



THE FRIDAY EMAIL **Friday 6th December 2024**

Friday Thought from Di Kitson:

Dear Friends,

Last weekend saw a magnificent display in the church when we celebrated the Festival of Light. 'From darkness into Light'. For those of you who were not able to attend it was a magnificent display of candles throughout the whole building. People worked so very hard to put on this magnificent display. It was so well organised by the Churchwardens and many other volunteers. The Chancel and Sanctuary was a blaze of light and was seen by over eighteen hundred people.



This coming weekend on both Saturday and Sunday we shall celebrate our Christmas Tree Festival. Many organisations and businesses have trees on display. On Sunday afternoon at 3pm we will celebrate with our annual Christingle Service, where each child (and some adults) will receive a Christingle. All monies collected will go to The Children's Society, which is a very worthy cause and helps many children in need, particularly at this time of the year.

As we enter the second week of Advent and the lighting of the Second Advent candle, we shall continue to await the Messiah or Christ. All teachers, and in particular builders, know the importance of good preparation in their work to make sure before they begin their class or building they must have a good foundation to work on. Advent gives us the opportunity to make ready in our preparation for the celebration to come at Christmas. It is a fresh chance to look at our lives and habits, and sort them out; to be ruthless about anything which is impairing our walk with God.

Yours in Christ.

Di Kitson

➤ READINGS FOR THIS SUNDAY

Baruch 5:1-9:

Take off the garment of your sorrow and affliction, O Jerusalem,
and put on for ever the beauty of the glory from God.

Put on the robe of the righteousness that comes from God;
put on your head the diadem of the glory of the Everlasting;
for God will show your splendour everywhere under heaven.
For God will give you evermore the name,
'Righteous Peace, Godly Glory'.

Arise, O Jerusalem, stand upon the height;
look towards the east,

and see your children gathered from west and east
at the word of the Holy One,
rejoicing that God has remembered them.

For they went out from you on foot,
led away by their enemies;

but God will bring them back to you,
carried in glory, as on a royal throne.

For God has ordered that every high mountain and the everlasting hills be made low
and the valleys filled up, to make level ground,
so that Israel may walk safely in the glory of God.

The woods and every fragrant tree
have shaded Israel at God's command.

For God will lead Israel with joy,
in the light of his glory,
with the mercy and righteousness that come from him.

Philippians 1:3-11:

I thank my God every time I remember you,
constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you,
because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now.

I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to
completion by the day of Jesus Christ.

It is right for me to think this way about all of you,
because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me,
both in my imprisonment and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel.

For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus.
And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and
full insight to help you to determine what is best,
so that on the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless,

having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

Luke 3:1-6:

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius,
when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea,
and Herod was ruler of Galilee,
and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Iturea and Trachonitis,
and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas,
the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness.
He went into all the region around the Jordan,
proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins,
as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,
'The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
"Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.
Every valley shall be filled,
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,
and the crooked shall be made straight,
and the rough ways made smooth;
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God." '

The collect for the this Sunday

O Lord, raise up, we pray, your power
and come among us,
and with great might succour us;
that whereas, through our sins and wickedness
we are grievously hindered
in running the race that is set before us,
your bountiful grace and mercy
may speedily help and deliver us;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit,
be honour and glory, now and for ever.
Amen



➤ Details of Sunday 9.30am Eucharist which is also live-streamed

- ❖ President: Revd Bill Church
- ❖ Preacher: Revd Bill Church
- ❖ Reader: Gilly Squire
- ❖ Intercessions: Huw Lewis
- ❖ Sunday Club: Becky Burton

- ❖ Processional: On Jordan's bank (Tune: Winchester New)
- ❖ Gradual: Hark the glad sound (Tune: Bristol)
- ❖ Offertory: The Lord will come and not be slow (Tune: St Stephen)
- ❖ Communion: O day of God, draw nigh (Tune: St Michael)
- ❖ Choir Motet: The truth sent from above (Music: Vaughan Williams)
- ❖ Recessional: The kingdom of God is justice and joy (Tune: Hanover)

INTERCESSIONS FOR THIS WEEK

For the world-wide Church:

- ❖ Bishop Alan - Bishop of St Albans
- ❖ Bishop Jane - Bishop of Hertford
- ❖ The Venerable Janet Mackenzie - Archdeacon of Hertford
- ❖ The Revd Gaz Tracey - Area Dean
- ❖ Archbishop Justin - Archbishop of Canterbury
- ❖ In the Anglican cycle of prayer for the The Episcopal Church of Sudan
- ❖ In the Diocesan cycle of prayer for the people and parish of Ayot St Peter, Welwyn Hatfield
- ❖ In our Deanery cycle of prayer for our own parish and people of Sawbridgeworth
- ❖ For those being martyred or persecuted for their Christian faith



[\(https://releaseinternational.org/\)](https://releaseinternational.org/)

For our world:

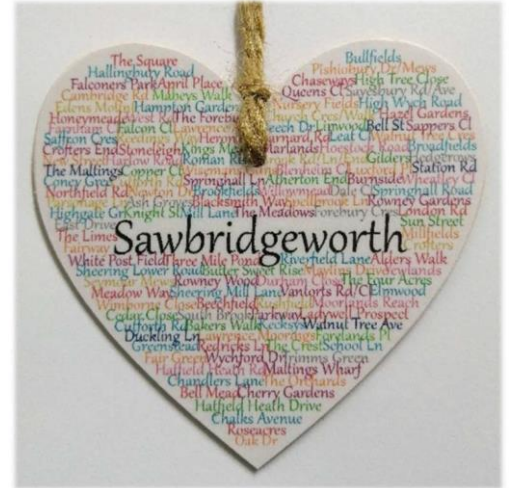
- ❖ For the victims of Israel and Gaza during the current Israel-Palestinian conflict.
- ❖ For the people of Ukraine, be they in their homeland or refugees in Europe.
- ❖ For just and peaceful governance throughout the world, not least in Russia, Ukraine, Israel, Palestine, Sudan, Somalia, China, Haiti, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Yemen, Iran, Pakistan, Myanmar, North Korea, and the DRC.
- ❖ For those suffering from the effects of climate change or natural disaster.
- ❖ For those working to reduce the effects of climate change.
- ❖ For those working to relieve suffering throughout the world.
- ❖ For emergency and keyworkers, scientists and leaders, medical and care workers, and, in this country, particularly for the NHS and social services.
- ❖ For those being unjustly held captive or being persecuted
- ❖ For those who have been abused in body, mind, or spirit.
- ❖ For those who are victims of modern-day slavery and human trafficking.
- ❖ For those who are victims of famine or poverty, praying for the work of the *Shiksha Rath* educational project in New Delhi which we support.
- ❖ For those struggling with addiction.



- ❖ For those who are homeless, and for the work of the *Holy Trinity Night Shelter* in Bishop's Stortford which we support.
- ❖ For those involved in the migrant and refugee situation.
- ❖ For the work of organisations which are working to bring an end to poverty.

For our town:

- ❖ For the staff and patients of our Central Surgery, the Princess Alexandra, Rivers, and Herts & Essex hospitals, for our care homes, social services, voluntary care sector.
- ❖ For Sawbridgeworth Town Council and for East Herts District Council and our councillors.
- ❖ For local businesses in these uncertain times.
- ❖ For our emergency services.
- ❖ For groups and organisations, including The Hailey Centre and library.
- ❖ For our youth organisations and uniformed brigades.
- ❖ For the pupils, teachers, staff, governors, and parents associated with our local schools, including our church school in Spellbrook, as they prepare for the new school year
- ❖ For those feeling isolated and lonely; particularly those living alone.
- ❖ For those who are concerned about making ends meet, and for organisations such as Harlow Foodbank and the evangelical church's pop-up store seeking to bring aid.



For the people of:

Sunday:	The Foreburey & Sayes Gardens
Monday:	Springhall Court & Spring Mews
Tuesday:	Sun Street, Revells Crescent & Salmon Road
Wednesday:	Rowan Walk & Hailey Place
Thursday:	Sheering Mill Lane & Lock View
Friday:	Gilders, Roman Rise & Slater Lane
Saturday:	Cutforth Road & Barnard Road

For the sick, tired, and bereaved, including:

Sue Adams, Angela Alder, June Allen, Pam Brown, Linda Bowler, Patrick Copeard, Jeanette Dedman, Rachael Dineen, Elsa Duce, Jeanette Ehlers, Jimmy Galvin, Jill Howard, John Ireland, Georgina King.

For those that have died, including:

- ❖ Julie Argent RIP
- ❖ Brigid Trillo-Blanco RIP
- ❖ Susan Cannon RIP

For our dearly departed ones, remembered at their year's mind:

- ❖ Doris Johnson RIP (8th Dec)
- ❖ Dave Lyons RIP (12th Dec)
- ❖ Michael Hemsley RIP (13th Dec)

*God of mission,
who alone brings growth to your Church,
send your Holy Spirit
to give vision to our planning,
wisdom to our actions,
joy to our worship, 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.*

NOTICES

Services and events in church:

❖ **Sat 7th December**



9am-5pm Christmas Tree Festival

10-12pm Father Christmas in the Church House grotto
With refreshments and tombola

1-3pm Father Christmas in the Church House grotto
With refreshments and tombola

❖ **Sunday 8th December**

Second Sunday of Advent

8.00am

Service of the Word

9.30am

Parish Eucharist (CW)

Followed by refreshments in Church House

11am-5pm Christmas Tree Festival

3.00pm

Christingle Service

❖ **Wed 11th December**

10.00am

Midweek Service of the Word

❖ **Sunday 15th December**

Third Sunday of Advent

9.30am

Parish Eucharist (CW)

Followed by refreshments in Church House

❖ **Wed 18th December**

10.00am

Midweek Service of the Word

➤ Festival of Light Shines Bright at Sawbridgeworth



On Saturday, 30th November, our 800-year-old Parish Church was transformed into a mesmerizing spectacle during the Festival of Lights. The exterior of the church was beautifully illuminated with coloured lights, complemented by a small refreshment stall.

Inside, the pews and windowsills were adorned with handmade lanterns crafted from recycled and recyclable materials by the children from local schools and youth organisations. The atmosphere was further enhanced by the gentle glow of 700 candles illuminating the Chancel, Font, Bapistry, and high beams between the arches in the Nave.



The serene beauty of the church attracted over 1,800 visitors, including around 20 dogs, who marvelled at the enchanting display.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who contributed to this magical event.



Whether you made a lantern, visited the event, moved furniture, welcomed guests, handed out flyers, tested and managed the tea lights, served refreshments, or lit and extinguished the candles—your efforts made this event truly special.

A special thank you to our dedicated church cleaners for tidying up after the festivities.

Thank you for making the Festival of Lights a radiant success!

➤ Christmas Tree Festival Weekend – Can you help?

We are very short of help in Church House on Saturday across the whole day. We could do with 5 people at any one time to help man stalls, refreshments and taking money for Santa. Most tasks can be done sitting! Cathy and Ann will be there both days, but need more hands, even for 1hr would be very helpful.

Thank you!



➤ **Annual revision of Year's Mind list**



Every year, we update our Year's Mind document which lists the names of our dearly departed ones who are included each week in the intercession section of this Friday Email and whose names are, on the appropriate Sunday, read out in memoriam at our services. If your departed loved one is already on our Year's Mind list and has been remembered this past year, they will remain on the list. However, if you would like to add a name, please complete a blue form and place it in the box at the back of church, and a box in which to place the forms.

➤ **Arrangements During the Vacancy**

Thank you for your continued support during this time of vacancy. Please be reminded that during this period, we are not able to make any changes to our services, no matter how small. We must continue with what we were doing prior to going into vacancy until a new incumbent is appointed. However, we understand that there may be times when people would like to enhance our services to better meet the spiritual needs of the parish. Therefore, as officers of the Bishop, if there are any requests for additional services or changes to the current services, these must be requested to and authorised by the Churchwardens.

➤ **Friends of Great St Mary's, Christmas Cards on Sale**

Di is selling Christmas cards for the Friends of Great St Mary's, featuring a picture of GSM with the Northern lights in the background, they are £6.50 for 10 cards. 2025 calendars also on sale for £10. If you are interested please see Di in church or contact her via telephone on 01279 723212.

➤ **Mothers' Union Advent Service on 17th December**

The Mothers' Union invites you to join them at their Advent Service on Tuesday 17th December at 2.00pm in Great St Mary's Church and for mince pies and cake in Church House afterwards. We look forward to seeing you!



➤ **News from our associated CoE School in Spellbrook**

Mr Fisher – our Headteacher – writes:



With December now upon us, Spellbrook School is getting into the Christmas spirit. It was lovely to be part of the Festival of Light at the Church at the weekend. The church looked quite spectacular in the dark of the evening and the lights inside were truly awesome. I am delighted that the school was part of this. We are very much looking forward to being part of the Christmas Tree Festival this coming weekend.



Our week in school began with our Decoration Day. Parents/carers and grandparents joined us and, together with the children, they made many different decorations. They used a whole range of techniques to create the beautiful Christmas decorations that the teachers had prepared for them.



There were Christmas trees made from paper chains, sparkly baubles, doily Christmas angels, paper plate snowmen, and stars made in a number of different ways, as well as many other super designs and activities.

It was lovely to see the interactions between the adults and the children and how some parents got truly stuck in, sharing their own talents and expertise, not only with their own children but with others around them as well. I saw a great deal of concentration as well as enjoyment and pleasure on the faces of adults and children alike. The classrooms have been decorated and look really good.



Next, we will be putting up our Christmas Tree. I know the children are looking forward to taking their decorations home at the end of term so they can enjoy displaying them in their own homes, as well as to the rest of the festive fun at school and at home.

Have a good weekend,

Mr Fisher

Thank you for your ongoing support of Great St Mary's

Content for the Newsletter

If you have a notice for the Friday Email, please contact Angela Kenny in the Parish Office by Wednesday lunchtime.

Contact us

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Website:

www.sawbridgeworthchurch.org.uk

Facebook:

www.facebook.com and search for 'Great St Mary's, Sawbridgeworth'

YouTube:

www.youtube.com and search for 'Great St Mary's, Sawbridgeworth'



Christingle Service

This Sunday 3pm

Seasonal fun and joy

for all the family



**Great St Mary's
Sawbridgeworth**



Great St Mary's
Sawbridgeworth

Passion for Christ - Compassion for all

Christmas

TREE FESTIVAL

SAT 7th & SUN 8th DEC
11am-5pm

ALSO

Sat 7th Dec 10am-12pm & 1-3pm

- ❖ **MEET FATHER CHRISTMAS**
- ❖ **SEASONAL REFRESHMENTS**
- ❖ **TOMBOLA**

Sun 8th Dec 3pm

❖ **CHRISTINGLE SERVICE**

*Come, wander,
and experience
some of the
magic of Christmas
with all the family*



Great St Mary's
Sawbridgeworth

Passion for Christ - Compassion for all

Come join us for a delicious charity
ADVENT LUNCH
on SATURDAY 14TH DECEMBER
12pm-2pm at Church House, Sawbridgeworth
Everybody welcome, just turn up!



Homemade soup – Crusty bread – Cheeseboard – Festive treats
Suggested donation £5 per head

Don't miss our **AMAZING raffle**
with **FANTASTIC prizes!!!**

EVERY PENNY WE RAISE WILL GO TO THE
CHILDREN'S SOCIETY CHARITY



Christmas at Great St Mary's

Sun 1st Dec at 5pm – Advent Carol Service

A candlelight service of Advent hymns and readings marking the beginning of our preparations for Christmas

Sat 7th & Sun 8th Dec – Great St Mary's Christmas Tree Festival

The magic of Christmas will be on display as Great St Mary's host an array of Christmas trees decorated by the town's many organisations

Sat 7th Dec onwards - Decorate the Community Christmas Tree

Bring your own decoration or use ours, perhaps to remember a loved one

Sun 8th Dec at 3pm – Christingle Service

A fun all-age service with oranges, candles and Christmas carols

Saturday 14th Dec at 12noon – Advent Lunch

Enjoy a light lunch in Church House of homemade soup, cheeses, fruit and treats, all in aid of The Children's Society

Sun 22nd Dec at 5pm - Christmas Carol Service

The traditional carol service followed by mulled wine and mince pies

Tues 24th Dec 3pm - Crib Service

A shorter, fun, all-age service, particularly suitable for young children

Tues 24th Dec at 11.30pm - Midnight Mass

The first eucharist of Christmas with traditional carols

Wed 25th Dec at 9.30am - Christmas Morning Eucharist

Dress as your favourite Bethlehem character for a scratch nativity and traditional carols

***All are welcome to these or any
of our other services and events***

