

NEWSLETTER

19th December



Christmas Services

Carols by Candlelight - Sunday 5pm

Crib Service - Christmas Eve 4pm

Midnight Mass - Christmas Eve 11pm

Christmas Day Family Communion - 10am

Rectors Ramble

Isaiah 7.10-16; Psalm 80.1-7,17-19; Romans 1.1-7; Matthew 1.18-25

**And all this took place to fulfil what the Lord said through the prophet:
“The Virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel”.
(which means “God with Us”)**

Matthew 1:22-24

Dear Friends,

Another fabulous week for both our churches, and I've got a confession. . I'm totally buzzing, so many great encounters, so many great conversations about the meaning of Christmas and the role our churches play in the life of our communities. The Christmas Tree festival with quiz, BBQ, Fr Martin's Raffle, Cake & refreshments, and Patsy's Emporium were all a huge success as was Jo and Andy's concert at St Peter's. Then on Monday & Tuesday we hosted over 600 people through our Primary school Cantata and our Secondary School Lessons & Carols. This is before our schools Christmas services on Friday and our own Carols by Candlelight at both churches over the weekend.

Special Thanks goes this week to our Vergers, Sextons, Administrators and Church Wardens, who have really kept the doors open and the welcomes warm to one and all. Thanks also to Jonathan & Andy and the Choirs for all you do at this busy time of the year.

Huge thank you to everyone who has enabled these events to happen and to our flower teams who are, as I write this 'ramble' transforming our churches into beacons of light and colour ready for the Christmas Services.

Let's face it, at this current moment, the world needs light!

Australia, indeed, the world, has been shaken by events at Bondi beach. The British Jewish community are frightened. Reports of Bondi here followed hard on the reporting of the 'Unite the Kingdom' carol service which looked like a carol service full of not very uniting St George's flags!

The gathering reportedly passed peacefully. But I was chilled by a pictured banner depicting Crusaders. I'm not sure 'Christian' knights fighting over Jerusalem in the Middle Ages is a timely image, and I wonder if our present day 'crusaders' are aware that Order of the Poor-fellow soldiers of Christ and of the Temple of Solomon or Les Chevaliers Templiers were a French Roman Catholic Religious Order established in 1119 by French Knight Hugues de Payens, to protect pilgrims from bandits travelling to Jerusalem, and to establish a financial infrastructure for the safe transfer of funds across Europe and the Holy Land?

In London it needed a counterdemonstration by Stand Up to Racism to raise the cheery banner, 'Love Christmas: Hate Racism'. That holly-adorned banner made me think. Such Christmas-themed imagery hits home, especially for a younger generation!

And all this got me thinking, how can the Christmas Christ brings offer us the much needed healing our nation desperately longs for?

Well, a different vibe, an inclusive one, came from our wonderful Christmas Tree Festival where diverse groups from our community displayed Christmas trees show-casing their activities and passions. Alongside a Remembrance tree, School & Pre-School, NEASSA, Bonfire, and one representing the Church's Owls' Owlets and Youth Club Group, were trees from all aspects of our community life. You will see Christopher's overview of It all further on In this Newsletter.

Among twinkling lights, in front of the Saints of our scriptures and under the gaze of Christ Magnificent in the stained-glass window, the Church made common cause with those meeting needs local and distant, and highlighted Christ's birthday as the right time to look outward.

Through the Incarnation God challenges us all. Like the child in the manger, we are called to be open and vulnerable, and let others' joy heal us.

But then, like the adult Christ, be bold and actively other-oriented!

In this week's passage, we focus on Joseph's fear, uncertainty, and confusion. Mary, his betrothed, is unexpectedly pregnant, and Joseph doesn't yet understand what's happened or why it happened. But an angel comes to Joseph and says: "Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife... for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit." And then Matthew tells us that the child's name shall be Jesus — because he will save his people from their sins — and that his name is Emmanuel, God with us.

This isn't a small detail — it's the heart of the Gospel.

God isn't distant.

God doesn't stay in heaven tucked safely away from life's fear, uncertainty and confusion.

No — in Jesus, God chose to come close.

God chose to be with us in every part of our human experience — including the fear, uncertainty and confusion!

And we're reminded of that in the world right now. On Bondi Beach, a joyful Hanukkah celebration — a moment meant for peace, light, and family — turned into horror and heartbreak when gunmen opened fire on the crowd, killing many innocent people and injuring dozens more. Families have lost loved ones. Children were present. A community's celebration became trauma. Such events like this arouse fear, create uncertainty and leave us all utterly confused.

Which in turn can raise questions for all of us: Where is God in all of this? How can God be with us when we see such evil and pain?

But this is precisely where the truth of Emmanuel becomes real and personal. Jesus comes not only to be with us in comfortable, happy moments, but in the moments that shake us to the core. God with us means God doesn't turn away from our grief. God doesn't pretend suffering isn't real.

Instead, Jesus enters into suffering. He walks alongside humans who are afraid, wounded, and grieving.

Jesus knows what it feels like to be afraid. Mary and Joseph felt fear. Jesus felt betrayal. He felt pain, and ultimately death. Yet, in all of this — God with us — promising justice, peace, and compassion that will be fully realised even if not yet fully seen.

So, what does Emmanuel mean for us in a moment like this?

God is near when we hurt. We can bring our pain, questions, and heartbreak to God honestly.

We are called to be with others in their hurt. When the world suffers, we are called to bring God's presence: through our prayers, our compassion, our actions. We can be the comfort the angel brought to Joseph.

The coming of Jesus shows us that love is stronger than hatred. Emmanuel means that no darkness — not even violence and terror — can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus.

We can't all be like the man, another Muslim, who grappled with a terrorist gunman to save his fellow Australians. But we can emulate Jewish families here and elsewhere fighting hate with defiant Hanukkah

candles; or the young people of goodwill who challenged the English nationalist slant of that carol service with their slogans.

This week let us pray and act so that we bring Emmanuel — God with us — into every broken place of the world, into our communities, and into our hearts.

Let's let our Christmas trees light up the darkness and our songs be songs of love and unity!

I'm going to finish this week, and this will be my last Ramble of 2025, with a poem read by a senior student from Chailey Secondary School at Tuesday's Lesson's and Carols.

It's by the great American Theologian and Civil Rights campaigner Howard Thurman:

The Work of Christmas

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among others,
To make music in the heart.

May I wish you all a peace filled Christmas and love filled and Christ centred 2026, and remember be joyful, keep the faith and keep doing the little things that make a difference to those you love and those in need.

Paul xx

PS reminder that Open Rectory will be on Sunday 4th January 2026 from 2pm to 4pm all are welcome to come raise a glass and finish the mince pies.

Hymns for Sunday:

Longing for light

Lo he comes with clouds descending

The angel Gabriel from heaven came

Come thou long expected Jesus

CHRISTMAS

A GENTLE APPEAL

Many thanks to all of you who have donated to St Mary's. It is your generosity that maintains the work of our Church. Bless you all.

At this special Christmas Time there are three areas of our work for which we ask for your special generosity.

Our FLOWER FUND which supports the wonderful work of our flower team is running low. St Mary's is blessed with splendid floral decoration every week of the year. Think of our wonderful floral displays at Easter, Harvest Festival, for Remembrance Day, and now for Christmas.



Our PASTORAL CARE FUND is continually called on to support cases of need in our village. Some of the issues we address are truly heart breaking. Christmas is a fitting time to extend our generosity to those less fortunate than us.

Our YOUTH WORK is one of our key contributions to our village. Led by the brilliant work of our Rector Paul Mundy supported by our excellent part-time Youth Worker Lee Buck and many generous volunteers from our congregation much is being achieved for all local young people. We are ambitious to build on the progress we continue to make.



If you wish to donate you can do so by BACS to our Newick PCC account sort code 09-01-54 account number 90773281 reference CHRISTMAS and we'll allocate your donation to these three areas.

If you'd prefer to donate to one particular area of our work make your reference FLOWER or PASTORAL or YOUTH as appropriate.

And of course I can take donations on Sundays on our card machine or by post to me at Marbles 7 High Street BN8 4LG

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Christopher Hume

SERVICES – DECEMBER 2025

Sunday 7th December Advent Two	8am BCP* Holy Communion Preacher: Rev Paul Mundy 10am Holy Communion Isaiah 11:1-10, Romans 15:4-13, Matthew 3:1-12 Preacher: Ian Reekie Seasonal Concert 4pm – music and readings for a Winter's evening
Sunday 14th December Advent Three	8am BCP* Holy Communion Preacher: Fr Martin 10am Holy Communion Isaiah 35:1-10, James 5:7-10, Matthew 11:2-11 Preacher: Fr Martin Morgan 6pm Worship2 Leader: Mandy Stockwell
Sunday 21st December Advent Four	8am BCP* Holy Communion Preacher: Rev Paul 10am Family Communion & Owls Isaiah 7:10-16, Romans 1:1-7, Matthew 1:18-25 Preacher: Rev Paul Mundy 5pm Carols by Candlelight Preacher: Rev Paul Mundy
Christmas Eve	4pm Crib Service Leader: Patsy Bailey 11pm Midnight Mass Isaiah 9:2-7, Hebrews 1:1-4, John 1:1-14 Preacher: Geoff Clinton
Christmas Day	8am BCP* Christmas Day Holy Communion Preacher: Rev Paul Mundy 10am Christmas Day Family Communion Isaiah 52:7-10, Titus 2:11-14, Luke 2: 1-7 & 8-20 Preacher: Rev Paul Mundy
Sunday 28th December The Holy Innocents Christmas 1	8am BCP* Holy Communion Preacher: Father Martin Morgan 10am Morning Worship Jeremiah 31:15-17, 1 Corinthians 1:26-29, Matthew 2:13-18 Preacher: Jeremy Burdett

*DENOTES STANDARD YEAR A LECTIONARY READINGS

PRAYER MEETINGS FOR CHURCH SERVICES EVERY SUNDAY 9.30 BARN CENTRE

SERVICES - ST MARY'S NEWICKS CHURCH

JANUARY 2026	FEBRUARY 2026
<p>Sunday 4th Jan - Epiphany</p> <p>8am BCP* Holy Communion Preacher: Ian Reekie 10am Holy Communion Preacher: Rev Paul Readings: Isaiah 60:1-6, Ephesians 3:1-12, Matthew 2:1-12 5pm Evensong Leader: Geoff Preacher: ALM Patsy Bailey</p>	<p>Sunday 1st Feb - 4th Sunday of Epiphany <i>Septuagesima</i></p> <p>8am BCP* Holy Communion Preacher: Rev Paul Mundy 10am Holy Communion Preacher: Rev Paul Readings: 1 Kings 17:8-16, 1 Corinthians 1:18-end, John 2:1-11 5pm Evensong Preacher: Reader Jeremy</p>
<p>Sunday 11th Jan - 1st Sunday after Epiphany</p> <p>8am BCP* Holy Communion Preacher: Fr Martin Morgan 10am Holy Communion Preacher: Fr Martin Morgan Readings: Isaiah 42:1-9, Acts 10:34-43, Matthew 3:13-17 6pm Worship2 Leader: Mandy Stockwell</p>	<p>Sunday 8th Feb - 2nd Sunday before Lent <i>Sexagesima</i></p> <p>8am BCP* Holy Communion Preacher: Fr Martin Morgan 10am Holy Communion Preacher: Fr Martin Morgan Readings: Genesis 1:1-2:3, Romans 8:18-25, Matthew 6:25-end 6pm Worship2 Leader: Mandy Stockwell</p>
<p>Sunday 18th Jan - 2nd Sunday after Epiphany</p> <p>8am BCP* Holy Communion Preacher: Reader Jeremy Burdett 10am Churches Together @ St Mary's Family Communion & Owls Preacher: Rev Paul Mundy Readings: Isaiah 49:1-7, 1 Corinthians 1:1-9, John 1:29-42</p>	<p>Sunday 15th Feb - Sunday Next Before Lent <i>Quinquagesima</i></p> <p>8am BCP* Holy Communion Preacher: Fr Martin 10am Churches Together @ St Mary's Family Communion & Owls Preacher: Fr Martin Readings: Exodus 24:12-end, 2 Peter 1:16-end, Matthew 17:1-9</p>
	<p>Wednesday 18th Feb - Ash Wednesday</p> <p>7pm Imposition of Ashes & Holy Communion Rev Paul Mundy & Fr Martin Morgan</p>
<p>Sunday 25th Jan - 3rd Sunday of Epiphany</p> <p>8am BCP* Holy Communion Preacher: Ian Reekie 10am Family Communion Leader: Rev Paul Mundy Readings: Jeremiah 1:4-10, Acts 9:1-22, Matthew 19:27-30 Preacher ALM Patsy Bailey</p>	<p>Sunday 22nd Feb - 1st Sunday in Lent</p> <p>8am BCP* Holy Communion Preacher: Ian Reekie 10am Family Communion Preacher: Rev Paul Mundy Readings: Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7, Romans 5:12-19, Matthew 4:1-11</p>

*Denotes standard Year A Lectionary Readings

**Lent Course commences on Monday 23rd February
 7pm St Mary's Newick**

Please remember those on our prayer list:

Francis Bailey, Cole Louise Blackman, Bernice Blundy, Karina Brown, Gabi Brunner,
Beryl Campion-Smith, Harri Gande, Morris Gee, John and Elizabeth Gould, Rubie Geer,
Juliette Lucas, Spike MacGuire, Christina McCann, Shirley Mansfield, Derek Marshall,
George Morrison, Patricia Moss, Ann Parker, Adrian, Andrea and Amber Parris,
Gemma Peacock, June and Ron Perou, Christine Ripley, Rubie,
Yvette Smith, Cheryl Stewart, Marcus Thrower, Felicity Veasey,
Toni Warrilow, Sean Watson, Nasima Wright.

A GREAT BIG THANK YOU!!

To everyone who came up with such creative trees, the lovely ladies who ran the Christmas Workshop, Nigel and his Violin, Andy and his fabulous singers, all the wonderful hospitality volunteers across the whole weekend and not least - everyone who came along and supported the fundraiser.

All the Pennies are still being counted - all the photo's are in the **Gallery** on our website, and Reverend Paul's winning ticket was drawn for the Hamper by one of our fantastic Tree entrants.

Another wonderful event with funds raised for St Mary's and St Peter & St James Hospice. This weekend we have the **East Sussex Concert Band on Saturday** and then Sunday starts the Christmas services with **Carols by Candlelight at 5pm**. Advent Calendar for all details are further on...

Finally , a taster of just some of the photos follow and after that, a more detailed overview of the weekend from Christopher

Winners, cooks and singers:



Christmas Tree Festival

Our very own Sara Fuller and Jenny Smerdon from the Hospice put together a new style festival this year.

Gone were the stalls of yesteryear. Mandy Stockwell and Sarah Byng had organised a new attraction for younger children. Craft tables were set up, wooden templates were provided and the children each produced three Christmas tree decorations – one for their own tree, one for a neighbour and one for a friend. It worked out better than we could have hoped. The children loved it, the decorations they produced were excellent and it was all a great success. A collection of the children's' work will be on display on Christmas Eve. There will be more next year - Mandy is already planning next year's version building on the success of this year's effort. Very well done Mandy and Sarah, congratulations and many thanks.

The festival itself worked very well. The trees were excellent this year – 37 trees representing many interests and facets of village life. The winning tree was from The Crown – what a pub and what a wonderful contribution to Newick life it makes.

We seemed to have more people through than ever this year. The atmosphere seemed calmer, more reflective and more “Christmassy” without the stalls. It worked very well and for me I thought it worked even better than in previous years.

Fr Martin Morgan had generously provided a splendid raffle prize. The raffle was well patronised and raised almost £700. Thank you Martin, and many thanks to all who supported the raffle.

Over in the Barn Centre it was all action! Patsy's bazaar upstairs, well stocked and presented by Patsy and her tireless Sexton husband Tony (where does he get all that energy?!!) was a great success raising almost £600. Well done Patsy! And Tony!

Rector Paul was back in action at lunchtime barbecuing sausages, bacon and onions to provide popular (and remunerative!) sausage and bacon baps. Jenny Smerdon organised some awesome sausage rolls which went down very well. And of course the mulled wine offering was as popular as ever.

A great day for St Mary's and St Peter and St James Hospice.

Well done and many thanks to all who contributed the beautiful trees, and all who worked so hard to make the day such a success. Particular thanks to Sara Fuller who worked tirelessly over the preceding months to put the Festival together and then worked tirelessly and effectively through the Festival itself.

Christopher Hume

Quiz Night

Ash and Mandy set up a splendid quiz night for a well-attended and happy gathering on Friday night.

The Church was comfortably full and a good time was had by all.

Ash had prepared an interesting and challenging quiz on a wide range of topics. Too good for me! All set up and impressively presented on the Church screens. Ash is some kind of genius on presentations like that. It was very clear that a lot of effort, research and skill had been employed. Who knew that Arsenal got a mention in the bible?



Rector Paul catered for the evening with three excellent curries – beef, chicken and vegetarian. Eat your heart out village curry house, there's a new force in town. A man of many talents, our Rector.



Pam ran the bar with aplomb. And it needed some running – the crowd was thirsty and the wine and beer flowed.

The evening was designed to be a fund raiser, and a very successful fund raiser it was. Over £1500 raised for St Mary's. Well done Ash and Mandy and caterer Rector Paul! Thank you!

But perhaps the most striking success was how enjoyable the whole evening was. Smiling faces everywhere, and lots of "we must do this again next year, bring it on".

Christopher Hume



Advent Calendar

- Advent Carols Sunday 30th November **6pm**
- Seasonal Concert in aid of The Bevern Trust Sunday 7th December **4pm**
- The annual Christmas Lunch Club Monday 8th December
- Christmas Tree Festival 12th-14th December incl:
 - *Curry and Quiz night in amongst the trees 7pm Friday 12th*
 - *Craft Workshop 10am - 2pm Saturday 13th*
 - *Andy Rees Singalong 2pm Saturday*
- East Sussex Concert Band with refreshments Saturday 20th December **7pm**
- Carols by Candlelight Sunday 21st December **5pm**
- Crib Service **4pm** and Midnight Mass **11pm** on Christmas Eve
- Early Communion Service **8am** and Family worship for all on Christmas Day **10am**



East Sussex Concert Band

conducted by Jonathan Bailey

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Saturday 20th December 7pm

St Mary's Church, Newick BN8 4JZ



Tickets: £7, under 12s free
www.trybooking.com/uk/96785
or scan the QR code
eastsussexconcertband@hotmail.com



East Sussex
Concert Band



*Supporting Live Music &
St Mary's Church, Newick*

FLETCHING SINGERS' EPIPHANY CONCERT

**Fletching Church, TN22 3SR.
Saturday 17th January 2026 at 7.30pm**

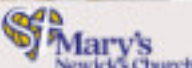

In celebration of Epiphany and the New Year, The Fletching Singers are excited to be joined by members of the Mid Sussex Silver Band who will add jubilation and triumph to music by Praetorius, Mendelssohn and Scheidt.

With plenty more beautiful choral works both old and new, interspersed with a poem or two, this is sure to be a lovely way to liven up a dark January night. Directed by Ansy Boothroyd.

Tickets £15 on the door or £12.50 early bird until Tuesday 13th January. Available online at <https://www.fletchingsingers.co.uk> from members or 07802 855113

A slice of traditional Galette des Rois will be offered free with every drink bought from the bar.

Retiring collection for www.thekindnesscooperation.org


Owlets Babies 'n Tots Group

Chat, Refreshments & Songs
For Mums/Dads/Grandparents/Carers and their
Babies and Tots!
Mondays, 9.30am - 10.30am
in St. Mary's Church
(term time only)
Feel free to be in contact -
Pam Mundy, childrenandfamilies@stmarysnewicks.church





Owls Club

**Crafts, Bible Story, Fun!
LEGO & Refreshments**
9.55am - 11.00am
Next dates: 15 November, 21 December, 18 January
Feel free to be in contact -
Pam Mundy, childrenandfamilies@stmarysnewicks.church



St Mary's Newick's Youth Choir



When: The 1st Sunday of the month
Time: 10-11am
Ages: All ages welcome
Where: Barn Centre, St Mary's Church, Newick

**Sing, have fun and
make friends**

Call: 01825 724006
Email: churchoffice@stmarysnewicks.church
Web: stmarysnewicks.church/youthchoir



NEWICK YOUTH CLUBS! NYC & NCT

WEDNESDAY EVENINGS (TERM TIME)

The Barn Centre, Church Road, Newick

6.00 - 7.30PM Year 7

7.30 - 9.00pm Year 8 onwards

Go to our [WEBSITE](#) for full details





OUR PRAYER FOR GROWTH

**God of Mission who alone brings growth to your Church,
send your Holy Spirit to give Vision to our planning,
wisdom to our actions, and power to our witness.**

**Help our church to grow in numbers, in spiritual
commitment to you, and in service to our local community,
through Jesus Christ Our Lord**

AMEN

Please visit our website stmarysnewicks.church for
more information on the various organisations and
events and regular activities available to you.

If you have any news you would like to share, any photos
you would like to display, or any stories about St Mary's
Newick or wider afield that you think the readers may enjoy
- please mail us at:

churchoffice@stmarysnewicks.church

The content deadline is 10am on Thursday

so please make sure you send anything to us in time. Anything received
after 10am will be included the following week if appropriate.

Thank you.