

ST. MARGARET'S

PARISH CHURCH FOR LEISTON-WITH-SIZEWELL



'A BLESSED CHRISTMAS TO ALL'

DECEMBER 2015



CHURCH SERVICES

FIRST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

9.00 Holy COMMUNION SERVICE

A Traditional Service using Common Worship

10.30 Family PRAISE & WORSHIP SERVICE

An all-age Informal Service for the whole Family.
Praising the Lord through Drama, Readings & Music

SECOND & FIFTH SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

10.00 PARISH EUCHARIST SERVICE & 'JAM' (JESUS & ME) Sunday School

THIRD SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

10.00 'WELCOME TO THE Table' Family COMMUNION

A simple Family Communion Service
where all are welcome to the table

FOURTH SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

10.00 PARISH EUCHARIST SERVICE & 'JAM' (JESUS & ME) Sunday School

6.30 COMMUNITY HEALING SERVICE

Listen to the healing word of God through Prayer
Please note: No Service in December

WEDNESDAY MID-WEEK Holy COMMUNION

10.00 Holy COMMUNION SERVICE

Please note: No Services in December

CONTACT Us

Priest in Charge: Reverend Martin Phillips-Last:

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Assistant Priest: Reverend Richard Ellis: 9 King's Rd. T. 832168

Reader: Mr Bernard Smith: 3 Daneway Gardens. T. 830105

Church Warden: Mrs Shirley Newman: 3 Red House Lane. T. 832446

Church Warden: Mrs Pat Carter: 42 Haylings Road. T. 831852

PCC Treasurer: Mrs Sandra Harle: 4 Lime Tree Avenue. T. 833578

PCC Secretary: Mrs Pat Carter: 42 Haylings Road. T. 831852

Sunday School: Mrs Kathryn Phillips-Last: T. 561149

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Director of Music: Mr Jonathan. S. Williams: T. 603936

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THE REVEREND'S RAMBLINGS



*'O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie;
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep, the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark Streets shineth the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.'*

Rev. Phillips Brooks

I visited Bethlehem a few years ago, and I was not disappointed by my pilgrimage experience, which left me with many wonderfully formative images, feelings, and memories. I have to say though that not all of my impressions were positive, and one of these not so positive experiences happened in Bethlehem.

I was of course ready and prepared to leave behind any lingering sentimentality of any idyllic rural setting, of peaceful stables, shepherds watching over their flocks and pastoral stillness. For I knew that the city of Bethlehem, as a continuation or urban south Jerusalem, was a busy, modern environment, and that the church of the Nativity was as far from any Christmas card images that it is possible to get. But what I was not prepared for was The Wall.

Bethlehem is a Palestinian City in the central West Bank and it is divided by the West Bank Barrier. Israeli separated from Palestinian, Palestinian from Israeli, with a guarded checkpoint to control the passage from one side to the other. A Palestinian Christian woman told me that sometimes she isn't able to get to church in Jerusalem because she isn't allowed through the wall.

As I walked along the wall, I soon came to realise that whatever Bethlehem is today, it is not a 'little town' and does not 'lie still'. Yet it should be our prayer that in its dark and fearful streets a light will shine, and that the promise of love and reconciliation will see walls coming down. Our hopes and fears still meet in Bethlehem tonight. Let us pray this Christmas that our hopes and dreams of peace will triumph over the walls of fear, darkness, hate and prejudice, wherever they are built in this busy and modern world.

May the Lord bless you all with a happy and peaceful Christmas, and may the light that shone in the dark streets of Bethlehem, shine in your hearts.

Happy Christmas Adventures,

Martin

The Reverend Martin Phillips-Last



St. Margaret's

Church Rd. Leiston

Lights to Remember
Sunday 6th December at 7pm

Royal British Legion Band Concert
Featuring the St. Margaret's Church Choir
Sunday 13th December at 3pm

Carols & Candles
Sunday 20th December at 7pm

Family Crib Service
Christmas Eve, 24th December at 4pm

Carols in the Library Square, Leiston
Christmas Eve, 24th December, at 6.30pm

Midnight Communion Service
Christmas Eve, 24th December at 11.30pm

Christmas Day Family 'Surprise' Service
Christmas Day, 25th December at 10.00am

A Warm and Festive Welcome awaits you!

St. Margaret's Church

Church Road, Leiston

Family Service



Sunday 6th December
at 10.30am

**Come along & share in the joy, colour & festive fun
of our all-age Family Praise & Worship Service**

RECOLLECTIONS OF CHRISTMAS PAST

Those of us of mature years find comfort in the memories of the time when we were young children, never more so than at Christmas. Is it my imagination or was life more simple and pleasures more appreciated all those years ago?

The first memory of Christmas I have, would have been when I was about four years old. Usually when my father came home from work, he would come in through the kitchen door, but one evening he used the front door instead and that is why he found me crying in the sitting room. Asking why I was in tears, my mother explained that it was due to a song that had been played on the radio. The song of course was "The Little Boy that Santa Claus Forgot." I wanted to give the little boy some of my toy soldiers and couldn't understand why it wasn't possible. Occasionally the song is played in department stores during pre-Christmas shopping. I manage to avoid tears today - but only just. Clearly I can still be taken in by a good sob story.

My sister and I would have a new winter coat as one of our Christmas presents. We felt very smart as we walked to Church on Christmas Day. One year I was given a doll's pram and after service was allowed out of the front gate to push my new pram along the pavement, but told "you can walk as far as Mrs King's lamp post, but no further." I wouldn't dare take one step more, mother was boss!

After lunch on Christmas Day, with my mother, father and sister, we would walk to the local railway station and take the train to Brighton, then walk to my grandparents' house. The fire in the parlour would be alight and Grandad sitting beside it made sure there was a good supply of roasted chestnuts available. It was only on Christmas Day and Boxing Day that the fire was lit in the parlour, so that in itself was a special treat. During the afternoon more relatives would arrive. At tea time, although no one was hungry, hot mince pies and Christmas cake was served. There was always someone who could play the piano and the grown ups would be expected to sing their party piece. It seemed strange to see my parents, aunts and uncles being so light hearted.

The time would come when my sister and I had to go to bed and were taken up to one of nana's bedrooms. We'd protest that we weren't tired, but it wasn't long before we were asleep. Next morning after breakfast, we'd play Ludo or Snakes and Ladders. Once an uncle offered to play with us, but he

cheated. We protested and tried to find out in which pocket he was hiding his “lucky dice”, but in the end we all finished up in a heap on the floor helpless with laughter. After lunch, (cold chicken and bubble and squeak) we went home by Streamline Taxi. Father sat in the front with the driver, while mother, sister and I felt very grand sitting in the back.

In 1942, my father was serving with the Royal Air Force and after a short period living in Stalybridge, my mother, sister, baby brother and I left to be close to my mother’s family in Edinburgh. We lived with an aunt in an apartment close to the castle. One Christmas, oranges were in the greengrocer’s shop. The ration was one orange per child’s ration book. The three oranges were placed on the sideboard until Christmas Day, when one orange was peeled and carefully divided into three pieces, which we children ate very slowly, savouring the taste. The same thing happened on Boxing Day and the following day. There may be a plentiful supply of oranges today, but I doubt if they taste as good as those I shared with my brother and sister so long ago.

The end of the war in 1945 meant the end of the blackout. After all the years of darkness, it was so exciting to see the shops a blaze of lights. Few people had refrigerators or freezers and so a great deal of shopping was left until Christmas Eve. There was such a wonderful atmosphere, with people laughing and joking. On street corners were groups of carol singers and strangers wished each other “merry Christmas.” Food, clothes, coal and so much more was still rationed and would continue to be for many years to come, yet there was a feeling of hope in the air.

I do believe it was because we had so little, the simple pleasures we did have, meant so much and left such an indelible impression.

Vi Matthews

‘HEAVENLY FATHER, THOU HAST BROUGHT US’

By Hester Periam Hawkins

Heavenly Father,
Thou hast brought us
Safely to the present day,
Gently leading on our footsteps,
Watching o’er us all the way.

Friend and guide through
life’s long journey,
Grateful hearts to Thee we bring;
But for love so true and changeless
How shall we fit praises sing?

Scripture Reference: Isaiah 48: 17

Sent in by: Vi Matthews

Cooking with the Bible

Cinnamon (*Cinnamomum zeylanicum* or *C. aromaticum*) is a light-brown spice with a fragrant aroma and a warm, sweet flavour. A member of the Laurel family, it is native to what is now Sri Lanka, India, and Myanmar (Burma). It was one of the first trade spices, with records in Egypt dating back to 1500 b.c. and it would have certainly been familiar to the Hebrew tribes by 1000 b.c. (it is mentioned in Exodus, for example, as an ingredient for an oil of anointing).

The LORD spoke to Moses: "Take the finest spices: of liquid myrrh five hundred shekels, and of sweet-smelling cinnamon half as much, that is, two hundred and fifty, and two hundred and fifty of aromatic cane, and five hundred of cassia — measured by the sanctuary shekel — and a hin of olive oil; and you shall make of these a sacred anointing oil blended as by the perfumer; it shall be a holy anointing oil." (Ex. 30.23-25 NRSV).

In ancient times, because of its flavour and its scarcity, cinnamon was worth as much as fifteen times the value of silver.

Why not try this festive biscuit recipe for a wonderful smell and taste of Christmas!

Christmas Star Biscuits

Ingredients:

- 150g (5 oz) self-rising flour
- 150g (5 oz) plain flour
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons of ground ginger
- Grated zest of two oranges
- 125g (4 ½ oz) butter
- 100g (3 ¾ oz) sugar
- 1 egg beaten
- Icing sugar & Cinnamon for decorative dusting



Method:

Preheat the oven to 160°C / Gas Mark 3

Sift the plain & self raising flour into a large bowl, then add the cinnamon, ginger & orange zest.

In a separate bowl, mix the butter with sugar until a smooth consistency. Add the egg & mix well.

Fold in the dry ingredients and mix into a firm dough.

Using a lightly floured board, knead the mixture until smooth dough & roll to a 5mm thickness.

Using a baking cutter, cut into 'star' shapes and place on a greased oven tray.

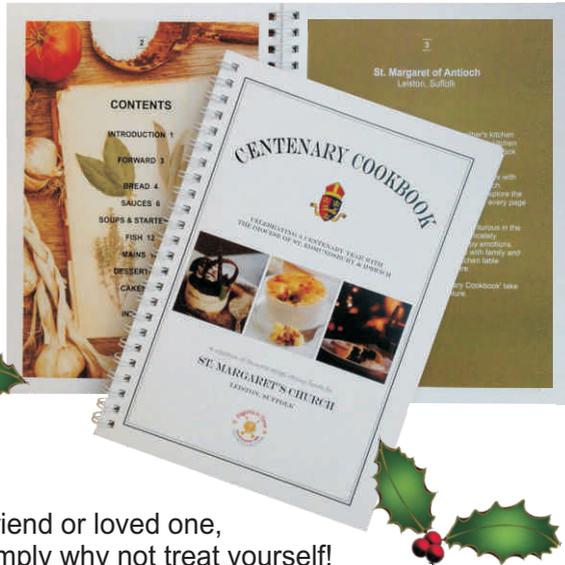
Bake in a preheated oven for approx 10 - 15 mins until light golden colour. Place on a wire rack & allow to cool. Then, either dust with icing sugar & cinnamon, or if desired you could ice the biscuits for a more decorative look.



CENTENARY COOKBOOK

2014 was a very special year for the Diocese of St. Edmundsbury & Ipswich of which St. Margaret's is a part, as it is the diocese's centenary year. To help celebrate this momentous year we at St. Margaret's Church have created a cookbook full of tasty recipes for you to try.

Help us celebrate this special year & also raise funds for St. Margaret's Church. Pick up your copy of the cookbook now!



Makes an ideal gift for a friend or loved one, **(GREAT TO POST!)** or simply why not treat yourself!

Helping to support your local Church and the important work it does.

Available after each Sunday's Service
or
Pop along and pick up your copy from
Margaret's Church Shop, here in the heart of Leiston

ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH TOWER LIGHTS UP

During November the lighting of the St. Margaret's Church Tower was sponsored on:

3rd November

In memory of Fred Carter. Remembering a wonderful best friend & husband, dad and grandad, on his birthday

3rd November

Celebrating Toby & Sharon Slaughter's 25th Wedding Anniversary

13th November

Celebrating Sharon Slaughter's Birthday

16th November

Celebrating Peter & Jill Mower's 62nd Wedding Anniversary

22nd November

Remembering my dear brother, George Harland, on the anniversary of his death

22nd November

Remembering Paul Snowden, on his birthday

If you would like to mark your own special occasion by sponsoring the lighting of St Margaret's Church Tower for a donation of £5 for each day, and see the details of your special occasion appear in the Church Magazine, there is now a simple payment envelope available in St. Margaret's Church.

Please write the details of your special occasion in the diary, as well as completing a payment envelope. If you can then put the completed envelope either in the wall safe or give it directly to Sandra Harle it will be received with many thanks.

THE REAL ADVENT CALENDAR



The Real Advent Calendar Christmas is just around the corner and the Meaningful Chocolate Company has once again launched its chocolate-filled Real Advent Calendars.

This year it includes a Christmas story/activity booklet illustrated by Sophie Allsopp, designed to be used every day during Advent.

As well as this, the company is hoping to donate £15,000 from sales of the calendar to help fund a baby clinic in Kenya and support overseas farmers through Traidcraft Exchange.

The Real Advent Calendar costs £3.99.

Available from larger Tesco stores, plus other retailers.

CHRISTMAS APPEAL FOR CHRISTIAN AID

Just a quick reminder that for the tenth time I will be sending a donation to Christian Aid to help those less fortunate than myself. This donation will be in lieu of buying and sending Christmas cards to my church friends at St Margaret's. You will still be wished a blessed Christmas but this will be in person.

If you'd like to join me in this, as many of you have in other years, please let me have your donations by cheque made payable to Christian Aid by **Sunday 6th December**. I have Gift Aid forms so, if you pay tax and are prepared to complete a form, even more money is given to help support this very worthy cause.

Give joy this Christmas!

Pat Carter

IN THE LEISTON COMMUNITY

Hi, My name is Julie and I'm the new Funeral Arranger at the Leiston Co-op Funeral Services on Sizewell Road.

I will be holding a Coffee, Tea and Cake Sale here at the Co-op Funeral Services on **Saturday 5th December, 11am - 3pm**. All monies raised will be going to support the work of the local Alzheimers' Society. So why not pop in and have a chat over a hot drink and a slice of cake.

This year Leiston Co-op Funeral Services will be sponsoring a Remembrance Tree at the St. Margaret's Lights To Remember Service. There will also be a Remembrance Tree at the Leiston Co-op Funeral Services on Sizewell Road.

St. Margaret's

Church Road, Leiston

'Lights to Remember'

Sunday 6th December at 7pm

A special service of
Readings & Reflection.
A time to remember
those known & loved
who have died recently
or in the past.

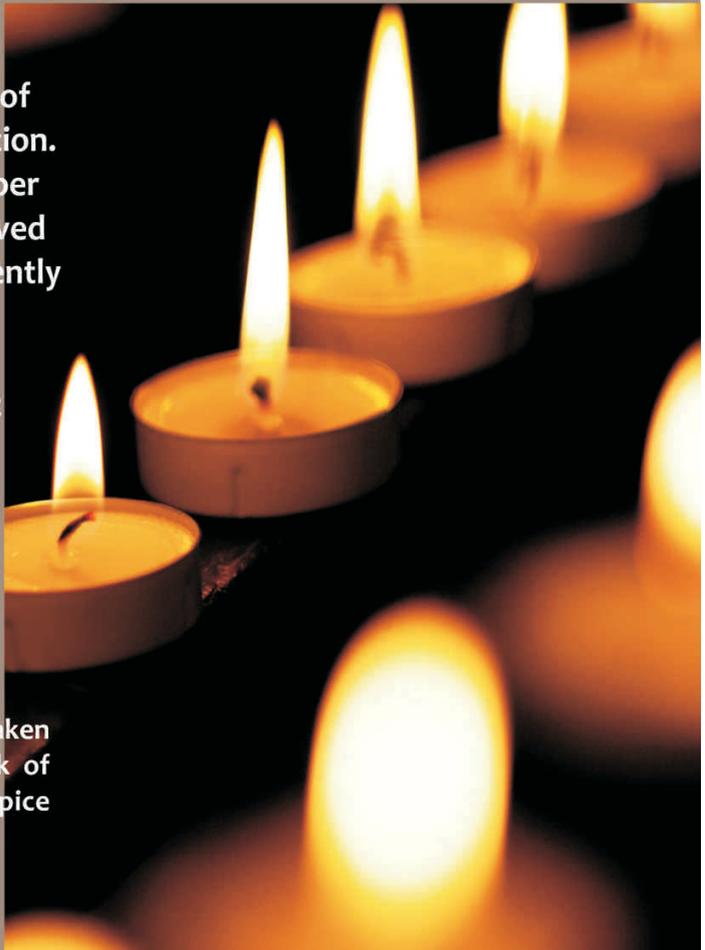
Come and light
a candle
in memory
of a loved one



A collection will be taken
to support the work of
St. Elizabeth's Hospice



St Elizabeth
Hospice
Registered Charity No. 20152



Sponsor A Chorister!

'Bow down and worship God for truly, God is here among you.'

(1 Corinthians 25).

Paul's words to the Corinthians highlight how wonderful it truly is to worship God, because it is in the very centre of our worship, that God is present.

As a great encouragement and continued blessing to our worship here at St Margaret's Church, the Lord has been encouraging new voices to join the St Margaret's Church Choir, each voice adding a new dimension to the already inspiring worship that is at the very centre of our community.



To help encourage new members in the choir and in their part of leading us into worship and so into the presence of God, we have begun a new campaign entitled '*Sponsor a Chorister*'. We would therefore like to invite you, if you are able, to make a donation of any size so that we can buy new robes, worship books and so on for new members of our choir. If you would like to make a donation please see Sandra Harle, our Church Treasurer.

We thank you in advance for any help that you are able to offer. For more information about this appeal please see our Organist & Choirmaster, Jonathan Williams

Jonathan Williams

CHRISTMAS CAROLS IN LIBRARY SQUARE

Come & join the fun on Christmas Eve and enjoy some Festive Carol Singing with 'Churches Together'.

6.30pm in the Library Square, Leiston.

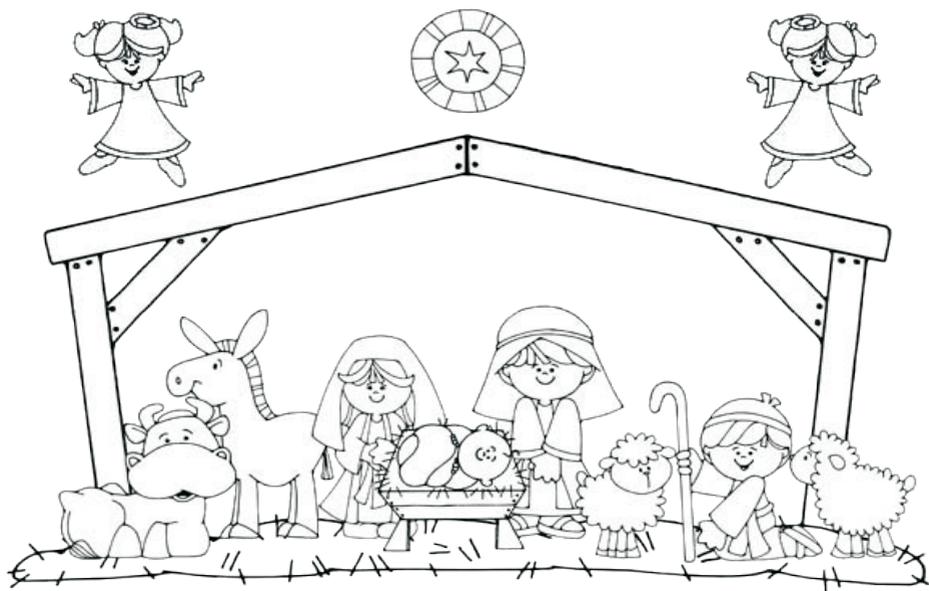


We look forward to seeing you there!

THE ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH CHRISTMAS FAIR - 21ST NOV



There was a wonderful festive atmosphere at this year's Christmas Fair. A great day was had by all who visited, helping to raise £1161.65 for church funds. A big thank you to everyone who came along and supported the event. Many thanks to everyone who helped organise the event, donated items, baked cakes, ran the variety of stalls, as well as to the ladies who served delicious refreshments. Santa was able to take time out of his busy schedule to visit us with Rudolph, to the delight of the children! We were also thrilled that young musicians from Alde Valley Academy were able to treat us to an array of wonderful music. They were also joined by some of St. Margaret's Choir who accompanied them in a few Christmas Carols, helping to give the event a festive feel! Our thanks go to everyone who helped prepare the church for the Fair, as well as to those who helped to tidy up at the end. Many thanks again to everyone who supported the Christmas Fair & helped in any way.



Nativity Word Scramble

All these come from the Christmas story. Can you unscramble them?

STRA _ _ _ _

AEGLN _ _ _ _

MAGREN _ _ _ _ _

JPHOES _ _ _ _ _

MYAR _ _ _ _

JSSEU _ _ _ _

SEPHE _ _ _ _ _

KIGSN _ _ _ _

DOEYKN _ _ _ _ _

STBALE _ _ _ _ _

Happy Christmas, from everyone at St. Margaret's Church

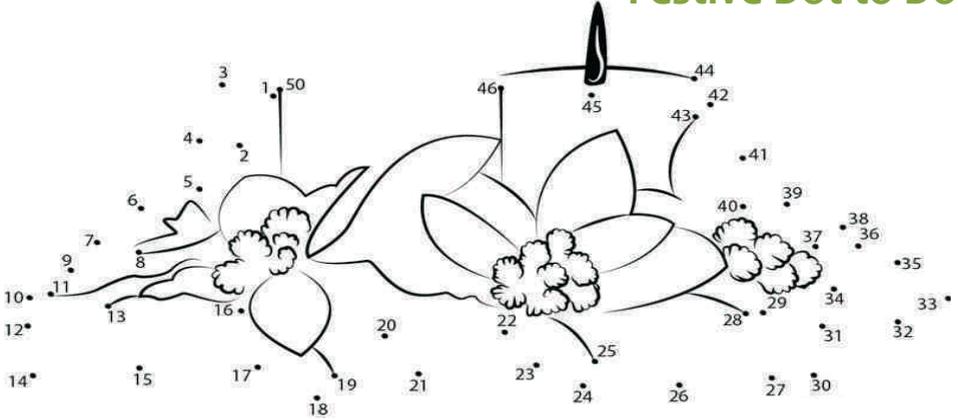


Hosanna, Jesus, our Saviour is born!





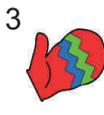
Festive Dot to Dot



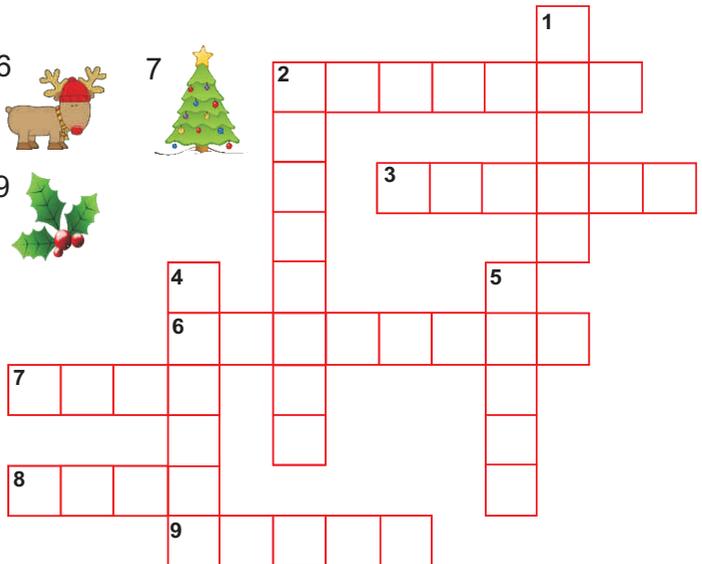
Christmas Picture Crossword

Solve the Crossword by using the Picture Clues.

Across:



Down:



Want to hear more about Jesus? Come along to our 'JAM' Sessions - Kids of all ages welcome!
Sun 13th December & 27th December - Both @ 10.00am

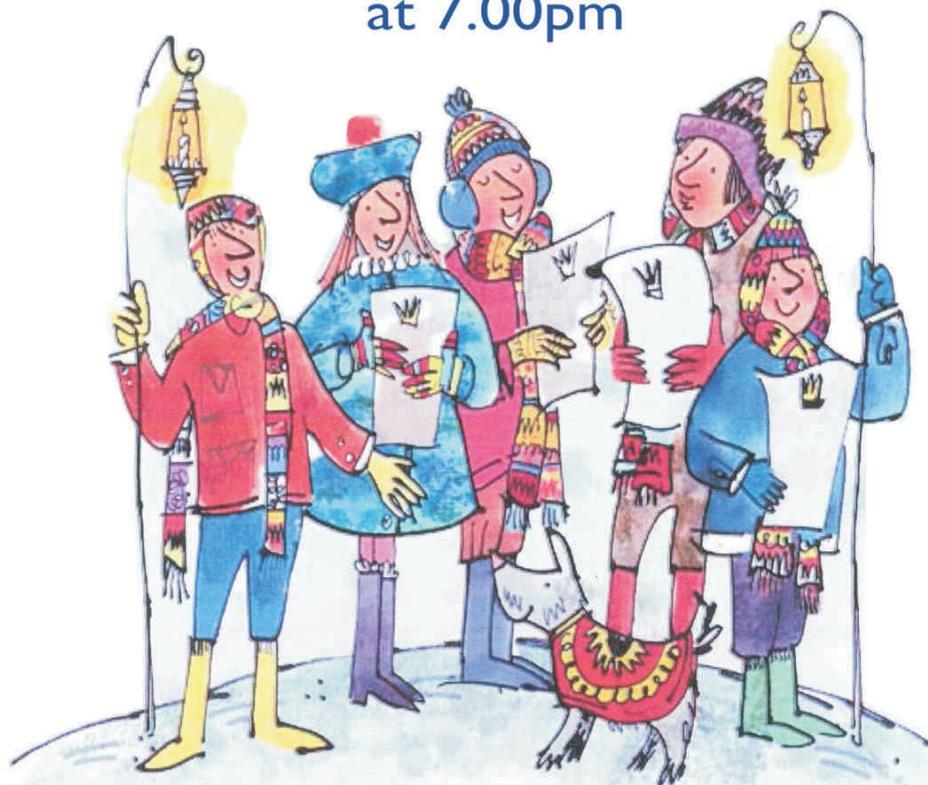
St. Margaret's Church

Church Road, Leiston

'Carols & Candles'

Sunday 20th December

at 7.00pm



Journey with us to Bethlehem

With Readings, Carols & Candles

Everyone Welcome!

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

Just a note to say thank you so much to everyone who has contributed throughout this year to the St. Margaret's Parish Church Magazine. Please do carry on sending in your articles they give much joy to all those who read them.

Wishing you all a Happy & Peaceful Christmas and New Year.

Kathryn Williams - Magazine Editor

CHURCH MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2016

Many thanks to everyone who has bought the Parish Magazine over the past year; through this you are helping to support St. Margaret's and its outreach work within your local community.

If you would like to continue, or start, subscribing to the St. Margaret's Church Magazine we will be collecting subscriptions for 2016 during January. This will be via a payment envelope which will be enclosed in January's edition of the magazine. Please enclose your £12.00 annual subscription in the envelope provided and then return it either to the person who delivers your magazine, return it to Margaret's Church Shop or contact **Sandra Harle on 833578** for further information. Cash or cheques are both welcome - Cheques should be made payable to 'Leiston PCC'.

Many thanks again for your continued support with the St. Margaret's Magazine.

St. Margaret's Church, Leiston

YULETIDE RHYMES FOR OUR TIMES

(To the tune of While Shepherds Watched)

Why do we need a new settee
now Christmas time is near?
The adverts tell us that we do
but pay for it next year.

Why do we need a new TV,
Phone, Xbox or iPad? Let's look
around, see what we've got,
and then we should be glad.

Why do we need to paint the
house according to Homebase?
There's Boots and other stores
who have stuff to paint on your
face.

Why do we need lots of new
clothes? The adverts say we
should top off the list with 'we
must have' a onesie with a
hood.

Why do we need lots of posh
food? Some stuff we've never
seen. So much of it will go to
waste, we'll ne'er eat every
bean.

Why do we need those old pop
songs compiled on a new CD?
Some Carols by the Choir of
Kings will suit people like me.

Let's not forget the reason why
we celebrate each year. It's to
give thanks for Christ the Lord,
whose presence we revere.

All Glory to God on high. And to
the earth be peace. Good will
henceforth from Heaven to
men. Begin and never cease.

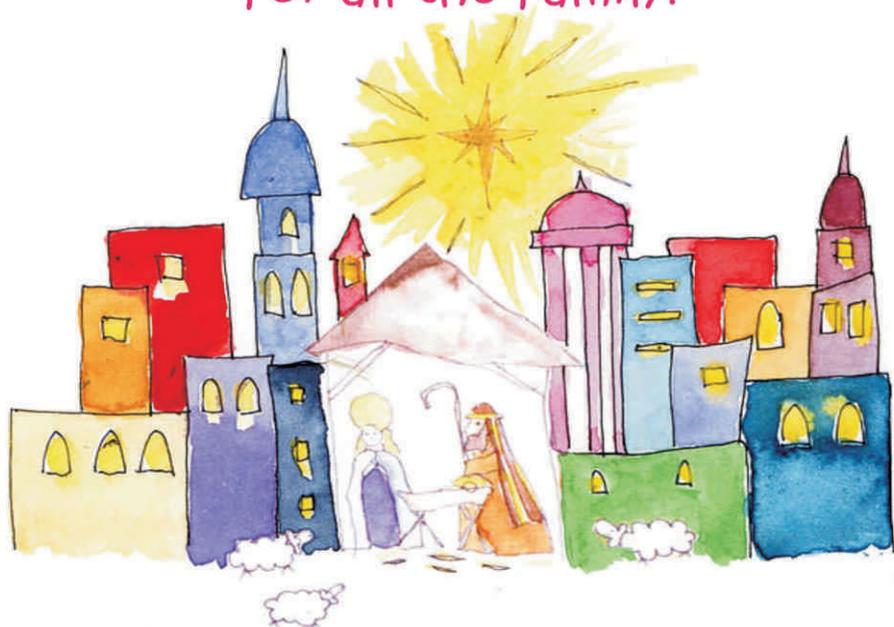
Hazel Rumble, Norfolk
Sent in by **Hilda Woodhead**

St. Margaret's

Church Road, Leiston

Crib Service

for all the family!



Christmas Eve at 4pm

Angels, Shepherds & Wise Men Needed!

Come along and join the festive fun dressed as your favourite Nativity character

Come along & join us for an informal service around the crib for all the family
and let us celebrate together the birth of Jesus Christ



Everyone Welcome



THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

LEISTON BRANCH (SUB-BRANCH ALDEBURGH)

It has been a busy month for the Branch. We are extremely grateful to everyone in Aldringham, Thorpeness, Leiston and Sizewell who helped and supported the Poppy Appeal. To date £6730.60 has been raised.

The Branch Standard was carried at the Woodbridge Poppy Launch, the Leiston Band Festival of Remembrance, 'C' Group Festival of Remembrance at the Apex Bury St Edmunds, Leiston and Saxmundham Remembrance Sunday Parades and Services and the Armistice Day Act of Remembrance on the Victory Road Recreation Ground.

The Branch held its Annual General Meeting on 17th November. Regrettably we were unable to form a committee and we are therefore in need of a Secretary, Treasurer and Poppy Appeal Organiser. The Poppy Appeal Organiser would be mainly an administrative role. If you feel you have the commitment to work with us you would be most welcome. It is not necessary to be a member of The Royal British Legion to fill any of these positions.

The Band's local engagements for the Christmas period are as follows:-

5th December Saxmundham - Fromus Square from 3.45pm – Carols with Church Choir

6th December Leiston United Church at 2.00pm – Christmas Carols / Concert

11th December Westleton Church Carol Service at 2.00pm

13th December Leiston St Margaret's Church Christmas Concert at 3.00pm

18th December Saxmundham Tesco's – Christmas Carols } Time to be confirmed

20th December Leiston Co-op – Christmas Carols } Time to be confirmed

24th December Leiston Post Office Square - Carol Service 6.30pm

For a full programme of the Band's events, please look at their website.

If you would like to help the Branch or join the Royal British Legion please make contact via the Ex-Service Club, Victory Road, Leiston. Membership fees for the Legion are £16 per annum.

An Extra-Ordinary General Meeting of the Branch will be held at the Ex-Service Club at 7.30pm on Tuesday 15th December when we hope we will form a Committee.

Trevor Peskett

Chairman - Leiston Branch TRBL

A Big Thank You To LEISTON PRESS

St. Margaret's Church would like to take this opportunity to thank Glenn & his team at Leiston Press, for their time & support over the past year and a half with printing our church magazine. It has been a real joy to work with you & we look forward to future projects together. Wishing you all a wonderful Christmas & New Year!

St. Margaret's Church, Leiston

SPONSORED BIKE RIDE

The total raised for St. Margaret's Church for this year's sponsored Bike Ride was £207.50. My thanks to all who took part on the day whether cycling or sitting in the church. Also a big thank you to all who so generously sponsored Pat, Terri and me. Many thanks again for everyone's support.

Simon Merrett

Bible Sunday 2015

This year Bible Sunday was celebrated on 25th October and donations were collected for the work of the very necessary organisation which helps to carry out Jesus' command to "spread the gospel throughout the earth". The total received so far this year is £114.50. More donations are expected. The Bible Society no longer meet as a separate group in Leiston but is included in the Leiston Christians Together group which has a Bible Society representative.

Pat Carter

LADIES GROUP MEETING NOVEMBER 2015

By the time you're reading this magazine I hope the Ladies Group will have had a very successful afternoon on Monday 30th November in church when Sue Hawkes will have led us in the creation of Christmas floral arrangements to be used in church over the festive season.

Our December meeting takes the form of a combined Beetle Drive and afternoon tea on Monday 7th December when we have invited the ladies of the United Church to join us. This meeting will take place at the United Church starting at 2pm. Please come along to join in the fun with food to share and a gift wrapped Secret Santa gift valued £1.

Following what I hope will be a very happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year plans are in hand for a post-Christmas lunch in January.

Pat Carter

Midnight Communion

St. Margaret's Church, Leiston

Christmas Eve, 11.30pm

a simple service of Holy Communion

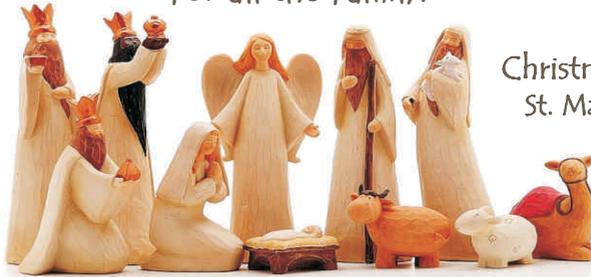
Join us as we celebrate Jesus this Christmas

Christmas Day Surprise Service

for all the family!

Everyone
Welcome!

Christmas Day, 10am
St. Margaret's Church



Come along and join us as we celebrate Jesus this Christmas.
A family service with a few surprises!



Christmas Blessings from St. Margaret's Church

As you prepare for Christmas, may the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the perseverance of the wise men and the obedience of Joseph & Mary embrace you. May the wonder of a shining star lead you to and embrace you with the hope & peace found in a baby named Jesus.

A very happy, blessed and peaceful Christmas to you all,
from St. Margaret's Church.

ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH FAMILY

INTERCESSION PRAYERS FOR DECEMBER 2015

Dear Friends,

December's magazine continues to focus on monthly prayer time. Below is the St. Margaret's church family group for this month. Please remember each family group appears in the Magazine every three months. This is not to say you are not in our thoughts, you remain in our church family's prayers always, however this will allow for our growing church family, and also for us all to focus our thoughts and prayers specifically on those listed for that particular month.

If you would like to be included in our family monthly prayers, or have any queries please email stmargaretsleiston@gmail.com.

St. Margaret's would like to wish all our church family in all our three prayer groups, as well as the community a happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year. We look forward to welcoming you during the Christmas festivities and also in the New Year.

In our Church Family Prayers

Martin, Kathryn, Grace & Eve Phillips-Last

Simon, Sheena, Hannah, Tom & Matt Merrett

Sheila Mckinnon, David & Midge Mckinnon

Phil, Sue, Joshua, Charlotte, Connie & Greg Watson

David & Cindy Fittsell

Zara & Emma Fittsell

Paul, Charlene, Alexander, Aidan, Cory & Amyleigh Fittsell

Jonathan, Kathryn & Joshua Williams

Mike & Lesley Cassie

Vi Matthews

Stephanie Luckhurst

Joan Whale

Paul Espindola

Ann & Peter Essex

Mary Murphy

Terry Ferguson

Jo Tozer

Sue, Dale, Ewan & Cameron Threadkell

Don Bridges

Bruce & Phyllis Songer

Stephen & Gail Southgate

Naomi Kerans

Helen Thackeray

Fred Shanley

John & Sue Last

Helen Rivett

Judith & Mike Stigwood

Alan, Maureen & Jason Fox

Wayne, Ben & Niamh Fox

Fi Long

Allison King

Luke, Asha & Jai Mewett

Clare & Kane Hambridge

Peter & Jennifer Roberts

Charles & Pauline Stride

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In our Special Prayers



Peter Mower
Joan Whale
Leah Crudgington
Alan Baird

Robin Ellis
Jean Hardisty
Sue Shotter
Karis Braithwaite



Graveside Burial - November 2015

Monday 2nd November Robert Walker

Funeral - November 2015

Wednesday 25th November Ian Drew



'May your unfailing love be my comfort, according to your promise to your servant'. (NIV).

Psalm 119:76



A Christmas Blessing

May the spirit of Christmas
bring you peace..

The gladness of Christmas
give you hope..

The warmth of Christmas
grant you Love.

Amen.

LET'S PRAY FOR ...

AN AWARENESS OF GOD'S LOVING COMMITMENT TO US.

One of the themes of Christmas is, "Immanuel, God with us."

A little while ago I read an account of a couple coping with the serious illness of the wife, which would mean her losing her ability to walk. Her husband was concerned to show her he loved her and was committed to being alongside her through the decline in her health. The wife, in turn asked her husband to show her a copy of the promises they made to one another at their wedding service. As they read together, the wife reminded her husband that just as he was committed to her in her sickness, so she required the opportunity to be committed to him in his health. Normally we focus on our need to remain faithful to God. Do we thank him enough for remaining faithful to us?

In psalm 63 the psalmist reaches out to God in what he describes as a "parched and weary land." That speaks to me of desolation, the exhaustion of constantly being aware of more and more distress politically and personally. Yet soon afterwards he says, "Your unfailing love is better than life itself; how I praise you! I will praise you as long as I live, lifting up my hands to you in prayer. You satisfy me more than the richest feast. I will praise you with songs of joy." Psalm 63: 3-5

What enabled him to lift his eyes from the weariness and turn to praise? Maybe verse two gives us a clue. "I have seen you in your sanctuary and **gazed** upon your power and glory" Taking time to be still and to ponder the Lord's promises and his commitment to help us grow spiritually, shifts our perspective, as well as our experience. Let's counter the busyness of the Christmas season by "gazing upon him," using the sentiment of that lovely chorus, "Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in his wonderful face and the things of earth will grow strangely dim, in the light of his glory and grace."

Pray that the Lord will enable us to fully grasp the significance of Christmas. God so loved the world that he **gave**. Let's thank the Lord that he loves us with an everlasting love, (Jeremiah 31:3)

Have a Happy Christmas, praising him with songs of joy. (Psalm 63: verse 5)

Rev. Pauline Florance

MAGNIFICAT (Book of Common Prayer) - A COMMENTARY

1. My soul doth magnify the Lord and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my saviour.

When I read this I am struck by the word 'magnify' as if Mary were holding a magnifying glass which enables her to make her Lord more visible and at the same time make her happy in his presence.

2. For he hath regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden.

At the same time she seems aware of her youthfulness and yet is still awed that she has been chosen for the role of Mother of the very special child she is to bear.

3. For behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

Despite her modest beginning she is conscious that what she has been asked to do will be memorable long after she has left this world.

4. For he that is mighty hath magnified me and holy is his Name.

Despite her beginnings she realises that God himself is magnifying her through the task she has been given and she recognises the wonder and holiness of God.

5. And his mercy is on them who fear him throughout all generations.

We can note that Mary is humble about her calling and yet at the same time recognises her value in God's sight by the task he has given to her.

So she goes onto remind us of God's mercy which those who recognise and revere Him can depend on – He is there for our healing and support.

6. He hath shown strength with his arm, he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

But that is not all, his strength is available to those who worship Him – but those who show no need of Him are reminded of their lack of humility.

7. He hath put down the mighty from their seat and hath exalted the humble and meek.

To Mary God challenges those who appear to have no need of Him. Those who do like Mary he reinforces and strengthens.

8. He hath filled the hungry with good things and the rich he hath sent empty away.

This great gospel canticle reminds us that it includes meeting the material needs of those who are poor and in want.

9. He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel.

So Mary reminds us that God remembers his mercy and helps us (which is the meaning in the King James Bible).

10. As he promised to our forefathers Abraham and his seed for ever.

Indeed the story of the Bible from Genesis onwards is the story of God choosing Abraham and his family and creating them as his chosen people.

Revd. Chris Gonin

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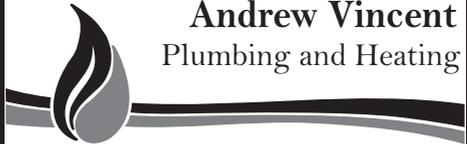
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Notice: Items for January's Magazine:

Please note that all articles, adverts etc. will need to be submitted to Kathryn Williams by **Sunday 13th December** for inclusion in January's Magazine. Thank you.

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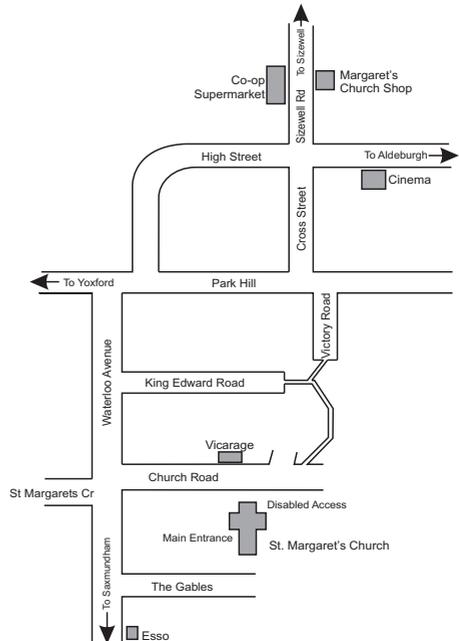
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