

## Safety guidance for Christmas Cribs from Father Darren

The coronavirus pandemic has had a huge impact on the way we conduct our worship at St Eth's and St Luke's, with many new rules and restrictions governing our health and safety.

One area of concern over the past month has been our Christmas Cribs. Although there are several weeks to go before Christmas Day, we needed to start planning early. So, we began with a thorough risk assessment to ensure that our Cribs are COVID-secure.

Here are the rules we have implemented for your safety:

1. A maximum of four shepherds only are permitted by the Crib.
2. Shepherds must wear facemasks (unless exempt) and strictly observe social distancing (2m, or 1m+ with mitigations).
3. Jesus, Mary and Joseph form a family bubble and thus may be placed together.
4. The ox and the ass need Declaration of Non-Contamination Certificates, obtainable from the Department of Agriculture.
5. The Three Wise Men, since they come from a non-Schengen Area, will be subject to a 14-day quarantine, whether or not they have tested negative for COVID-19.
6. The straw, moss, palm branches and other decorations must be disinfected, with hands washed thoroughly for twenty seconds after handling, whilst singing happy birthday.

7. Angels flying over the Crib are now forbidden, owing to the aerosol effect produced by the batting of wings.

8. Shepherds are permitted provided they are not more than seventy years old or suffering from underlying medical conditions or are in another vulnerable category.

9. The Inn, along with other businesses in the hospitality sector, is closed until further notice.

10. For 2020 only, a Pontius Pilate should be added to the Crib to explain to authorised participants the protocols for washing and sanitisation of hands.

Have a blessed Christmas. Fr Darren

### A HOLY FAMILY BUBBLE



# Parish of Bishop's Hatfield St Etheldreda with St Luke

## St Etheldreda's Church Services

**SUNDAY:** 9.30<sup>am</sup> Holy Communion

**WEDNESDAY:** 10<sup>am</sup> Holy Communion

**THURSDAY:** 7<sup>pm</sup> Holy Communion/Compline

## St Luke's Church Service

**SUNDAY:** 11.30<sup>am</sup> Holy Communion with Hymns

**St Luke's Church** is open on:

**Saturday & Sunday from 10am to 4pm**

For private prayer and contemplation

You can view all St Eth's services, in real time, or later at your leisure, online at:

[www.facebook.com/StEthHat/](https://www.facebook.com/StEthHat/)

Join us for Morning Prayers online each day at 7.30am and Compline at 9pm

Please contact Fr Darren to book your Wedding or Baptism

t: 01707 256638 e: frdarren@yahoo.co.uk

Parish of Bishop's Hatfield St Etheldreda with St Luke : Registered Charity No.1152011  
St Etheldreda's Church, Fore Street, Old Hatfield, Hertfordshire AL9 5AN

## A Christmas roundup from our Curate, Rev'd Kathryn ...

I can't believe we've nearly come to the end of this strange year. I hope you and your families are doing ok, and that you've experienced some encouraging moments amongst the challenges that 2020 has thrown at us.

There has recently been much media speculation about whether Christmas is going to be cancelled. I hope this month's edition of Refocused reassures you that no matter what restrictions are in place, Christmas is most definitely still on. It's just going to be rather different!

This year, why not begin your journey towards Christmas by tuning into our online Advent Carol service on 29<sup>th</sup> November. You could then join me on an 'Advent Adventure' each day in December, as I travel to 24 'real-life' Advent Calendar doors and discover how people are preparing for Christmas with hope, peace, joy, love. Door openings can be found on our Facebook and YouTube pages.

As the 'big day' draws closer, many of our traditional Christmas services will be live streamed. You don't even have to leave the comfort of your sofa to sing carols and hear the Christmas

story in 2020! Full details of what's on can be found on page 3.

Although we're hugely thankful for online worship, there's still something special about spending time in a church building at Christmas. Subject to unexpected Government announcements, we very much hope you'll be able to pop into St Etheldreda's during Christmas week.

You'll be able to pick up a Christingle, enjoy the Christmas music, crib scene and decorations, as well as add an Angel to our Christmas tree with a prayer or memory of a loved one. St Luke's will also be open if you'd like to find some peace in the middle of the busyness of the season.

On the very first Christmas over 2000 years ago, God's gift of love in Jesus arrived in the middle of unpredictable times. It's my hope and prayer that in the middle of *these* uncertain times, each and every one of you discovers that love which is always with us.

Wishing you a blessed Christmas.

Kathryn



# Christmas 2020 Calendar

Pick up a Christingle, enjoy the Christmas music, crib scene and decorations, as well as add an Angel to our Christmas tree with a prayer or memory of a loved one at St Eth's. Times and dates below:



21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> December 6—8pm  
24<sup>th</sup> December Christmas Eve 1—5pm

All of our services can be viewed on  
[www.facebook.com/StEthsHat/](https://www.facebook.com/StEthsHat/)

**Saturday 19th Dec 4pm: Family Carol Service with Y.E.S!**  
**Sunday 20th Dec 6pm: Nine Lessons and Carols Service**

**NOTICE:** Due to COVID, attendance at these two services is restricted to 50 tickets. Tickets are available in advance from the Team office:  
[bhteamoffice@gmail.com](mailto:bhteamoffice@gmail.com)

**Thursday 24th December 11pm: Midnight Mass**  
This service is limited to 70 in attendance

## CHRISTMAS DAY EUCHARIST

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> December  
9.30am: St Eth's—1am: St Luke's

## EPIPHANY EUCHARIST

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> January  
9.30am: St Eth's—11am: St Luke's

## Stable Yard Shops

### WELCOME TO THE JODHPUR COMPANY

Hatfield House is delighted to welcome The Jodhpur Company to the Stable Yard!

The grand opening will come when government guidelines allow... for now we wanted to share a sneak preview of the interior and let you know that you can shop online at: [www.thejodhpurcompany.com](http://www.thejodhpurcompany.com)

Owner Viraj Singh is looking forward to opening the doors soon...

*"It is with immense pleasure and excitement that we join The Stable Yard, a location most fitting for The Jodhpur Company, where tradition, arts and crafts are all being preserved within a culture-rich historic Estate. We are most pleased to be the newest addition to an already fabulous roster of businesses and look forward to welcoming you into our gallery and bringing your sartorial visions to life."*



# On The Twelfth Day of Christmas: Written by Mary Rathbone—Lay Reader Epiphany on 6th January, and the Bethlehem Star

A group of us visited the Bayfordbury Planetarium in Hertford some time ago now. It was an amazing experience. Amongst other things, we were introduced to the science of the Bethlehem Star by a young Christian astronomy student who explained what might have happened in the sky 2000 years ago to cause the Magi to travel to Bethlehem.

The visit to the planetarium really opened my eyes, and I wanted to learn more and searched the internet and bought specialist books for a better understanding.

I discovered that there are several entirely plausible scientific explanations for the star spoken of in Matthew's gospel, and I wrote about it in this magazine last year. You may have read the article.

As I continued to study the subject I began to feel rather overwhelmed with the sheer vastness of God's creation in outer space.

I could see how the planets and stars, the constellations and conjunctions were all perfectly designed and aligned by the work of God's hand. Their courses all mapped out when the Universe was created, formed, shaped, and eventually set into motion in His own time.

But something special **DID** come to me during my time of research; I came to realise that it is not necessary for us to understand the precise science that caused the magnificent Bethlehem Star to appear. Because, it is Jesus who is the real

**STAR** of Bethlehem—he was the motivation for the long journey made by the Magi. They rejoiced due to the final fulfilment of Micah's ancient prophecy foretelling that the Messiah, who will lead the world into an age of peace and understanding, had now been born, in Bethlehem. MICAH 5:2-6

Jesus himself told us: '*I am the Light of the World. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the Light of Life.*' JOHN 8:12

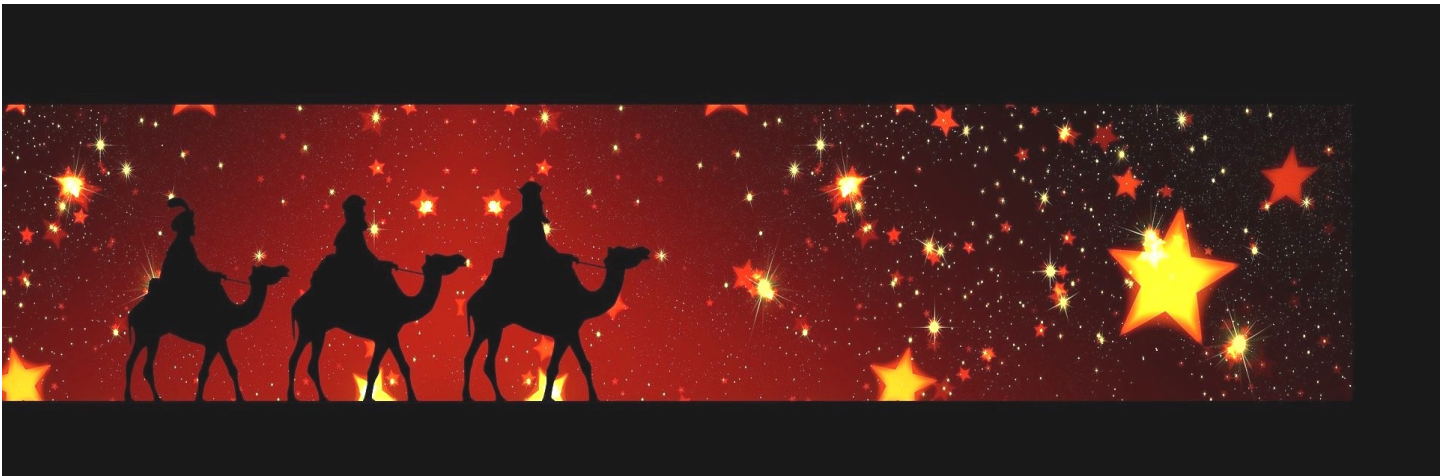
The great prophet Isaiah also foretold of the coming of Christ: '*for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you*' ISAIAH 60

The Bethlehem Star, whatever it was, has been and is now long since gone. But the wondrous glory of Jesus, the Light of the World, still dwells amongst us. It is as real today as ever and offers to all the Light of Life—meaning the hope of life eternal, in an age of peace and understanding.

So, if Christmas is about what God has given us—then Epiphany is about our response to the gift of great hope we have because of the birth of Jesus.

But what could we give Him in return? There is a hymn, In the Bleak Mid-Winter, that also asks this question—and gives an answer too;

What can I give him, poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb,  
If I were a wise man, I would do my part,  
yet what can I give Him:  
**I will give my heart.**





# Jo Roscoe asks Can Covid Kill Christmas?

*Fear not said he, for mighty  
dread had seized their  
troubled mind.*

No, Covid will not kill Christmas. There may not be a sense of fear around, so much as a sense of loss. We may not be free to gather with our family and friends.

But while ever a Christmas tree bauble can light up a child's eye with awe and wonder; while ever Father Christmas and his reindeer ride over the sparkling snow on a Christmas card or in a shop window; while ever Christians travel to Bethlehem

in body, mind or spirit, Christmas will be Christmas.

And as Christmas Eve draws near to its close, our hectic preparation will gradually cease. Hearts and minds will turn towards the darkening sky, in silent communion with loved ones here with us and those gone before.

Like the child we will feel the awe and wonder of this night.

Then church bells will ring out;

*All glory be to God on high,  
And to the earth be peace,  
Goodwill henceforth from man  
to man. Begin and never cease.*

**May we all share a  
blessed Christmas**



## An invitation from John Barnard Lay Reader

Whilst we are all still in a time of lockdown and with restrictions likely to extend well into the new year, this is a good time to prepare ourselves for further ministry in our parish for when we will be able meet together in person.

Our Pastoral Care group are keen to set-up and run various types of care groups which include care for the bereaved and young parents, among others. To this end we shall be running a Pastoral Care Course starting in January and running for 5 weeks.

Subjects covered are:

- Pastoral ministry and Christian discipleship
- Building relationships
- Praying with people
- Dealing with difficult situations
- Confidentiality, communication and accountability.

We begin on Monday 11th January and each Monday through to 15th February all starting at 7pm until 8:30pm.

All these sessions will be via Zoom so we will not have to 'go out' on cold dark evenings and will be led by members of our Pastoral Care Group.

I do urge you to consider coming along to these sessions whether you are considering actively being part of this project or if you are interested in being able to care for others more effectively.

Any questions or queries regarding our pastoral care in general or this course in particular, please contact me or any of our pastoral care group.

Mobile—07770 519290  
john209barnard@btinternet.com



# Stone, Flint and Brick

by Richard Morton, Church Warden

Our church and the Old Palace next door, both beautiful but very different, one built largely of flint and the other in brick, together tell part of a fascinating story about ancient buildings and the materials used in their construction. To us the sight of a flint church seems entirely normal and the finest examples – churches like Long Melford and Southwold – are stunning, but such buildings are rare outside the South-East and East Anglia and almost unknown outside Britain. So what is the story and what are the alternatives?

You might think of brick as a possibility and we are familiar with the cathedral tower at St Albans, constructed out of bricks salvaged from Roman Verulamium, but brick churches were, in fact, very rare in Britain until Victorian times, and we had no other brick cathedrals until work started at Westminster (the Catholic Cathedral) and Guildford early in the twentieth century.

The main reason for this, is that brick manufacture stopped in Britain when the Romans left in the fifth century and did not resume on any scale for another thousand years. During that time buildings of any size were built of stone. In the North and West this was of course no problem but in the South and East the nearest sources of good building stone were far away. The Normans imported stone from Caen and later supplies came from quarries around Stamford, but transport over such distances made things very expensive. At St Eth's the only part built entirely of stone is the Salisbury Chapel, probably with limestone from Ancaster in Lincolnshire.

An ingenious, more affordable and, as I have said, uniquely British alternative is the flintwork which we see at St Eth's. Local flints gathered from the fields or chalk pits, are set into lime mortar with some details like the west door carved in clunch, a very soft local stone, and with good building stone just for a few key elements like the buttresses. The flint was renewed for most parts of the church during the 1870s restoration, but the tower, dating from 1470, is in something much closer to its original state.

Now we come to something of a puzzle though, because Bishop John Morton while building our tower in flint was, at the same time, building his own palace next door in

brick, which had become fashionable after manufacture restarted in the early 1400s. He was not alone in making this distinction. At Tattershall in Lincolnshire the magnificent 1430s castle was built in brick with the church next door in stone and likewise at Trinity College in Cambridge the stone chapel stands out from the surrounding brickwork of the Great Court. Brick was used for many of the country's most important buildings throughout this period, including Hampton Court, the most splendid of Tudor Palaces, but it was not used at all for churches until much later, following the Great Fire, and only very rarely until the Nineteenth Century.

In this, England differs significantly from Continental Europe where brick had been used continuously since Roman times and where it is used for many great churches and cathedrals such as those in Lubeck and Albi.

I can think of no practical reason why this distinction should have been maintained and brick had great advantages when good stone was scarce because it could be made locally. If you venture, for instance, into the south eastern part of Hatfield Park you will find Brick Kiln Wood.

The tradition that only stone could be used to build the House of God appears though to have remained unshakeable even when it was being used for the magnificent houses of Kings and Bishops. The contrasting materials at the top of Fore Street are not an accident but a fine example of an important but curiously English building tradition.

*This article was originally written for our May 2020 issue of Refocused, which was not printed and hand delivered in the Parish due to COVID19—we hope you enjoy it.*





# Memorial Bench for Loga Pradhaban

A lovely photograph of Suba at the memorial bench just installed in Salisbury square in memory of her husband Loga who sadly died of Covid19 earlier this year.



Unfortunately, due to the virus, there could be no formal installation ceremony of the bench for Suba. Nevertheless, when she came to see it, Suba was overwhelmed and delighted and said how very grateful she is to all who had made it possible.

A big thank you to all the many people who made donations and sent memories of Loga, collated into a Book of Memories which was given to Suba; friends, residents, businesses, and support from Gascoyne Estates made all this possible. As well as being able to purchase and install the bench, there was a generous donation to UCL Hospital and a further gift to support Suba and Loga's son, Kaaviyan.

*Dear Friends and Residents of Old Hatfield,*

*My son, Kaaviyan and I are both incredibly touched that a bench has been placed in Salisbury Square in memory of my husband Loga.*

*Thank you to everyone who donated so generously. We are so grateful for your kind words and thoughtfulness during this difficult time.*

*It brings us great happiness that Loga has positively engaged with so many people during his time with us.*

*The installation of the bench is a wonderful way of celebrating his life for years to come.*

*Suba and Kaaviyan*

## Tail End..... News from the Bellringers

**Second Lockdown.** No ringing at St Eth's until after 2<sup>nd</sup> December. However, with kind permission from Father Darren, Mary and I went up the tower on Remembrance Sunday, and put a muffle on one side of the clapper of the 8<sup>th</sup> bell and rang it half-muffled for a few minutes before 11.00am and then again for a few minutes after 11.02am.

The picture below shows Mary pulling the 'sally' at handstroke. The 8<sup>th</sup> bell rope comes down next to a wonderful old notice in the Ringing Chamber which, see above right, states:

*'Rules and Orders of this Steeple'*  
If any person pulls a bell down with a Hat or Spurs on; curses or swear; smoke; or over-set a bell shall for every of the above offences forfeit the sum of six-pence  
*By Order of The Society*"



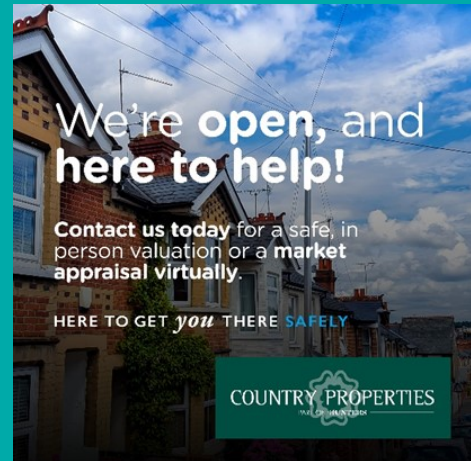
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With best wishes to everyone, Linda & Zoe.



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The country as a whole is facing unprecedented times. If social distancing and the effect it is having on our retail industry is not bad enough funerals are unfortunately affected as well.

Acting on guidelines set by our Funeral Trades Associations, the National SAIF and the NAFD, and the government we are having to sadly introduce the following measures:

1. We would ask you to contact us on 0800 174 220 to make an appointment to attend one of our offices.
2. We would ask that only 2 people attend our offices at one time.
3. Those attending the office are to wear a face covering or show an exemption notice.

4. You will be encouraged to scan and complete the NHS Track and Track QR Code displayed in our premises.
5. Limousines are now available, but the occupants will be expected to wear face masks with no exception.
6. Services are now possible in Church.
7. Up to 30 people may now attend a funeral however this number varies between facilities so our Funeral Arrangers will advise you accordingly.

I appreciate how upsetting these guidelines are and as a funeral director for nearly 26 years it is alien to me to not be able to provide the level of service and personal care that has been expected from J J Burgess & Sons. We are entering uncharted waters and I would ask that you work with us and be respectful of our staff who are trying, like the staff within the NHS, to continue to work under extreme conditions.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us: 0800 174 220



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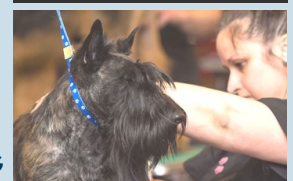
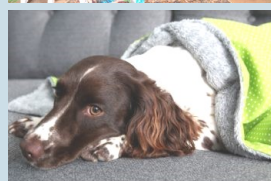
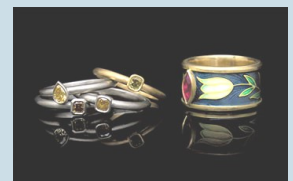


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Please contact—[maryrathbone@icloud.com](mailto:maryrathbone@icloud.com) if you have any editorial contributions.

# hyh

Herts Young Homeless

*Knitting is  
the new yoga  
(apparently)*



*St Mary's Church in North Mymms has been  
knitting blankets for the homeless for 5 years.*

*The blankets are for young people who are coming out  
of council care and setting up their first homes.*

*We are going to join St Mary's efforts and start  
knitting the squares that make up the blankets.*

*Is this something you would like to help with?*

*The soothing effect of knitting can be quite relaxing  
too—so it's a great win-win winter activity*

Contact: [maryrathbone@icloud.com](mailto:maryrathbone@icloud.com) 😊

The Herts Young Homeless charity at Gracemead House,  
in Hatfield Town Centre, helps young people in Herts aged  
18-24 who are coming out of care, to establish their first homes.

# DailyHOPE

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