 1:26–38 Magnificat (p 1026)

8.00 am Holy Communion

9.30 am Parish Communion

16.00 pm Christingle service

Saturday 24th December – Christmas Eve

Readings: Isaiah 9:2,6,7 (p 693), John 1: 1–14 (p 1063)

16.00 pm Nativity Service

19.00 pm Carol Service

23.30 pm Midnight Mass



Sunday 25th December – Christmas Day

Readings: Isaiah 62:6–12 (p 749), Titus 3:4–7 (p 1199), Luke 2:1–20 (p 1027)

8.00 am Holy Communion

9.30 am Family Communion

16.30 pm No Service

Each Wednesday there is Communion at the Day Centre at 11.30 am.

Early morning services – You may find it useful to come to the 8 am service, if you are going out for the rest of the day!