

St. Luke's Herald

Christmas 2023

A message from Lindsay Glazebrook...



Dear friends

I wonder how you feel as you look back over the past year? Perhaps you started the year with great excitement about the future. I hope 2023 has lived up to expectations. For some of us, this year will have been wonderful, but many of us will have experienced health or relationship challenges, loss, loneliness or fear. For others, it's hard to make ends meet, with a record number of people in the UK depending on the help of food banks to get through each week.

There's no getting away from the fact that life is tough for many people, both here in the UK, and especially for those, often the least and the weakest in society, suffering as a result of conflicts around the world. Some wonder why God doesn't step in and do something about it. Perhaps you're one of them.

If you are, then do read on, because we have good news to share this

Christmas, although actually it isn't our news. It's the news that was brought approximately 2,000 years ago to a bunch of agricultural workers on the night shift in the fields outside a small town in Judea; their job was to defend the farmer's sheep from predators who would have been prowling around, seeking to carry off any who were unprotected, looking for the weakest and the most vulnerable of the flock.

God stepped in to that small, unlikely group by sending an angel with a message of the best news ever: 'Good news of great joy'; and it wasn't just for them, or just for that time or that place; it was 'for all people'. The news was that a baby had been born close by, in the town of Bethlehem. Now, news of a baby's birth is often greeted with great joy, but this Baby was the Messiah - the One the people had been awaiting for hundreds of years; He was destined to change the world.

Once the message had been given, a huge choir of angels appeared on the hillside singing praises to God. Now, unsurprisingly, they had been terrified at the appearance of just one angel, never mind 'a multitude of the heavenly host', but the message was clear 'Do not be afraid.'

You know the story: once God had stepped in, they stepped out; they found the Baby Jesus with Mary and

Joseph; and then they told everyone they met about Him. Their lives were changed for ever, through God's intervention in the form of a weak, vulnerable baby.

Throughout the three short years of His ministry, Jesus continued to step in, meeting the needs of all who came to Him; transforming lives wherever He went.

He lived on earth for just 33 years, and despite having lived a life of utter purity, He was nailed to a cross like a criminal. But that wasn't the end of the 'good news', because He died that death for us, and three days afterwards, He rose from the tomb where His body had been laid.

Many religions offer ways of reaching up to seek God. Only Jesus, God's Son, has stepped in to reach down and has sought us, because He loves us and wants us to live in relationship with Him. He will step in to your life with His transforming love if you invite Him to do so.

Do come and join us at any of our Christmas services, or on any Sunday at 10 am, or choose one of the invitation events detailed on the following pages. We would love to see you. We wish you a very Happy Christmas!

Lindsay

Lindsay is a licensed Lay-Minister at St. Luke's



What has happened to our vicar?!



Rev Matthew Frankum, Vicar of St Luke's for fifteen years, left in May this year to take up a post at the Diocese of Bath & Wells. He has taken on responsibility for people throughout the diocese who feel called to ordained ministry. We

gave him a great send-off with a mixture of sadness for ourselves at losing him, and gladness for him and his family at this new chapter of their life, which includes having Sundays off for the first time in his years as a Vicar!

Life continues much as usual at St Luke's, where we still have regular services and many activities, including some new ones. We have a strong team of volunteer leaders, and are helped out by some generous clergy who are either retired or off-duty.

We have started discussing our vision for the future and will be consulting members of the church and community about our role in 2024 and beyond.

The Church of England is currently reorganising how it deploys paid clergy in order, both to save money, and to ensure that there is mutual support and shared leadership between churches. This means that we are not yet sure when we will have a new vicar and whether it will involve any reorganisation. Watch this space for updates in coming months!

Jan Rich
Churchwarden



Coffee and Cakes at St. Luke's

Do join us for coffee and a chat....



Our regular coffee mornings resume on Friday 20th January from 10am-12noon in the Church building. Entry is through the main Church door.

Real coffee or tea, our delicious homemade cakes (including gluten- and dairy-free options) and time to chat in a warm, welcoming space - just the thing for a winter morning!

Please come and bring your friends, your family or just yourself. Everyone is welcome. See if you can decide which is your favourite cake!

There is no charge but there is an opportunity to make a donation to charity. In the run-up to Christmas, we have been supporting Bath Foodbank.

The dates up to Easter, all from 10am to 12 noon, are:

Friday 19th January 2024

Friday 9th February 2024

Friday 1st March 2024

Friday 22nd March 2024

We look forward to seeing you.

Brenda

St. Luke's Classic Film Club

The Classic Film Club was restarted last year and has once again become a firm favourite with a number of regulars, and is enjoyed by many, on a dreary autumn/winter Friday evening.

We try to show a variety of films and this season so far we have shown 'Singing in the Rain', 'The Lady Vanishes' and 'Saving Mr Banks' and we are looking forward to our screenings in the New Year.

If it is something that you might like to try why not come along to our next screening on Friday 19th January 2024. Film yet to be decided.

Light refreshments will be available from 7pm before the film starts at 7.30.

This is a FREE event but any donations to cover costs will be gratefully received.

CLASSIC FILMS



Dates going forward are as follows:

Friday 19th January 2024

Friday 16th February 2024

Friday 22nd March 2024

Screenings are in the Church

Prime Time

This is a 'lunch club and more' for the not-so-young, taking place approximately once per month in the St. Luke's Church Centre.

A home-cooked two-course lunch with coffee or tea is provided for just £6, followed by some form of entertainment or talk of general interest.

Here is the programme for the first part of 2024:

January 18th: Graeme Payne - 'A trip on the Royal Train'

March 14th: Paul Collins - 'Talking Books & Local Newspapers'

April 18th: 'Ripple Effect'



We do need to know how many people are coming so do call the church office on **331898** to book a place.

Youth at St. Luke's



Jamie & I are still enjoying our fortnightly meetings with the Youth of St Luke's. As well as meeting on Sunday morning together at 10:00, we've joined in events at Café Church & have used our musical skills in services.

After the Christmas break we will start meeting again on 7th January. We meet in the Lower Rooms, so any young person who'd like to have a 'look see' do just come in the door from the path at the back of church, which will be open. We'd be very pleased to see you and hot chocolate & biscuits are always available!

Liz & Jamie

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.... The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace”. (Isaiah: 9 v 6)

Carol Singing...

Christmas Night

The busy town now still
and quiet, except for a shed
furnished with hay.
Women attended the woman,
men paced and waited.
As the star was at its brightest
so baby Jesus was born.
Angels sang out the story,
woke sleepy shepherds
who hurried along,
found the promised child,
crept inside, knelt in awe;
‘He is Emmanuel, God with us,’
they whispered.
Wise men too, journeyed
with precious gifts to honour Him,
knelt, bowed their heads,
prayed Hope and Peace
into a broken world.

Deborah Tomlin



...the spirit of Christmas!

If you just like to listen to other people singing carols at Christmas time, then do come along and join us as we celebrate together on Bear Flat, on Saturday December 16th. But better still do join in - carol sheets provided.



We'll be gathering outside 'The Bear' at 10.30 am and would love to see you there.



Don't worry - we'll provide copies of the words for those who would like to join in.



Christmas Services at St. Luke's

Sunday 10th December

10.00am Service of Holy Communion (using the Book of Common Prayer)

4.00pm Christingle Service

(a 'café style' service suitable for all the family)

Sunday 17th December

10.00am Service of Holy Communion

6.00pm Service of Lessons & Carols

(followed by mulled wine and mince pies)

Christmas Eve 24th December

10.00am Family Nativity Service

(An 'all age' service - all are welcome - children are invited to come dressed as a character from the nativity story)

11.30pm Midnight Holy Communion

Christmas Day 25th December

10.00am Family Celebration

(An 'all age' service including Holy Communion)





Children At St. Luke's...

Hello - I'm Serena, Children & Families Minister - I have now been at St Luke's for just over 8 months, and what a busy, but fulfilling 8 months it has been! On the next page or two, I hope to give you a flavour of what we have been doing and what is available for children at St. Luke's.

Little Stars & Me



A Weekly Baby Group for Newborns up to 12 months & their parents/carers



A new initiative has been the starting of 'Little Stars & Me', a group for parents/carers of babies up to 12 months, and, of course, their babies! We meet every Wednesday from 11am-12.30pm in the Church Centre. 'Little Stars & Me' is a time for parents/carers to meet & socialise with each

other & their babies. Play time, tummy time, rhyme time, gentle baby massage & makaton for our babes and we serve tea/coffee/juice, toast, cake, fruit & biscuits to the grown ups.

In June we were welcoming 3 mums/carers and their babes to the group, but now we are welcoming between 25-30 mums/carers each week!

It's been wonderful to see this weekly group grow and develop and to build relationship and community with these young and local families.

This group has also enjoyed some social events too where we have welcomed partners & husbands & grandparents to this growing community. These social events have included a quiet firework party, the making of Christmas wreaths and making Christmas tree decorations for the forthcoming Christmas Tree Festival at St Luke's Church, on the morning of December 9th.



Light Keepers

St Luke's Holiday Club 2023

This year saw the return of St. Luke's summer holiday clubs for KS1 & KS2 aged children, and for children who go to Chatterbox - the toddler group. These were very well supported and children enjoyed a variety of activities, depending upon their age, including messy & challenging games, team & individual craft activity, a dramatised Bible story, a testimony of faith, songs, prayer activities, games outside, refreshments and a water slide!

The message of Jesus was shared through the theme for the day - the feeding of the 5000, the healing of a lame man and Jesus calms the storm.



Next year's holiday club is already in the diary - 'Going for Gold': Monday 19th - Thursday 22nd August 2024 - make a note in your diaries!

Rockets



We have also developed a regular weekly children's group, which meets on a Sunday morning during the morning services at St Luke's. This group is called Rockets and is suitable for KS1 & KS2 children. Each week there is something different but there is always a Bible/Jesus/faith focus.

Our current schedule is as follows :-

1st Sunday of the month - *'Wild Rockets'* - our group meets outside in the green space, often around a fire pit and surrounded by God's wonderful nature. We make seasonal crafts & have fun in the outdoors.

2nd Sunday of the month - *'Cafe Church'* - This is a once a month all age service at St Luke's, where the children are included and involved in an informal service for all ages and stages.

3rd Sunday - *'Centre Rockets'* - Our session is in the Church Centre, where we have fun in the Bible, games, craft & refreshments.

4th Sunday - *'Community Rockets'* - This week takes us to the community surrounding St Luke's Church, where we have enjoyed blessing our community with litter picks, playing in the local park and baking & serving cakes to our church family at St Luke's.

This year, we have also developed two family nature trails - see below for more about these and watch out for more in the future.

Family Parties

Another recent initiative has been hosting parties, at St Luke's Church, for KS1 & KS2 children and their families. Parties, this year, have included an Easter Party, Coronation Party, Beach Party and a Light Party.

These parties have included fun team games, guessing games with prizes, craft, Bible story, songs and hot food, ice cream & cakes.

The parties have been well attended events and it's been great to get to know the young families who come along and join us.



Nature Trails

Since last Easter, we have developed two family nature trails within the green space surrounding St Luke's Church. These trails have included a Bee Trail.....



.....and more recently a Remembrance Trail.

It's been wonderful to run these trails for a full week and to see many individuals & families within our church family & community taking part.

Chatterbox is the Toddler Group, that meets every other Thursday during term time 9.30-11.30am and welcomes many different families. There is a charge of £1 for the morning which includes unlimited refreshments, crafts, toys, singing and a Bible story. There are ride-on toys, a climbing frame, a Wendy house, a slide, jigsaws and colouring in, as well as an area for babies.

We meet in the downstairs hall of the Church Centre and have been in existence for over 30 years.



Some people who previously brought their children, now bring their grandchildren and some children are brought by nannies or au pairs

Do come along - it's a great way to spend a Thursday morning and we look forward to meeting you.

Chatterbox restarts after Christmas on January 11th and is currently every two weeks from that date

Sam Packer

Tea-time Concerts

Since the summer we've been running a series of afternoon concerts once a month, on Thursdays, in the church. We've been blessed to have quite a varied programme, ranging from our musical director, David Kniveton, on the flute, piano and organ; to Richard Fry on the piano, playing a number of well known songs; and to Jane Lilley performing with a small group of her singers. The concerts begin at 2:30 and after them is a cream tea, or tea & cake, finishing at 4 o'clock. These have been well attended and appreciated by those who've been.

In January we are having a break.

The concerts resume with the first date being **Thursday 22nd February** with a concert entitled 'Lindsay & Jane Entertain', and I'm sure they will!

The concert will include includes items of poetry and song.

Our other dates are: 14th March, 25th April, 23rd May & 20th June. All Concerts are free but contributions can be given if you wish. These go to St Michael's School, Busembatia, Uganda which we at St Luke's support.

Please put the dates in your diary, it would be lovely to see you again if you've been before, or meet you if you're coming for the first time.

The Concert Team



Services at St. Luke's

Do join us for our Sunday services at St. Luke's. You will be made very welcome.

There is a service at 10.00am each Sunday. Whilst we are without a vicar, the pattern of

services necessarily has to be a little more flexible - please refer to our website for details.

We have Sunday groups for youth and younger children (Rockets) (see pp 3&7).

If you would like to know more about any of the events or activities described in this edition of the St. Luke's Herald, please visit www.stlukesbath.com or do contact the church office by phone 01225 331898, or by email admin@stlukesbath.com