

# **St. Mary's Church, Pulborough Advent and Christmas Newsletter 2025**



## **Church News and a little more...**

**Published by St Mary's Church  
Printed by Mews Press in Pulborough  
[www.stmaryspulborough.org.uk](http://www.stmaryspulborough.org.uk)**

## **Prayer for our world today**



**Let compassion rise higher than division,  
understanding speak louder than anger,  
and kindness flow stronger than hate.**

**Guide leaders with wisdom,  
communities with courage,  
and each of us with the will to sow peace  
in our words, our choices, and our actions.**

**May the light of hope  
shine through the darkest nights,  
until every nation rests in harmony,  
and every soul knows the warmth of safety and love**

## Contacts

### **The Rector: The Reverend Canon Paul Seaman**

The Rectory, Hillcrest Park, Lower Street, Pulborough RH20 2AW

Tel: 01798 875773 | email: pulbpccrector@btinternet.com

**Reader**            **Mr Tony Holloway** 41 Arun Vale, Coldwaltham, RH20 1LP  
Tel: 01798 874146 email: anthonypholloway@gmail.com

### **Church Warden and Parish Secretary**

**Mrs Ann Kaiser** Tel: 01798 872819

email: ann.kaiser@live.co.uk

**Director of Music**    **Mr Anthony Hancock** ARCO Tel: 01798 873479

### **Authorised Lay Ministers (ALMs)**

Hannah Holloway, Austen Hindman, Toni Hayes,  
Christine Lindsay, Susie Hindman

**Kingfishes Group:** stmaryschildreuschurch@gmail.com

Alyson Heath Tel: 01798 873795

(meet on Mondays after school during term time)

**Deanery Synod Members:** **Mr Rob Aylott, Mrs Alyson Heath,**  
**Ms Susan Scholefield**

### **Parochial Church Council Elected Members**

Mr Brian Hunter	Ms Christine Lindsay
Mr Peter Gregory	Mr James Raynard
Mrs Toni Hayes	Ms Susan Scholefield
Mr Austen Hindman	Mrs Jacqui Walbridge
Ms Elizabeth Hunt	

**P.C.C. Secretary**        **Ms Susan Scholefield** Tel: 07747 774867

**Hon. Treasurer**                    **Mr Brian Hunter** Tel: 01798 875253  
**and Gift Aid Administrator**

**Safeguarding Officer**

**Mr Austen Hindman** Tel: 07563 678817  
[ajh75@hotmail.com](mailto:ajh75@hotmail.com)

**Electoral Roll Officer**

**Mrs Antoinette Hayes** 86 Glebelands,  
Pulborough RH20 2JJ

**St. Mary's Tower Bells**

**Tower Captain**

**Tower Secretary**

**Mrs Lucinda Barton** 07742449160

**Mrs Susan Black** Tel: 01798 669587

**Church Flowers**

**Mrs Pauline Adsett** Tel: 01798 874243

**Church Website:** [www.stmaryspulborough.org.uk](http://www.stmaryspulborough.org.uk)

Webmaster: Andy Leese 01798 873872

**Friends of Pulborough Parish Church**

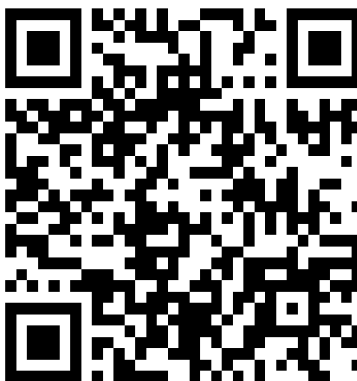
**Website:** [www.friendsofpulboroughparishchurch.org](http://www.friendsofpulboroughparishchurch.org)

*The aim of the FPPC is to raise funds for the fabric of one of the most iconic buildings in Pulborough.*

**The Chairman is Chris Williams: email**

**[pulboroughwilliams@btinternet.com](mailto:pulboroughwilliams@btinternet.com)**

**QR Code for  
Donations to  
St Mary's  
Church**





## THE MEANING OF CHRISTINGLE

The idea of Christingles came from a Moravian Church in Germany on December 20<sup>th</sup>, 1747. The minister, John de Watteville, gave children at the service a lighted candle with a red ribbon around it. Christians sometimes call Jesus ‘the light of the world’ and the final prayer of that first service was

“Lord Jesus, kindle a flame in these children’s hearts, that theirs like Thine become”.

The custom went around the worldwide church. Missionaries brought the Moravian Church to England in the late 1700s. Over the years the symbolism of the Christingle grew into what’s known as a Christingle today. Here’s what the different parts of the Christingle represent to Christians:

- The orange is round like the world.
- The candle stands tall and straight and gives light in the dark like the love of God.
- The red ribbon goes all around the ‘world’ and is a symbol of the blood Jesus shed when he died for us. (Sometimes in Moravian Churches a white ribbon is used, to represent the purity of Jesus.)
- The four sticks point in all directions and symbolise North, South, East and West – they also represent the four seasons.
- The fruit and nuts (or sometimes sweets!) represent the fruits of the earth, nurtured by the sunshine and the rain.

**To make you smile....**

### **Keep it a surprise**

Four year-old Lily was helping her mother wrap a present for her father. While wrapping, her mother told Lily about keeping the present a secret so it would be a surprise. After the present was wrapped, Lily proudly put it under the tree.

When her father asked her if he could shake it and guess what’s inside, she said very seriously, “No, that’s not possible. T-shirts don’t rattle.”

## **6<sup>th</sup> December - ST NICHOLAS, a much loved saint**

One account of how Father Christmas began tells of a man named Nicholas who was born in the third century in the Greek village of Patara, on what is today the southern coast of Turkey. His family were both devout and wealthy, and when his parents died in an epidemic, Nicholas decided to use his inheritance to help people. He gave to the needy, the sick, the suffering. He dedicated his whole life to God's service and was made Bishop of Myra while still a young man. As a bishop in later life, he joined other bishops and priests in prison under the emperor Diocletian's fierce persecution of Christians across the Roman Empire.

Finally released, Nicholas was all the more determined to shed abroad the news of God's love. He did so by giving. One story of his generosity explains why we hang Christmas stockings over our mantelpieces today. There was a poor family with three daughters who needed dowries if they were to marry, and not be sold into slavery. Nicholas heard of their plight and tossed three bags of gold into their home through an open window – thus saving the girls from a life of misery.

The bags of gold landed in stockings or shoes left before the fire to dry. Hence the custom of children hanging out stockings – in the hope of attracting presents of their own from St Nicholas - on Christmas Eve. That is why three gold balls, sometimes represented as oranges, are one of the symbols of St Nicholas.

The example of St Nicholas has never been forgotten - in bygone years boys in Germany and Poland would dress up as bishops on 6<sup>th</sup> December and beg alms for the poor. In the Netherlands and Belgium 'St Nicholas' would arrive on a steamship from Spain to ride a white horse on his gift-giving rounds. To this day, 6<sup>th</sup> December is still the main day for gift-giving and merry-making in much of Europe. Many people feel that simple gift-giving in early Advent helps preserve a Christmas Day focus on the Christ Child.

## FAMILY SUPPORT WORK

### Toys for Family Support Work at the 8am and 10.30am Services

Traditionally near the Feast of St. Nicholas we collect toys for FSW which will be delivered to families in need in time for Christmas. On **Sunday 7<sup>th</sup>**

**December** at our services we ask people to bring gifts (**unwrapped**) for children. The charity will be pleased to receive, board games, science kits, arts and crafts sets, roleplay kits, sensory toys, lego, toy cars, colouring books, gift vouchers, teen clothing with gift receipts. Rolls of Christmas wrapping paper are also welcome.



**Please contact Alyson Heath on 01798 873795 or for any further details of Family Support Work**



We've got online carol-singers again!





# Christmas Extravaganza

Christmas songs and carols, seasonal humour and  
festive food. Christmas Fayre raffle

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December 7pm for 7.30pm

Pulborough Village Hall

**Tickets £20 to include a glass of wine on arrival**

In aid of Education West Africa and  
The Parish Church of St Mary, Pulborough  
Tickets from Ann Kaiser 01798 872819

[ann.kaiser @live.co.uk](mailto:ann.kaiser@live.co.uk)

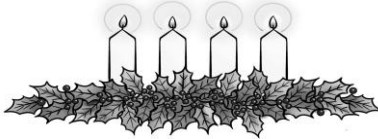
Michael Pioli 01798 368342

[michael@pioli.co.uk](mailto:michael@pioli.co.uk)



## DECEMBER CHURCH WORKING PARTY

The last working party of this year will be on **Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December from 10am to 12noon**. When jobs both inside the church and out in the churchyard are undertaken. Please to come along to the working party, you will be made most welcome and with delicious refreshments served at the end of the morning.



## PULBOROUGH VILLAGE CHRISTMAS MARKET

Celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary back in May, Pulborough Village Market will be holding its Christmas market on **Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December from 9am to 12noon in Pulborough Village Hall**. There will be a festive atmosphere with stalls selling hand-made Christmas gifts, seasonal foods and carols singing from Churches Together in Pulborough at 10.30am. The market café will be serving freshly cooked breakfasts and breakfast baps, together with home-made sausage rolls and mincepies. There will also be a special Christmas raffle. St Mary's stall will be selling home-made quiches, cheesy biscuits, home-made fat-free mincemeat, home-made scones and local honey. There will also be an opportunity to get your Christmas jigsaw puzzle! It is a great meeting place for friends and neighbours. Look forward to seeing you!

## SING FOR CHRISTMAS PLEASURE

Why not take a break from the 'hustle and bustle' of Christmas preparations and come and enjoy singing some seasonal songs and carols on **Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> December** venue is The Meadows Room, Pulborough Village Hall. Michael Pioli leads with his delightful sense of humour from **2pm to 3.30pm**. We will take a break for tea, coffee, warm mince pies, and Christmas biscuits. No need to book, just come along, you will be made very welcome.

## **NEWS FROM THE FRIENDS OF PULBOROUGH PARISH CHURCH – FPPC**

### **Dear Friends**

It has been a busy few months for the Friends of Pulborough Parish Church. November found us all at Champs Hill for a truly insightful evening in the company of Mark Drury who is the Governor of Ford Open Prison. In discussion with our own Chris Williams and compered beautifully by Tim Fooks, the High Sheriff of West Sussex, Mark provided fascinating insights into the challenges and opportunities of the modern prison system. Whilst acknowledging the role that prisons play for punishment and protection of the public, what really shone through was Mark's compassion and determination to find ways to rehabilitate the men and women in his care – truly inspirational. And huge thanks to Mary Bowerman and the team at Champs Hill for providing such an amazing venue!

Planning for new Friends events in 2026 is also in full swing. We are excited to announce that we are finalising the details for an evening with Alexandra Harris, author of "The Rising Down". This is a book which delves into the rich history of West Sussex, and intertwines personal stories with historical events to offer readers a unique perspective on the region's past.

We will also return to Sullington Great Barn for a repeat of the very successful barn dance event first held in April 2024. Please join us for a proper hoedown!

Of course there are two main goals behind all the hard work that goes into organising and running such a diverse set of events. The first is build a strong sense of community by bringing people together in different and interesting ways. The second is to raise funds for the upkeep and restoration of the fabric of the building of St Mary's. On this front we have now had a full assessment of the works that are needed for immediate conservation purposes, and it is clear that a substantial sum will be required. However fund

raising is progressing well and the Friends committee is always seeking new ways of approaching the challenge. We are confident that with your support this ambitious goal is very achievable. If you would like to become a member of The Friends, or make a donation of any kind, please visit the [website](#) or come to the church itself where you will find membership forms and other information on the work of The Friends.

It has been a while since we put together an update on the overall status of the work of the Friends of Pulborough Parish Church, so let's take the opportunity to look back over the last fifteen months and look forward to what the coming year may bring.

Let me begin by re-stating the twin aims of the Friends because it is so important that everything that happens is firmly rooted in these principles. These are of course:

- To raise funds for the upkeep and restoration of the fabric of the historic building of St Mary's Church
- To foster community relations by placing the building of the church at the centre of Pulborough life

The aim of fostering community relations has been a keen influence on the range and diversity of fund-raising events that have been held since The Friends was re-constituted a few short years ago. Through dance, song, art and tales of travel and adventure we have tried to reach across the community and this has resulted in over 500 different people attending our events so far.

There are details of each of the fund raising events to be found on The Friends [website](#), but the last fifteen months alone has seen an evening of Salsa dancing organised by the ever nimble James Raynard; a Come and Sing workshop in which the Mozart Requiem was rehearsed and performed during one very enjoyable day under the expert direction of Peter Allwood; and a fascinating talk by the conservationist Roger Morgan-Grenville based on his book "Across a Waking Land".

As well as raising valuable funds, the events have served as a mechanism to socialise the work of The Friends and to highlight the very pressing need to fund essential repairs and other conservation activities relating to numerous elements of the church building. A combination of membership subscriptions, event ticket sales and some very generous individual donors have led us to a very healthy starting point on our fundraising journey. And this has allowed us to make some visible progress this year by replacing the weathervane at the top of the tower, as well as refurbishing the tower clock. In the meantime, work has continued to assess the full extent of stonework and other repairs and this will inform the next set of more significant conservation activities, all with the intention of ensuring the building of St Mary's Church will remain an asset to the community for centuries to come!

If you would like to become a member of The Friends, or make a donation of any kind, please visit the [website](#) or come to the church itself where you will find membership forms and other information on the work of The Friends.



## HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR REAL CHRISTMAS TREE

If you want your tree to last as long as possible this year, the following should help:

Cut off about half an inch from the bottom of the trunk. This opens the pores of the tree. Then place it outside in a cool shaded place, standing in water until required.

Once you have brought it in, place it in a water-holding stand, well away from direct heat such as radiators. Top up the container every day – you will be amazed how much water the tree drinks. These ideas come from the British Christmas Tree Growers Association (BCTGA)

## **YOUR COUNTDOWN TO CHRISTMAS – 20 ideas**

**Plan your budget** – don't let Christmas 'fever' make you reckless. Be careful you don't go over any overdraft with your bank – the penalties are expensive! Also, really and truly, beware using credit cards if you can't pay them off quickly

**Practical details:** Make sure you have in a good stock of coal and logs, Christmas tree lights that work, a clean oven, a stock of candles and matches, and spare batteries.

**Choose a colour theme for this Christmas.** Red? Gold? Purple? Silver? Then use it on everything – from your candles, tree baubles and wrapping paper, to table napkins and Christmas cards and lights.

**Hang a wreath.** You can buy one, or get creative with a mixture of foliage from your garden.

**Enjoy any Christmas fayres and markets** – and consider taking a housebound person with you, or someone who may be lonely.

**The trip to Bethlehem.** Dig out your nativity set, and start Mary and Joseph and the donkey at the top of your stairs – moving them a bit closer to the manger downstairs each day. And don't forget to start the wise men on their way, from another part of the house. (Beware your dog eating anyone on the way!)

**Plan your Christmas lunch early.** Try and think of everything that you will need on the day – and make sure you have it ordered or bought in good time.

**Think about decorating your table** – you could use holly and ivy and narcissi and snowdrops... and lots of red ribbon. But if you use poisonous plants, be very careful around the children...and pets.

Pick the perfect tree. Bear in mind that an artificial tree is not just for Christmas, but for life.... all that non-renewable plastic will spend eternity in some landfill site. So why not branch out and look for the real thing. For more options, visit The British Christmas Tree Growers Association [christmastree.org.uk](http://christmastree.org.uk)

**Display your cards with style.** The simple ideas are often the most stylish. So have fun with wooden clothes pegs, sprayed gold, and peg your cards along ribbon that can be looped from one end of a curtain pole to the other.

**Deck the halls** – especially yours. Would your front entrance hall take a small tree, wreath, or maybe just a bowl of pretty sweets? Run a garland up the banister. Add some ivy and some fairy lights.

**Donate to charities** who help the homeless and the migrants.

**Sing carols** – and play carols at home. Remind your family what Christmas is really all about.

**Wrap those presents** – what you get and how you wrap it will say a lot about your attitude towards the person you are giving to! So, select your presents and wrapping materials with care, use only sharp scissors, and put your Sellotape on neatly. Adding some ribbon is well worth the efforts.

**Fill those Christmas stockings** – a must for Christmas mornings. Cleverly planned, they might even delay the time when exhausted parents are awoken from slumbers....

**Give your pets some extra care.** If you have a curious dog or cat, avoid tinsel on the tree – your pets could choke on it. Keep a watchful eye on the turkey bones on Christmas Day – and dispose of them safely. If they splinter in your pet's throat on Christmas Day, you could easily double the cost of your Christmas with just one visit to the vet.... Don't leave scraps of wrapping paper around if they



might be eaten. Finally, ensure your pets can find a quiet place to rest if all the family is there.

**Go crackers.** In 1847 the confectioner Tom Smith invented the Christmas cracker. Legend says that he spotted a beautifully wrapped French bon-bon, and had a 'eureka moment'. In effect, he said to himself: "What that bon-bon needs is a tiny plastic key-ring, an awful pun on a piece of paper, and a tissue paper hat, all crammed into an exploding toilet roll." The rest is history.

**Read your children the Christmas story.** There are any number of excellent children's books which tell it with wonderful illustrations.

**Make sure your neighbours are all right** – is there anyone who could use a helping hand? Anyone needing a lift to church?

**On Christmas Eve/Christmas,** make time to have a family reading of the Nativity stories in Matthew and Luke. As a family, make time to praise God for the gift of Jesus!



*To make you smile.....*

That well known pilot

At Sunday school, the younger children were drawing pictures to illustrate a biblical story. The teacher was startled to see one little boy was drawing an airplane. "This is the Flight into Egypt," the little boy explained. "See, here is Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus. And this," he said, pointing to the figure in the front of the plane, "is Pontius. He's the Pilot."

# Let Christmas begin!

Join the Mary How Trust  
for our annual event and  
sing all your favourite  
carols, led by the Arun  
Choral Society



Enjoy mulled wine and mince pies and help  
get our community into the festive spirit!

## *community carols*

Wednesday 17th December

St Mary's Church, Pulborough

Doors open 6.30pm Carols from 7pm

OUR HEADLINE SPONSOR



This is a **FREE** event organised  
by the Mary How Trust charity



**Donations are very welcome** and will help us to keep  
offering life-saving health screenings to individuals  
over 18 in our local community and beyond.

[maryhowtrust.org](http://maryhowtrust.org) | reg charity 1122393

# A Year in the Life of Education West Africa 2025



**Over the past year thanks to the generosity of so many local people by attending events or making donations, we have people able to improve the educational lives of many children in BO and Freetown Diocese in Sierra Leone.**

We have provided text books for Holy Trinity School in Makeni and having been building up funds to rebuild St Mathais School in Lunsar, please see pictures below. This project in total will cost £15,000 which will include the total rebuild with classrooms, storage, toilets and office. Because of the generosity of a recent Stem Funding bid and donations we have £5000 in which to start building the new classrooms as the priority.



Two of the four classrooms that need replacing

In the Bo diocese we have we have provided a new motor bike for Alex the Education Secretary plus his insurance and licence so he can get around and visit his schools across a large area.



We have provided new classrooms in at SLC Primary School in Bopani



Before and After -Class room at Bopani

We have refurbished classrooms for SLC Pre School Kalu and refurbished classrooms and provided a new roof for SLC Primary School Kangahun, and Damballa Road



Completed work at Damballa Road

The next project we are working towards in the Bo Diocese is the refurbishment of 3 buildings which will provide 12 classrooms in the St James Compound in Kenema.

**THANK YOU** to everyone who continues to support us. As you can see every penny raised is making such a difference to so many pupils.

**Alyson Heath (01798 873795) [alyson.heath55@gmail.com](mailto:alyson.heath55@gmail.com)**

**Education West Africa will be one of the two charities being supported at the Christmas Extravaganza on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December in Pulborough Village Hall.**

## **10 Fun Facts about Christmas trees 10 FUN FACTS ABOUT CHRISTMAS TREES**

Even before the time of Christ, evergreen trees were seen in winter as a symbol of fertility.

It was the 16<sup>th</sup> century monk, Martin Luther, who is credited with the idea of having lights on Christmas trees. He added candles to his tree, to look like stars in a forest.

Windsor Castle got its first Christmas tree in 1800, brought by Charlotte, wife of George III.

It was in 1835 that the term 'Christmas tree' was first used in English.

It was in the 1840s, when Prince Albert, consort of Queen Victoria, began bringing trees inside, that led to their popularity throughout the UK.

It was Woolworths who first sold manufactured Christmas tree ornaments – back in 1880.

The tree in London's Trafalgar Square has been a gift from the city of Oslo, Norway since 1947.

The world's tallest Xmas tree, at 221ft high, was erected in a Washington shopping mall in 1950.

In a survey of the nation's favourite smells, real Christmas trees came eighth, just behind the sea, but ahead of perfume. About five million real Christmas trees are sold in the UK each year.



## PARISH GIVING SCHEME

**An extra plea for help to put us on a good financial footing for the New Year**



**The best way to help St Mary's Church!  
it is so easy and gives a regular donation  
even on the Sundays when you are  
unable to get to church!**

GIVING

Givers can set up a Direct Debit with PGS online, over the phone or by filling in a gift form at church. This can be made on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis. Each gift is restricted to a parish church chosen by the giver and cannot be used elsewhere. The

gift will be passed back to the church of the giver's choosing by 10th of the month. Any eligible Gift Aid will be sent separately once it has been received from HMRC.

A unique feature of the scheme is the option for the giver to commit in principle to increase their gift annually in line with inflation. This is entirely at the giver's discretion on an opt-in basis, but it is proving popular - with more than 55% of the cash received currently index-linked.

For more details of the scheme do pick up a leaflet at the back of the church.

### ***To make you smile....***

The nativity play was going as planned and Joseph and Mary were going from 'house' to 'house' knocking on the doors and asking if there was any room for them.

As they continued to get 'no room' answers, a little voice called from the back of the church: "You should have booked!"

## ALL ABOUT CHRISTMAS TREES

***How many are sold each year?*** According to recent figures, about five million real Christmas trees are sold in the UK each year.

***How old are they?*** Your typical Christmas tree of six to seven feet is between ten and 12 years old.

***How are they grown?*** Seed is collected from trees either in the wild or in specially selected seed orchards. It is sown in a nursery, where the seedlings then grow for three to four years. The young plants are then planted by a grower and grown on for a further seven to nine years. While they are growing, the grower will fertilise, shape and prune the tree many times each year.

***What are the different types of Christmas trees? Here are just some...***

**Nordmann Fir** – the most popular Christmas tree in the UK. Much loved for its symmetry, strong branches and excellent needle retention. The lush, dark green needles provide great background for displaying ornaments.

**Fraser Fir** – the tree with the wonderful fragrance. Pyramid-shaped, it has strong branches with dark green, needles that are silvery underneath.

**Noble Fir** – A bluish-green tree with short, stiff branches ideal for heavier ornaments. A fresh fragrance, and great needle retention.

**Douglas Fir** – Very popular in the USA, with a great shape, and probably the strongest scent of all Christmas trees. Only problem – harder to decorate as usually very dense branches.

**Norway Spruce** – A dark green conical shaped tree with a strong fragrance. Needs to be well-watered for good needle retention.

**Blue Spruce** – This is ideal for your small or second tree. It's beautiful, unique blue colouring and good stiff branches are great for showing off heavy decorations. Needs watering well.

**Lodgepole Pine** – Beautiful tapered branches with green/yellow needles. A tree loved by traditionalists.

The British Christmas Tree Growers Association (BCTGA) estimates that approximately 75% of the trees sold in the UK consist of Nordmann Fir, with the remaining portion comprising Norway Spruce, Fraser Fir, and a selection of other less prevalent species. The BCTGA urges people to buy a British grown tree to support the local economy, agriculture and the environment. Buying British means money is going directly back into the country's economy and helping provide employment in the agricultural sector.

A natural two-metre Christmas tree without roots, disposed of by burning on a bonfire, planting it or having it chipped to spread on a garden, will have a carbon footprint of around 3.5kg of CO<sub>2</sub>. A two-metre Christmas tree made from plastic has a carbon footprint of around 40kg of CO<sub>2</sub>.

Find a stockist who stocks British grown trees at [www.bctga.co.uk](http://www.bctga.co.uk).

*This article comes from website of The British Christmas Tree Growers Association (BCTGA).*



# **THE PARISH CAROL SERVICE AT ST. MARY'S CHURCH**

On **Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> December at 6pm** there will be  
The Traditional Service of Carols and Readings  
with St. Mary's church choir

**CHRISTMAS EVE**  
**4pm Crib Service**  
**11pm MIDNIGHT MASS**

**CHRISTMAS DAY**  
*(There is NO 8am service)*  
**10.00am PARISH EUCHARIST**

## **I heard the Bells on Christmas Day**

I heard the bells on Christmas day  
Their old familiar carols play,  
And wild and sweet the words repeat  
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

And in despair I bowed my head:  
'There is no peace on earth, ' I said  
'For hate is strong, and mocks the song  
Of peace on earth, good will to men.'

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:  
'God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;  
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail,  
With peace on earth, good will to men.'

Till, ringing, singing on its way,  
The world revolved from night to day  
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime,  
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

*By Henry Wadsworth Longfello*

## AND THERE WERE SHEPHERDS

In his gospel, Luke tells how the shepherds in the fields were keeping watch over their flocks when they were terrified by the sudden arrival of heavenly angels, surrounded by the glory of the Lord. And the message of the angel that night has rung down the centuries:

*"I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." (Luke 2:10,11)*

And so, the first people to greet the Saviour were not rich VIPS, but humble shepherds. And in turn, it was the shepherds who became the first evangelists: for they would have gone home to their families and neighbours that night with the amazing news of what they had seen.

Meanwhile, for Mary there followed a time of reflection. She gathered up in her mind all her impressions, and all that the shepherds had shared about the angelic visit. She knew it was treasure, and not to be squandered. Then she quietly pondered in her heart the meaning and significance of all that had happened, so that she would never forget.

Exuberant witness and quiet contemplation are not opposites. They are, in fact, good companions in the spiritual life! So, this Christmas, let's be filled with the joy that the Saviour has also been born 'to us'. May our lives reflect the glory of His coming, even in a small way. May our interactions with friends, colleagues and families during this Advent season reflect the great joy that the angels brought that night, so long ago.



## ST MARY'S CHURCH CHRISTMAS CARD 2025

Once again, we are producing a Church Christmas card.

The design this year will be a picture of our new Nativity scene. If you like your name included on the inside of the card please let **Ann Kaiser on 01798 872819 or [ann.kaiser@live.co.uk](mailto:ann.kaiser@live.co.uk) know by Monday 15<sup>th</sup> December** On the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent 21<sup>st</sup> December we will put the Christmas Card on show and also have individual ones for people to take home.



The message in the card will be:

**With Christmas blessings.**

**May the spirit of Christmas bring you hope, good health and happiness throughout the year.**

**Praying that 2026 be a year of peace and reconciliation throughout the world.**

If you would like to give a donation towards the upkeep of the church to support this initiative that would be so helpful.

Please just leave a donation in the glass carboy

## ST MARY'S CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

As we move towards our Christmas celebrations, our church flower arrangers are planning their festive arrangements.

If you would care to give a small donation in memory of a loved one or just to help towards the cost of the flowers for this special festive season this would be so gratefully received.

Donations can be given to **Pauline Adsett** in church or the

Flower Arrangers BACS details are:

Account: St Marys Flower Group

Sort Code: 60-16-27

Account No. 96016779

Marked: Christmas





# Churches Together in Pulborough Christmas Services

## **United Reformed Church**

4pm Carol Service Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> December

10am **Christmas Day** Family Service



## **Pulborough Baptist Church**

4pm Carol Service Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> December

10am **Christmas Day** Service



## **St Gabriel's RC Church in Billingshurst**

**Christmas Day**

Mass 9.15am

*To make you smile.....*

As we were putting out biscuits for Father Christmas one Christmas Eve, I accidentally dropped one. I picked it up and dusted it off before placing it back on the plate. "You can't do that," argued my four-year-old. But I assured him that Father Christmas would never know.

He shot me a dubious look. "So, he knows if I've been bad or good all year, but he doesn't know if you dropped his biscuit on the floor?"

## THE CHURCH WEATHERVANE/COCKRELL IS IN TROUBLE!

Following the recent storms and high winds the church Cockrell has had to leave its perch. The large oak king post/ finial has been found to be damaged together with the large supporting oak timbers on the top of the tower. On inspection by Tarrant's and the church Architect the estimate we have received is £15,000 to restore these beams and king post and put the bird back on his perch.

In the meantime our church Cockrell has been placed in an ecclesiastical coop, somewhere he prefers not to be!

As far as we are aware the weathervane has been on the church tower for a great many years and was there before weather forecasting as we know it today, to aid agricultural and other outdoor workers have some idea of current and likely weather conditions.

Raising this amount of money will prove to be a challenging project for us at the Church. If anyone would like to donate towards this project we would be so grateful. To see the gleaming Cockrell back on his perch in 2026 is our fervent hope.

Donations can be sent to our Treasurer. Thank you for your support  
**PCC of PULBOROUGH,**  
**Sort code 60-16-27**  
**Account No: 96006293**  
Marked: Cockrell

