

## CALENDAR

Wednesday	01-Jan-25	<i>New Year's Day (Bank Holiday)</i>
Thursday	02-Jan-25	
Friday	03-Jan-25	9.30am Online Benefice Morning Prayer 12pm Make Lunch Club at The Wilshere Hall
<b>Sunday</b> <i>Epiphany</i>	05-Jan-25	9am All Age Eucharist at St John the Baptist 10.30am All Age Baptism Service at St Andrew's
Monday	06-Jan-25	9am Coffee Morning at The Wilshere Hall (Warm Welcome Space) 9.30am Online Benefice Morning Prayer
Tuesday	07-Jan-25	9.30am Prayer Group 7.30pm Life Group on Zoom
Wednesday	08-Jan-25	10.30am Community Hub Drop-in at St Mary's, St Margarets 10.30am Life Group at Steve Wright's home Midday Holy Communion at St Mary's, St Margarets
Thursday	09-Jan-25	9am Teddy Club at The Wilshere Hall 10.30am Benefice Coffee Morning (The Red Lion)
Friday	10-Jan-25	9.30am Online Benefice Morning Prayer
<b>Sunday</b> <i>Baptism of Christ</i>	12-Jan-25	9am Eucharist at St John the Baptist 10.30am Holy Communion at St Andrew's
Monday	13-Jan-25	9am Coffee Morning at The Wilshere Hall (Warm Welcome Space) 9.30am Online Benefice Morning Prayer
Tuesday	14-Jan-25	9.30am Prayer Group 7.30pm Life Group on Zoom
Wednesday	15-Jan-25	10.30am Community Hub Drop-in at St Mary's, St Margarets 10.30am Life Group at Steve Wright's home Midday Prayer at St Mary's, St Margarets
Thursday	16-Jan-25	9am Teddy Club at The Wilshere Hall 10.30am Life Group at The Wilshere Hall
Friday	17-Jan-25	9.30am Online Benefice Morning Prayer
<b>Sunday</b> <i>2nd Sunday of Epiphany</i>	19-Jan-25	9am Eucharist at St John the Baptist led by Bishop Alan 10.30am Morning Prayer at St Andrew's 10.30am Holy Communion at St Mary's, St Margarets
Monday	20-Jan-25	9am Coffee Morning at The Wilshere Hall (Warm Welcome Space) 9.30am Online Benefice Morning Prayer
Tuesday	21-Jan-25	9.30am Prayer Group 7.30pm Life Group on Zoom
Wednesday	22-Jan-25	10.30am Community Hub Drop-in at St Mary's, St Margarets 10.30am Life Group at Steve Wright's home Midday Holy Communion at St Mary's, St Margarets
Thursday	23-Jan-25	9am Teddy Club at The Wilshere Hall 10.30am Benefice Coffee Morning (The Red Lion)
Friday	24-Jan-25	9.30am Online Benefice Morning Prayer
Saturday	25-Jan-25	8.30am Benefice Breakfast at The Wilshere Hall
<b>Sunday</b> <i>3rd Sunday of Epiphany</i>	26-Jan-25	9am Eucharist at St John the Baptist 10.30am Holy Communion at St Andrew's
Monday	27-Jan-25	9am Coffee Morning at The Wilshere Hall (Warm Welcome Space) 9.30am Online Benefice Morning Prayer
Tuesday	28-Jan-25	9.30am Prayer Group 7.30pm Life Group on Zoom
Wednesday	29-Jan-25	10.30am Community Hub Drop-in at St Mary's, St Margarets 10.30am Life Group at Steve Wright's home Midday Prayer at St Mary's, St Margarets
Thursday	30-Jan-25	9am Teddy Club at The Wilshere Hall 10.30am Life Group at The Wilshere Hall
Friday	31-Jan-25	9.30am Online Benefice Morning Prayer



## The 3 Churches Benefice

### NEWS & NOTICES ~ JANUARY 2025

Hooray! Christmas is here!

A Facebook discussion about what prayers you use for carol services reminded me that the traditions of the church keeps shifting and changing all the time, and sometimes not necessarily for the better. Christmas is here, but in a world that pushes Advent out and starts decorating Christmas trees at the end of November, most people are putting away the Christmas celebrations, even before the New Year has rolled in.

Traditionally, The Festival of Christmas lasts for 40 days from late on Christmas Eve until the 2nd of February, so for us Christians Christmas is just beginning! The trouble is that Advent ended so easily somewhere in the third week of December, that the celebrating can run out of steam. Traditionally, Christmas carol services happened after Christmas Day, but we've been listening to Christmas music since November on the radio and in the shops. So what are we going to do in this Christmas Festival? How can we serve God and celebrate his love when we're all tinselled out?

Perhaps the best thing to do is to focus on the message of the angels: 'Do not be afraid, for I bring you good news!'



I have been thinking about the lovely, 'calm and bright' sanitised story of the Nativity this year, and realising that it wasn't! It wasn't clean or tidy or filled with sunshine and Christmas roses... It was dirty and messy and terrifying, with fear and uncertainty all around! But the angels brought the two fold message: 'Do not be afraid' and 'A Saviour has been born!'

During our School Carol Services the children hit the nail on the head about fear. Why don't we need to be afraid? Because God is with us always! This is the Good News! Quick, share it! In the messiness of real lives, in sorrow and pain, poverty and suffering, conflict and complex situations, people need to hear that we do not need to be afraid, because God is with us!

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## NEWS & NOTICES

### The Three Villages Magazine

If you haven't already, please do pick up the December issue of The Three Villages Magazine. It is available for £1 at the back of the churches, so please pop your money into the honesty box. Thank you!

### Men's Breakfast and Benefice Breakfast at The Wilshere Hall

Please note there will not be a Men's Breakfast this month, but there will be a Benefice Breakfast on the last Saturday of the month, which is open to everyone, starting at 8.30am in The Wilshere Hall.

### Warm Welcome Spaces

Don't forget our Warm Welcome Spaces: Coffee Morning on Monday mornings, 9-11am at The Wilshere Hall – offering a warm drink and a fun activity!; The Community Hub Drop-in on Wednesdays, 10.30-11.30am at St Mary's, St Margarets – offering a cuppa and chat, as well as practical help if needed.

### St Andrew's Card-making Group

St Andrew's Card-making Group meets every 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month at 1pm in The Wilshere Hall. The cost is £4 per session to cover materials used and two cards will be made each session. We have a break midway for refreshments, which is included in cost. New members welcome – please contact Janet Dance 07941096834

### Open Garden: dates for your diary

The Bishop of St Albans will be opening his garden (Abbey Gate House, Abbey Mill Lane, St Albans AL3 4HD) on two weekends in February for people to come and look at the display of snowdrops. Those who came to visit in the summer will know that the garden is delightful, it also has an appeal to visitors in the spring as the snowdrops herald the end of winter. Spring opening days are 15 and 16 February and 22 and 23 February, 2-4pm, subject to the snowdrops. Entrance is £5 per person (children free) and dogs on leads are welcome. Please wear footwear suitable for the time of year. All money raised is donated to the Beds and Herts Historic Churches Trust.

## RT REV'D THE LORD BISHOP OF ST ALBANS

Bishop Alan, the Rt Rev'd the Lord Bishop of St Albans, is resolved to visit all the churches in the diocese and is coming to St John the Baptist, Great Amwell on Sunday 19th January to lead and preach at our 9am Eucharist. Everyone is welcome and it would be wonderful to celebrate Communion with Bishop Alan in our beautiful church, with the church family and the wider community.

## FROM THE CHURHWARDENS

### The Christmas Tree Festival

Thank you to everyone who supported our Christmas Tree Festival in December. Despite the storm, we had a steady stream of visitors and raised a wonderful £403.78 (gross total), which will go towards the work and upkeep of the church.

## PRAYER MINISTRY

The Ministry Team is always happy to pray for anyone, so do call or email if you have prayer requests.

At St Andrew's we have Prayer Ministry after the 10.30am Sunday Service for anyone who would like prayer. Please do come to the front for the Team to share your concerns, and pray for and with you.



## PRAYER REQUESTS

Please keep the following people in your prayers this month:

### Baptisms

- Maeva Osbourn on 5th January at St Andrew's [*during the morning service*].
- Jude Merry on 12th January at St John the Baptist.

### Weddings

- Naomi Ross & Jon Lester on 24th May at St Andrew's.
- Alice Anderson & Adam Carlson on 8th August at St John the Baptist.
- Verity Dent & Steve Hawksbee on 20th September at St Margarets.

### Deaths

- Monica Eden-Green on 16th November.
- Sylvia De Vere on 26th November.



## UPCOMING DATES IN FEBRUARY

- 2nd ~ Candlemas/Presentation of Jesus in the Temple
- 2nd ~ 6.30pm Book of Common Prayer (BCP) Evensong at St Andrew's Church



## USEFUL LINKS

Online Zoom Services & Events  
[www.tinyurl.com/3churcheszoom](http://www.tinyurl.com/3churcheszoom)

A Church Near You  
Benefice Page  
<http://tinyurl.com/3churchesBenefice>

The 3 Churches Website  
[www.3churches.net](http://www.3churches.net)