

Dec 24 / Jan 25

The Lychgate



The magazine for the people and community of Long Ditton

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Burns Night Supper Saturday 25th January 2025

Do join us for our annual celebration of Burns Night on Saturday 25th January 2025.

As usual we will have a live bagpiper and a reciting of the traditional 'Address to the Haggis' and then a three course dinner.



There is the option for guests to read out a poem of their choice and it's always fascinating to hear the range of what is delivered.

A vegetarian meal is available on request (yes, they do make both vegetarian and gluten-free haggis!).

This evening is always really popular so do please book early – we will be selling tickets after all Sunday services. £25 per ticket – or book for a table of eight.



REGULAR SERVICES AT ST MARY'S

Sundays:

08.00am Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion
10.15am Parish Communion with Organ and hymns
6pm Evening Prayer (Choral Evensong 3rd Sunday of month)

Wednesdays:

10.00 am Holy Communion followed by Coffee Club

Prayer Chain

If you, or someone you know, would like to be prayed for (for any reason) please send your request by e-mail to:-
prayerchain@stmaryslongditton.org.uk

Your request will only be known to those in the Prayer Chain and your confidentiality will be respected.



Celebrate Christmas at St Mary's Long Ditton

ADVENT CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

Sunday 1 December 6pm

NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS

Sunday 22 December 6pm

CHRISTMAS EVE

3pm Crib Service

11.30pm Midnight Mass

CHRISTMAS DAY

8am and 10.15am Holy Communion

FROM THE REGISTERS

**The Rectory, 5 Church Meadow
Long Ditton, KT6 5EP**
Tele: 020 8398 1583
email: rector@stmaryslongditton.org.uk

Baptism of:

Zara Keen
Finley Walker
Erin Walker



Funeral of:

Lorna Smith
Judith Williamson
Eric Wigg



Burial of Ashes of: David May

RIP: Harvey Burnett

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Mon 9 December	Christmas Buffet lunch
Fri 3 Jan 2025	1pm Friendship Lunch
Fri 17 Jan 2025	2pm Film Friday
Sat 25 Jan 2025	Burns Night supper

ADVANCE NOTICE

Wed 12 Feb 2025 8pm - Book Box - newspaper columnist and author Bryony Gordon "Mad Woman" reflecting on ten years of leading the drive for acceptance of the importance of good mental health.

Dear Friends

By the time you read this Christmas preparations will be well underway. You'll probably have booked a Christmas supermarket delivery slot, you may have done all (or most) of your Christmas shopping, Christmas cards will have been sent and the house may very well be decorated.

It is all a huge amount of work and we do it for the joy it brings, particularly in households where children are looking forward to the celebrations. It can be easy, amidst that familiarity and joyfulness of Christmas, to forget the light shining brightly at the centre of the season: the light of the Lord Jesus.

Christians believe that in Jesus God became a human being in order to draw human beings into union with God. Jesus is the one who, in his own person, declares to the world the great love of God, because in him the God of heaven and earth stepped down from the heights of heaven to become a human baby.

Perhaps that is why, when we pause and take a break from all the preparations, we find the Christmas story so inspiring: it reminds us that ordinary human life is of enormous significance to God. Why not make time to pause and reflect and to wonder at the child who made heaven and earth one?

Please do join us at one of our Christmas services – all are welcome!

Wishing you all God's blessing

REGULAR GROUPS AT ST MARY'S

Friendship Lunch

Christmas Buffet Lunch MONDAY 9th December at 12.30pm (£12)
Friday 3rd January 2025 at 1.00pm

Babes and Tots

Every Friday in term time. All carers and their little ones welcome for singing, outdoor play and crafting. 09.30 - 11.30
Coffee makers always welcome!

Film Friday

17th January 2025 at 2pm

All of the above activities take place in St Mary's Community Hall

BOOK BOX

Wednesday 20th November 8pm - Martin Cooper professional soldier will tell the fascinating story of the Reverend Captain Theodore Hardy VC, the most decorated non-combatant of WW1. Copies of the book, Theodore Bailey Hardy VC by David Raw can be ordered can be ordered from the Regency Bookshop.

Tickets £10—available in church, on the door or through the church website

Tea/coffee and homemade cake included in the ticket price

These events will be held in St Mary's Community Hall starting at 8pm

ST MARY'S CHURCH CONTACTS

Ministry Team	The Rev'd Dr. Kuhan Satkunanayagam	020 8398 1583 (Day off -Tuesday)
Associate Priest	The Rev'd Prof Alison Baverstock	020 8546 9267
Churchwardens	Bob Hancock Joanne Hall	020 8398 0519 020 8398 5637
Pastoral Team	<i>Call us if you need someone to listen or talk with you</i>	
Pastoral Assistants	Cathy Doyle Joanne Hall Diana Jemmett Kenneth Mould Judith Topp	020 8398 0715 020 8398 5637 020 8398 1184 020 8339 0933 020 8399 1004
Sunday Club		children@stmaryslongditton.org.uk
Churches Together	Cathy Doyle	020 8398 0715
Director of Music	Julia Bowyer	music@stmaryslongditton.org.uk
Church Electoral Roll	Lucy McMullan	office@stmaryslongditton.org.uk
Flowers	Tessa Vallings	020 8398 4807
Sacristan	Val Tanner	020 8974 2713
Stewardship Hon Treasurer	Sarah Carvalho	treasurer@stmaryslongditton.org.uk
PCC Hon Sec	Penny Fussell	020 8672 0838
PCC Hon Treasurer	Sarah Carvalho	treasurer@stmaryslongditton.org.uk
Parish Office & Community Hall	Mandy Ali The Parish Office Church Road	020 8339 0008 office@stmaryslongditton.org.uk

[www.stmaryslong ditton.org.uk](http://www.stmaryslongditton.org.uk)

LONG DITTON
GENERAL CONTACTS

Group	Contact	Tele Number
Babes 'n' Tots	Cathy Doyle	020 8398 0715
LD Residents' Assn	Mark Herbert	020 8398 6037
LD Garden Club	Sue Corb	07766 742370
Village Hall	Michelle Aveson	07804 057589
Rainbows	Lesley Sullivan	020 8398 0150
Brownies (Wednesday)	Lesley Sullivan	020 8398 0150
Brownies (Thursday)	Hannah Siebert	020 8398 0576
Guides	Fay Tiplady	07486 696167
Rangers	Cat Smith	07738 599318
Dittons Scouts contact	Stuart Jack	07971 479740
LDSM Junior School Sugden Road, KT7 0AD	Sarah Martin (Head)	020 8398 1070
LD Infant School Ditton Hill Road, KT6 5JB	Sarah Martin (Head)	020 8398 4398
Long Ditton Youth Club	Glenn Sampson	07588 825917
Ditton Bridge Club	Redvers Cunningham	020 8398 4338
Sugden Road Allotments	David Wiltshire	07718 054345
Long Ditton Cricket Club	Jeremy Huntingford	07876 171899
Surbiton Bowls Club	Keith Stedman	07543 095070
Editor of Lychgate	Janet Burton	07810 810822
Citizens Advice Bureau Esher	01372 464770	
Elmbridge Borough Council	01372 474474	
Elmbridge Dial-A-Ride	01372 474944	
Thames Water Emergency Line	0800 980 8800	
Samaritans Kingston	Freephone: 116123	
Dittons & Weston Green Neighbourhood Care	020 8398 8600	

Millions at breaking point as “shockingly low incomes” leave them hungry

Chronically low incomes are devastating the lives of millions of people who don't have enough income to afford food, essential bills and a safe home to live in. That's according to the latest report by UK debt advice charity, Christians Against Poverty (CAP).

CAP's YouGov polling, which accompanies the report, shows that 11.8 million (22%) of UK adults say they currently have a deficit budget, which is when a person's income doesn't cover the cost of the core essentials they need to live on.

CAP's clients, on average, are £273 a month short of what they need to be able to cover their basics such as food, energy bills and rent.

The report highlights that when CAP's debt coaches go into clients' homes, they find people living in cold properties and with empty fridges. Clients describe sitting in the dark with the lights off and curtains closed, often hiding in terror because they're afraid of bailiffs knocking at their door demanding money that they don't have.

The report reveals that almost half (47%) of CAP's clients have deficit budgets, even after an expert debt advisor has supported them to review their finances, and has worked through suggestions to maximise their income and cut out non-essentials.

Christians Against Poverty's Chief Executive Officer, Stewart McCulloch, said, "Our expert debt advisors, alongside local churches we partner with, are continuing to help thousands of people across the UK to become debt free."

"But it's frustrating for our team when they have the tools to help someone out of debt, but the person's income is so shockingly low that even when the burden of debt is removed, they still can't afford life's essentials."

"11 million people living lives of hidden desperation is utterly unacceptable. We can't afford the welfare and health costs of this tragedy."

If you would like to help: <https://capuk.org>

Choral Evensong in St Paul's 13th October 2024



Last January I was given the singular honour of being asked to preach at St Paul's. They plan a long way ahead so, in addition to choosing one of the dates they had available, I had the choice of mid-morning eucharist or choral evensong. For me it was no choice; I love the prayers and format of the latter.

Somehow, once I had got this important date in my diary, other things started to coalesce around it. This also seemed a good time to step down from my full time role at Kingston University, taking a phased retirement so I can concentrate on my commitments to St Mary's and the charity I set up to link military families through shared-reading. Do have a look at www.readingforce.org.uk which is open to anyone with a military connection.

The event also had a great family significance. My grandfather's brother – my Great Uncle George – was a Vicar Choral at St Paul's and so got to sing at two coronations and the wedding of the then Princess Elizabeth (several members of the St Paul's choir were loaned to Westminster Abbey for these occasions). So when on the day I was shown to my seat by the virgins, and found it was right next to the current Vicars Choral, it felt very special. Several of my cousins also came along and were similarly moved.

After the event, people kept asking me if I was nervous. Once I was in the cathedral, strangely, the answer is no. Kuhan had kindly twice listened to me practice my delivery in St Mary's. In St Paul's, Josh the virgins walked me through the order of what would happen and in what order. I had a trial run at climbing up the circular staircase to the pulpit – and hearing how I should aim what I had to say at Joshua Reynolds (the tomb on the opposite wall). I felt very confident that Josh would keep me in line – that his staff of office would be pointed in my direction and I would know what to do. And because one is preaching within the context of a service, I was concentrating on that – and the beautiful music – so this helped me remain in role. It also helped massively that the staff of St Paul's are such a friendly team; so welcoming and easy to talk to. Meeting members of the congregation afterwards was lovely.

LDRA Autumn Public Meeting

The Autumn public meeting at the LD Village Hall was held on November 27th and all residents were invited to attend. Everyone had the chance to meet our councillors and discuss local issues.

LDRA Committee

We are seeking new volunteers, so if you are interested in a position on the LDRA committee, please contact Mark Herbert (Vice Chair) or Paul Bartlett (Treasurer).

LDRA on Facebook

The LDRA Facebook page continues to grow in popularity and has over 2,500 members. It is a great source of local information. You can join by searching FB for 'Long Ditton Residents Association' and requesting membership. Please read and agree to the FB page rules to be accepted.

Monthly LDRA Committee Meetings – Community Hall

The LDRA continues to hold monthly committee meetings in the Long Ditton Community Hall, behind St. Mary's Church. All residents are welcome to attend, especially if they have an issue to raise. The meetings start at 8.00pm, on the first Wednesday in the month, except May, August and November.

Local Police

All incidents of anti-social behaviour should be reported to Surrey Police (ring 101 or online <https://www.surrey.police.uk/>). The LDRA is working with the local police team, so please feel free to keep us informed too. Information on police matters can be viewed on <https://www.police.uk/pu/your-area/surrey-police/the-dittons-and-hinchley-wood/>

Help us to help you!

In addition to Facebook and our website, we would like to use e-mail to keep you informed. If you would like to be on our e-mailing list please send your full name, your road and e-mail address to: mark.herbert@longditton.org. All information supplied will be used in accordance with GDPR, strictly by the LDRA Officers only, and not made public. All recipients are e-mailed using *Blind carbon copy* (Bcc).



Elmbridge Borough Council – New Local Plan

The Elmbridge Borough Council (EBC) Local Plan is in serious jeopardy, as the Planning Inspector has refused to allow the council 12-15 months to modify the plan. The council has written to the Housing Minister and the Planning Inspectorate to request the refusal be overturned. Failure could lead to the plan being withdrawn and EBC having to start the Local Plan process all over again. More up to date information is available on the EBC website. (<https://www.elmbridge.gov.uk/local-plan-examination/>)

2024 LDRA Annual Subscriptions

2024 annual subs are due as online payments (and cheques for those who do not use online banking – to be sent to the Treasurer, 7 Chalcott Gardens, KT6 5HJ). We suggest £3.00 or more per household. Bank details remain the same:

Sort Code: 20 – 46 – 73 Account No.: 3350 6282 Payment Reference: <<Your road name>>

Overgrown Verges and Public Areas

LDRA co-opted supporter, Paul Fagan, has been challenging EBC and SCC on the state of Long Ditton's verges, church environs, open public spaces and street cleaning. Paul's tireless efforts press home the fact that the gardening contractors are not fulfilling their contractual obligations. We hope action will be taken.

Plough & Harrow Pub

The Plough and Harrow pub, on Ditton Hill Road, celebrates its one-year anniversary of re-opening on the 5th December following major renovations. It is good to have a pub and quality restaurant in the centre of the village. A great boost for Long Ditton.

Long Ditton 'Lights Up' – Christmas Tree Lights Switch On Event

The popular Long Ditton Christmas 'Lights Up' event was held on November 24th. All residents were welcome to attend and fun was had by all. The LDRA would like to thank Nick Darby, our SCC councillor, for arranging his regular major contribution towards the costs of the Christmas trees above the Fleece Road shops.

Overall, it just felt like a really blessed occasion – although also one that remains unreal. I still can't quite believe that this really happened.



It was terrific to see so many people from St Mary's there supporting me, no doubt encouraged by the prospect of a tour with Yvonne Jackman beforehand. I wonder if our Long Ditton community

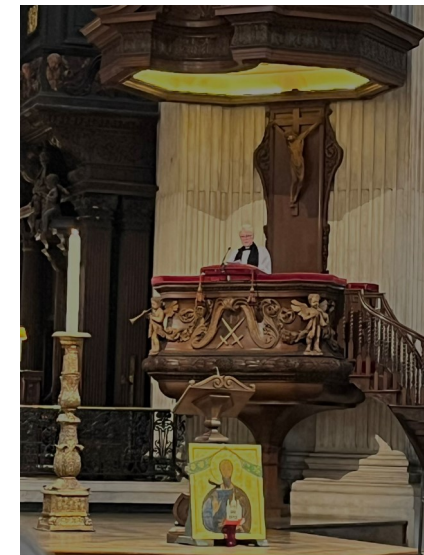


knows that we have in our midst an official tour guide at St Paul's?

Yvonne is incredibly knowledgeable – as we found out when she gave a talk to BookBox last year. Sadly I did not get to hear her (the tour overlapped with my rehearsal) but my husband has been quoting key facts, about both Christopher Wren and the building, ever since!

All in all, it was an evening to remember, in simply stunning surroundings. The picture shows the height of the pulpit.

Rev'd Alison Baverstock



That coin in your Christmas Pudding

There is a tradition, which dates from the Middle Ages, of putting silver coins into Christmas puddings. The first coins used were a silver farthing or penny. After World War One, it became a threepenny bit and then a sixpence. Finding one was supposed to bring you good fortune, but probably it was more likely to break a tooth as you bit into the pudding.

We now pay for most things with plastic or by tapping a mobile telephone. In future, will people put old credit cards or phones in their Christmas pudding? Hope not.

Other coins 'appear' at this time of year. Chocolate coins are traditionally given to children at Christmas time, and in Jewish tradition during Hanukkah. It is said that one night Saint Nicholas climbed on a roof and threw a purse of money down a chimney, which landed in a pair of stockings that a little girl had hung up to dry. Good throw!



are endless and will increase in length as the Service progresses. The final reader will probably end with a lengthy exegesis on what he thinks the passage means, correcting whatever you said in your sermon.

I once made the mistake of not telling all readers which Bible translation to use. One, an Old Testament expert, therefore decided to read in Hebrew. Not to be outdone, another read her Gospel passage in Greek – apologising beforehand that it may not be a perfect rendering, as she was spontaneously translating it from the English. And some say Christians are not competitive.

You have two alternatives: either repeat last year's Service without any alteration, saying that it could not be improved, or design your own – and then take Christmas off.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

Smile lines

Church rules

Six year-old Angie and her four-year-old brother Joel sat together for the Christmas concert in church. Joel kept giggling and whispering until his big sister had had enough. "Be quiet in church!" "Why?" Joel demanded. "Who is going to make me?" Angie pointed to the back of the church and said: "See those two big men standing at the door? They're hushers."

Christmas gifts

Grandfather was talking to his grand-daughter, "When I was a child all we got for Christmas was an apple and an orange." The little girl clapped her hands in joy. "Brilliant! I'd love a new computer and a mobile!"

St James the Least of All

On why Carol Services are so dangerous

The Rectory
St James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

So, you are excited about being invited to plan your first Carol Service. The dangers involved are only slightly less than being invited to judge the best cake made by the Ladies' Group. You seem to have no idea of the lifelong offence you will inevitably cause. In decades to come when you will either be a seasoned old clergyman – or more likely a double glazing salesman – you will be remembered as “the Curate who offended Mrs Smith.”

First, you have to decide which groups are going to be represented to give the readings. If the Brownies were asked last year, then it has to be the Cubs this time, but don't forget that every third year, the Boys' Brigade must be asked, or they will take their revenge and get their flag tangled in the nave chandelier come Remembrance Sunday.

If someone represents the choir, then over a four year period, all four voice parts must be called on – and if the organist isn't asked on the fifth year, then all hymns subsequently will be played at double speed and with one verse missing. Should one person have been invited to read for two successive years, then their annual appearance thereafter will be taken as an inalienable right for the rest of their lifetime – and probably longer than that. To drop them may well invoke legal proceedings.

Then there is the batting order to be considered. Someone from the church council will take it as a deliberate slight if they are placed lower in the order than a representative of the Men's Fellowship and no self-respecting bell ringer would voluntarily follow a brass cleaner.

If you do not specify where they should read from and how the readings should end, then a form of ecclesiastical inflation will happen. If the first reader speaks from the chancel step, the next one will go to the lectern; after the sanctuary and pulpit have been utilised, the final reader will probably ask you to move so he can take your place. The variations on “Here endeth”, “This is the Word of the Lord”, and “Thanks be to God”,

Think Twice about buying that goat from Ghana

What are you buying your friends for Christmas this year? If you are tempted by ‘socially responsible’ gifts that involve you NOT giving your friends anything at all, but instead giving your money to a charity ‘in their name’, you may wish to think again. Such gifts as goats in Ghana or chickens in Chad can make you feel virtuous, but may damage your relationships.

A recent study has found that people who buy others ‘socially responsible’ gifts can actually be considered to be self-serving and inconsiderate by the people to whom they give them. It seems that such givers often over-estimate how appreciative their friends will be to receive nothing.

A study at the University of Southern California found that to be successful, a gift must make the recipient feel ‘extraordinary, and special.’ If you suspect giving your various loved ones news about a goat won't achieve that, there is only one solution: instead of *giving* only socially responsible gifts, insist on *receiving only them*. Then your mantelpiece will be full of photos of happy goats and chickens, and your family and friends will enjoy your more usual gifts, and still be speaking to you.



What kind of a Christmas Card person are you?

The time to send and receive Christmas cards has come round again – time for our annual shock at the cost of a coloured card, and disbelief at what the Post Office intends to charge us to deliver them.

It seems there are three kinds of people when it comes to Christmas cards: the total abstainers, the total givers and the selective givers.

Abstainers write 'Happy Christmas everyone' on Facebook, and consider the job well done. Total givers spend a fortune on cards and stamps and send them to everyone they know. Selective givers try to cut corners, but then cannot remember who sent who what, and as the cards pour through their door, spend time worrying...

However you do it, it is good to stay in yearly touch with your widest circle of friends and family. Proverbs points out that: 'Like cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.' Prov 25:25. Your loved ones will enjoy hearing from you!

How much will you spend on Christmas this year?

You will probably spend about £600 during this festive period – what with Christmas gifts, food, decorations, socialising and travel.

Over half your budget will go on gifts for others, followed by food and drink (18%), travel (6%), gifts for yourself (4%) and decorations (2%).

About a third of us will still be shopping during December, though about 43% of us will have finished our shopping before Black Friday. We tend to spend most on our children, then on our partners, and least on our mothers-in-law.

56% of those aged 18-24 and 25-34 hope to receive practical or essential gift this Christmas, rather than a luxury item.

These figures come from the IPA's annual Christmas-focussed survey. (The IPA is The Institute of Practitioners in Advertising.)

Hedgehog extinction fears grow as population plummets

The status of hedgehogs in western Europe has recently been downgraded to "near threatened", according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List.

If European numbers decline any farther, hedgehogs will be listed as being at risk of extinction. Numbers have shrunk in more than half the countries where hedgehogs live – including the UK, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany and Austria. Some national declines have been as much as 33 per cent. Our rural population of hedgehogs here in the UK has fallen by up to 75 per cent since 2000, although city-dwelling hedgehogs are doing a bit better.

The combined pressures of intensive agriculture, domestic pesticides, garden strimmers, busy roads and urban development have taken their toll. An eighth of all hedgehogs in the UK die every year just as roadkill.

Now a national hedgehog conservation strategy has been launched by the People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES) and the British Hedgehog Preservation Society (BHPS).

Teachers struggle with ill health

As you prepare for Christmas this year, spare a thought – and a prayer – for our teachers. Their job is even more demanding at this time of year, as school Christmas activities are added to an already overcrowded school curriculum.

Also, recent figures from the Department for Education show that, for whatever reason, our teachers struggle with some ill health. About 14,000 teachers in England called in sick every day last year, a recent analysis has found.

That means that overall, about 66.2 per cent of England's teaching workforce were off school last year because of illness. That means that a whopping 2.5 million schooldays were lost in 2022-23, as more than 326,000 teachers missed class, owing to sickness.



Dwight L Moody – extraordinary evangelist and peace-maker

It was 125 years ago, on 22nd December 1899, that Dwight L Moody, the famous American evangelist, died.

Moody was born in Northfield, Massachusetts, in 1837 and raised in the Unitarian Church. His father died when he was four, and he had a hard upbringing as one of nine children. At 17 he moved to Boston to work in his uncle's shoe shop –

a job he got on condition that he attended the Congregational Church of Mount Vernon. There he was converted to evangelical Christianity through his Sunday school teacher, Edward Kimball.

One of Moody's favourite quotes was "Faith makes all things possible. Love makes all things easy." He devoted himself to bringing the Gospel to as many people as possible. Unwilling to fight in the Civil War, he worked among the troops with the YMCA, and then built up a strong evangelical church in Chicago – only to have the building, his house and the homes of many in the congregation destroyed in the Great Fire of 1871.

Re-evaluating his priorities, Moody teamed up with Ira D Sankey, a hymn writer, and they made a number of tours to Great Britain, where he avoided divisive doctrines, preaching "the old-fashioned gospel". They drew large crowds, inspiring many local people to start Sunday schools for children and young people. News of this had a big influence in Sweden, though the Americans had no knowledge of Swedish.

Moody showed his fearlessness in going to Ireland, where Catholics and Protestants were at loggerheads. He ignored the sectarian divide and was welcomed by both, leading to revival there.

He had meanwhile returned to Northfield to live, and ten years after his death the Chicago church was renamed the Moody Church in his honour. President Dwight D Eisenhower, born in 1890, was named after him.

The "cheek and chic, pose and poise" of Noel Coward

Just 125 years ago, on 16th December 1899, Noël Coward, British playwright, composer, director, actor and singer, was born. His plays include *Hay Fever*, *Private Lives* and *Blithe Spirit*.

Coward was a supremely talented individual, starting as a child dancer who made his professional debut at the age of 11 and progressing to become a success in many areas of show business.

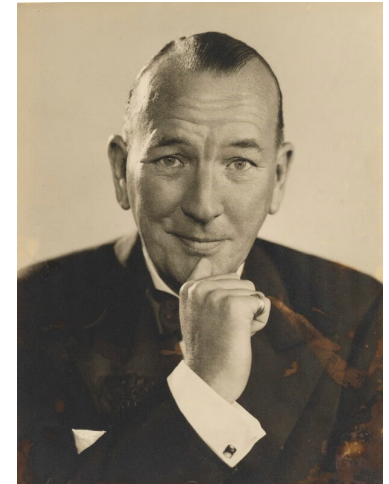
He published more than 50 plays and hundreds of songs, most of them set in the kind of high society that he himself soon inhabited, despite his unpretentious upbringing in Teddington. His acting and directing career lasted six decades.

He received some education at the Chapel Royal Choir School, but he later described his spiritual attitude as "unregenerate" and became agnostic. He said: "I have a selfless absorption in the well-being and achievements of Noël Coward. I am jolly kind to everybody and still attentive and devoted to my dear old mother." He found it easy to make friends and possessed what *Time* magazine called "a sense of personal style, a combination of cheek and chic, pose and poise".

His many successes, including those in cabaret from the 1950s, led to a knighthood in 1970. Much earlier, by 1930, he had become one of the world's highest-earning writers, with an annual income of £50,000 – equivalent to more than £4 million today.

During the Second World War he worked for British Intelligence and ran the British propaganda office in Paris. It is reported that Churchill preferred his role in entertaining the troops.

Towards the end of the 1960s Coward developed arteriosclerosis and suffered from bouts of memory loss. He received many other awards, including an honorary Doctor of Letters degree from Sussex University.



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Iconic Bethlehem Carol Sheet celebrates 70 years in print

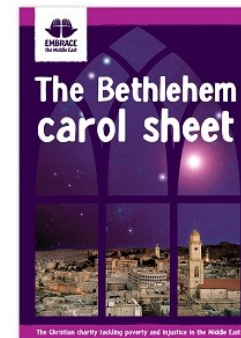
It was back in 1954 when the charity, BibleLands Mission Aid Society, first tentatively decided to print a colourful compilation of popular Christmas carols, alongside images of some of the people BibleLands served.

From the start, the scheme was an immense success. The carol sheets were so popular that even that first year, 100,000 copies were insufficient to meet the demand of schools, churches, British army bases at home and abroad and Royal Navy ships across the world. The donations appeal towards the BibleLands projects in the carol sheet also raised hundreds of pounds.

When 500,000 copies were quickly sold in 1955, BibleLands knew it had a winner on its hands. So it was that, in 1956, with 1.5 million carol sheets sales as the target, an accompanying catalogue of Christmas cards and gifts and prayers for God's favour was also launched. The plan was overwhelmingly successful – much needed funds were raised for the work of BibleLands.

Since then, many millions of carol sheets have been sold, until this year the charity, now renamed Embrace the Middle East, has produced a new-look Edition with 27 popular carols, including three new additions for this year: *O Holy Night*, *See Him Lying on a Bed of Straw (Calypso Carol)* and *The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came*.

For more information or to purchase your copy,
Visit <https://shop.embraceme.org/collections/bethlehem-carols>



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donations for charitable
purposes to benefit the
residents of Long Ditton.
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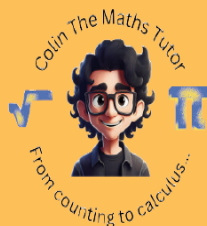


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ST MARY'S 100 CLUB 21 RESULTS

WINNING NUMBERS

OCTOBER

- 1st Prize: No.4
- 2nd Prize: No.9
- 3rd Prize: No.12

Renewal forms for members of the 100 Club 21 will be distributed during October ready for the 100 Club 22 and the first draw will take place on 5 January 2025. The closing date for membership applications will be 1 December or sooner if we have full allocation. If you wish to become a new member and join in the fun please contact Ann Leeson (akleeson@hotmail.com).

Profits from 100 Club 22 will go towards the cost of reiling the main hall of St Mary's Community Hall

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- Improve the amenities and defend our Green Belt
- Keep in close contact with our councillors

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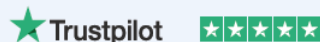
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Canape Corner

If you've ever been to a social function at St. Mary's, you may well have been treated to canapes known as Lady Mann biscuits, delicious, moreish cheesy nibbles with a rather surprising ingredient!

Lady Mann was the widow of an Army Major who served in India in the days of the Raj - this was one of her favourite recipes she used when entertaining friends in Saxmundham, Suffolk. And the surprising ingredient? Rice pops!

Ingredients

2 cups of grated strong cheddar cheese
250g of softened margarine or butter (or use half of each)
2 cups plain flour
2 cups of rice pops (unsweetened kind)
1 teaspoon salt
Generous pinch of dry mustard
N.B. use a large breakfast cup or medium sized mug for measuring

Method

- In a large bowl, mix together the softened margarine/butter and grated cheese using a wooden spoon or electric mixer
- Sieve together the flour, salt and mustard and add this to the creamed butter and cheese along with the rice pops
- Stir well together
- Make into teaspoon size balls, place on a lightly greased baking tray and flatten with a fork
- Bake at 190C/170C fan/gas 5 for 15 - 18 minutes. Biscuits will still be quite pale when cooked

Biscuits keep well in an airtight container

Enjoy!

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30 year anniversary of Churches Together locally

In 1994, Esher and District Christian Council changed to Churches Together in Esher and District, CTED. To mark this change there was an Inaugural Service and the 12 churches came from the Dittons, Hinchley Wood, Esher and Claygate.

The Service, designed by the lay representatives and agreed by the clergy, went well. Afterwards, at the Methodist Church, there was held an exhibition with tea and cake. The amazing cake had been made by Pauline Law, from St. Marys, using ingredients collected from the churches. At that time, the emblem of the Churches Together was a Pilgrim Shell, so, as each church's contribution was collected, the giver was given a Pilgrim Shell.

The cake was cut by The Society of Friends, and there was enough cake left for each church to take back some to share with their congregations at their next Sunday service.



At the Millennium Gathering of the Churches Together at Imbercourt, it was decided that a split would benefit the churches - to enable smaller numbers to get to know each other better. So - CT in the Dittons, Hinchley Wood, Weston Green, and CT Esher and Claygate were born.

In the time between then and now, the Cornerstone Ministries came and went from Esher, the Methodist Church closed, the two Catholic Churches now share the one Parish Priest & the Mass Centre at St Mary's School is no more, the United Reformed Church branch in Speer Road has closed & the Anglican clergy have all changed several times.

Churches Together in the Dittons now consists of St Marys, St Christophers, Our Lady of Lourdes, All Saints and St. Nicholas. We still meet regularly 3-4 times a year and have established regular annual times when we share services together.

Every year, during the week of 18th-25th January, we celebrate together the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Each day a different church invites everyone to visit and join in one of their regular services, with a joint service of worship held on the Sunday afternoon.



On Good Friday on Giggs Hill Green, we join together to pray and worship (and then sharing in enjoying some hot cross buns!). This originally started with a Walk of Witness carrying the Cross from each church.

Another joint community activity is at the annual Scout Fair. For many years we have manned a plant crèche, and recently have also offered a prayer tent - giving people a chance to have some quiet time/reflection and the opportunity for prayer.

In October, we have a joint service of healing where there is the opportunity to come and worship and bring any worries to be prayed for and anointed by the clergy.

We have also held many successful joint trips to various places of interest - e.g. Canterbury Cathedral, Westminster Abbey.

In this time, when there is such conflict and unrest in the world, it is good to remember and celebrate all that unites us and to continue to work and worship alongside each other.

The prayer we share together is known as the Pilgrim Prayer - which is part of the Swanick Declaration of 1987, marking the transition from a Council of Churches model of working to the Churches Together model.