

THE PARISH POST

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF SANDFORD, NEW BUILDINGS AND UPTON HELLIONS CHURCHES

1ST DECEMBER 2019

A warm welcome at the beginning of Advent to our communion service at Beacon Church, New Buildings at 8.30am and then at St Swithun's Church, Sandford at 10am.

REFLECTIVE MORNING PRAYER – every **Wednesday** at 9.00am at St Swithun's

PENNY SOMERVILLE'S TALK ABOUT THE WORLD OF GLASS

Penny gave us a fascinating talk about stained glass last Friday. As well as a personal memoir of how she got into it, we learned amongst other things of the treasure that is medieval stained glass, mostly found in church windows. One of the best examples in the country is just up the road at Doddiscombeleigh! The evening raised £530 for the Friends of St Swithun's, St Mary's and Beacon Churches. Thank you Penny and well done everyone.

SANDFORD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL – DECEMBER 13TH-15TH

We will be decorating a tree with stars, big and small, sparkly and matt, multi-coloured and plain, fabric and card, 2D and 3D ... you get the idea. If you have any tree decorations that are star related and you are willing to loan them, please let Linda BS know.

GIVING MACHINE

Black Friday or not, if you shop online don't forget about 800 on-line stores participate in this scheme. PCC Sandford & Upton Hellions is registered on the site so to find out how you can register as a Giver, go to Giving Machine website www.thegivingmachine.co.uk.

CREDITON FOOD BANK

Thank you to all who regularly support the food bank, either at the supermarkets or by leaving items at St Swithun's. Please don't stop, the need hasn't declined. And it's definitely OK to put in some festive extras at this time of year!

PLASTIC FREE CHURCHYARD

We have had notices around the churchyard for some months explaining that we are aiming for our churchyard memorials to be plastic free and environmentally friendly by the end of 2019. Instead we are encouraging the use of bio-degradable or natural plants and foliage. Christmas wreaths can be an exception but even many of these are now completely natural. Please bear this in mind as you tend graves and memorials now and in the future.

THANK YOU TO THE CAFE GROUP

Whenever we have an event at church that requires refreshments afterwards, the Cafe Group comes to the fore and apparently effortlessly snacks, food and drinks appear. Thank you to the whole team who take it in turns to play host and help make sure our events run smoothly.

BIRTHDAY WISHES

A very Happy Birthday to our busy churchwarden Linda Bennet Smith today and to Renate on Monday.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

- Pray for the success of #AdventChallenge, which suggests 24 daily things to do through Advent and #FollowTheStar which offers prayers and meditations through December to keep us in touch with Christmas. You can find more details of both online.
- Continue to hold before God those we know who are ill or unwell in any way, praying for their

- families and carers too.
- Pray for your nearest neighbours or work colleagues, that God would bless their homes and work, their relationships and health, their choices and their future. Whether they acknowledge him or no, God has a passionate love for them.

SUNDAY'S READINGS – ISAIAH 2:1-5; PSALM 122; ROMANS 13:11-14 AND MATTHEW 24:36-44

Today children around the country open the first door of their Advent Calendars, it's a visible and chocolatey count down to Christmas Day. And so the adventure begins! The root word for advent and adventure is the same, '*arrival, coming, about to happen*'. The season of advent helps us prepare for the exciting arrival of Jesus into the world at Christmas. But our readings today also focus on Jesus' return to earth to establish the Kingdom of Heaven here. We can't use a calendar to count down for that awesome event as only God knows the timing but we must be prepared for it to happen.

CHRISTMAS AROUND THE PARISH

Carol service at St Mary's Church, Upton Hellions – Saturday 7 th at 6pm
Sandford School Nativity service at St Swithun's – Friday 13 th at 11am
Sandford Congregational Church Christmas Tree Festival – 12 th -14 th daytimes
Carol service at St Swithun's Church, Sandford – Saturday 14 th at 4pm
Carol singing at Summerhayes - Sunday 15 th at 11am
Carol service at Beacon Church, New Buildings – Sunday 15 th at 4pm
Christmas service at Sandford Congregational – Sunday 15 th at 4pm
Carols in the Square – Tuesday 17 th at 7pm (followed by carol singing at Dowrich)
Crib service at St Swithun's – Tuesday 24 th at 4pm
Christmas Eve Eucharist at St Swithun's – Tuesday 24 th at 9.30pm
Christmas Day communion at Beacon – 8.30am
Christmas Day communion at St Swithun's – 9.45am
Christmas Day communion at St Mary's – 11.15am
