



**The
Prince
of
Peace**

December 2023
& January 2024

Stratton Team Ministry

Seeking, Sharing, and Serving God Together

www.strattonteamministry.co.uk



For a child is born to us, a son is given to us, and his name will be . . . the Prince of Peace. Is 9:6

STRATTON TEAM MINISTRY

Priest in Charge: Reverend Elveen Mead [Usual Day off Friday]

Lay Minister: Lisa Lodwick
Alison Burston
Dan Read

Church Administrator Georgina Martin 826505
Email: stmchurchoffice020@gmail.com

CHURCHWARDENS

St. Margaret's Church and St Mary Magdalene Church

Mrs June Lewis 822954
Mr Ian Jones 07769703385
Mrs Diane Whitford 824339

Deputy Wardens

Mr David Horne 724776
Mr Richard Pflieger 828367

St Leonards Church

Mrs Liz Hillman 762935
Mr Chris Pope

Joint Parish Safeguarding Officers & DBS Lead Recruiters

Dr Mike Boshier 07799835437
Mrs Mary Boshier

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL for St. Margaret's and St Mary Magdalene

Mrs Rosalind Mitchell (Secretary) 764146
Mrs Diane Whitford
(Deputy Secretary of St Mary Magdalene) 824339

St Leonards

Mr Michael Curtis
(PCC secretary St Leonards)

LOCAL CHURCH CONTACTS

Stratton Methodist Church, 829335
St Mary's R C Church, The Presbytery, Swindon 535089

Rectors Ramblings

I wonder if you've ever had a moment where you've just watched the news or read the paper and seen what's going on in the Middle East or somewhere else in the world and felt the absence of anything hopeful.

The definition of hope is the sense that things are going to improve and get better. I think we all as humans have that underlying need to have hope.

If you search for songs with a theme of Hope within them the list is a lot longer than you might expect.

So it seems to be something that a lot of us need. Emelie Sandé sings 'I just hope I'm not the only one', Jack Jackson sings 'you better hope your not alone'.

It's said that antidote to any despair might be hope, experts say. It's one of the most powerful—and essential—human mindsets, and possible to achieve even when it feels out of reach.

"Hope is a way of thinking," says Chan Hellman, a psychologist who's the founding director of the Hope Research Centre at the University of Oklahoma. "We know it can be taught; we know it can be nurtured. It's not something you either have or don't have."

As we begin our journey through Advent this year with the prospect of Christmas fast approaching. I wonder if we need to be reminded that the hope that God, our Heavenly Father offers us is much more robust and rooted in the reality of all that he came in human form as a vulnerable baby to bring.

As we enjoy time catching up with friends and family over the next few weeks and the Christmas period itself, let's take the opportunity to be thankful that we live in peace in comparison to others across the world and don't often fear for our safety. Let's take the opportunity to be generous with what we have so that those in more vulnerable situations financially and otherwise might have the

chance for that grounded hope to be nurtured in their situation and circumstance.

As we meet in church week by week during advent may we be praying for the hope of the Christ child to stir in our hearts and remind us that we are not alone. May we draw strength from knowing the buck doesn't stop with us but that we take responsibility for our part in making our community a more hope filled place.

Every Blessing
Rev. Elveen



Wind in the Bible

Wind features frequently in The Bible. As a youngster I revelled in a windy day as I felt invigorated by it blowing into my face and through my hair (true, I did have thick, wavy hair in my youth). Wind is invisible yet its effects can be closely observed.

For example, in Exodus, The Lord drove back the sea with a strong, East wind affording The Israelites a passage to safety. Again, He caused a wind to blow to disperse the flood in order that Noah could bring The Ark to dry land. Flocks of Quail flying a metre above the land brought by a strong wind also gave sustenance to the Israelites in their desert exodus.

On the day of Pentecost the sound of a mighty wind preceded the believers receiving The Holy Spirit. Another time when the disciples were rowing on the lake miles off shore a strong wind got up which frightened them but the sight of Jesus walking on the water restored their calm.

We cannot see the wind, although at times, its effects can be all too apparent, neither can we see The Holy Spirit. Our prayers and above all, our faith enable us to recognize God's answers by way of His Holy Spirit.

How great it is to see and believe, but how much greater to believe without seeing (John 20: verse 29).

Colin Howell



Work to start on rehanging the bells at St Margaret's Church

January 8th 2024 after 4 years of planning and gaining permission.

After 4 years in planning the work to rehang the bells at St Margaret's Church will start on 8th January 2024 and the realisation of the late John Cornwall's dream. The last time they were rehung was in 1935.

John Taylors and Co of Loughborough will start to dismantle the ceiling of the tower in preparation to remove the bells for work to be carried out at their foundry. This will allow the extensive work on the tower by Beards Ltd of Swindon to remove the old Victorian chimney to create a larger ringing space. A mezzanine floor will be added to give a modern bell ringing chamber with access by a staircase from the church.

A disabled toilet will then be installed on the ground floor as well as an area for storage and the reworking of the main electric controls and wiring of the church within the tower. To make the area at the back of church more spacious 11 pews will be removed to give an open space and to be able to accommodate a kitchen serving area. The Font will be moved a metre to give a clearer entrance to church and allow easier access to the Nave. For larger attended services we will have stacking chairs to be used at the back of the church. The bells will be retuned, rehung with new bell fittings, repainted frame, ladders, new window netting and a new ceiling will be fitted.

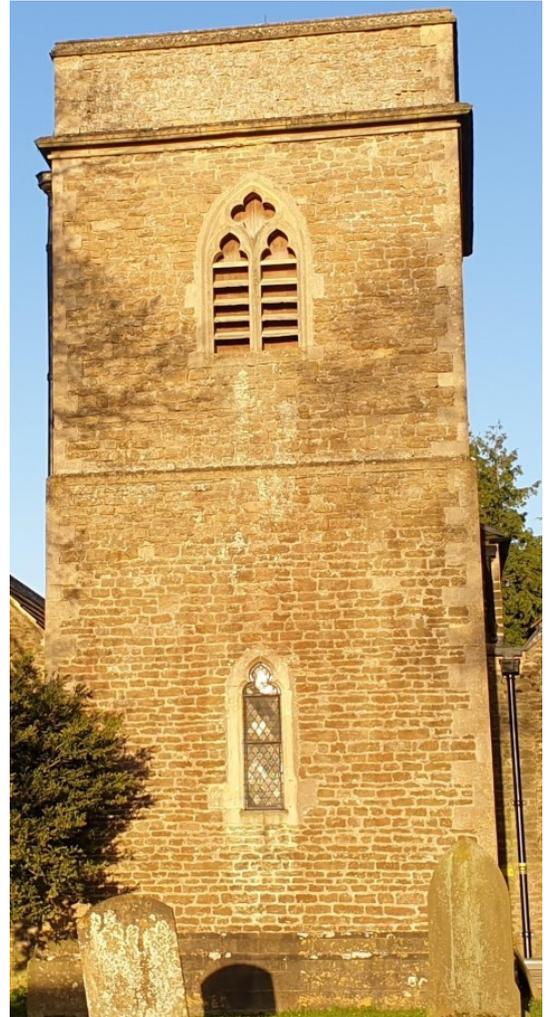
It is hoped to keep the church open whilst the work is carried out and we will be able to update this as work progresses. A new services channel will connect water, sewerage and electric wiring will be installed.

Once this 1st phase of the project has been carried out we will be looking to complete the final stage of the re-tiling of the South roof and Porch.

We are looking forward to seeing the revamped church building for use in the 21st century, as the project moves forward we will update the progress.

St Margaret's Building Committee

Richard Pflieger





Advent and Christmas Prayers 2023

A selection of prayers for the season of Advent and Christmas

Advent and Christmas Intercessions (option 1)

God of Hope, be with us on our Advent journey, be with us in our gathering and in our travelling together, be with us in our worship and in our praying together,
Be with us on this Advent journey of hope.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

This Advent time, we remember Mary and Joseph, giving thanks for their faithfulness,
Courage and obedience, stepping out into the unknown In the strength of your spirit,
Playing their part In the fulfilment of your plan to bring your people home again.
We pray that their example might be the pattern of our lives, that when your gentle whisper
Breaks through the noise of this world and into our small corner,
We might be ready to listen and having listened, to act.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Lord in this season when every heart should be happy and light, many of us are struggling with
the heaviness of life, with burdens that steal our joy.
Fill us with your light instead of our darkness, help us clear the way in our hearts and minds
to concentrate on the true meaning of Christ's coming and not on the worldly things,
which so often block out our thoughts and worship of you.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We live in disturbing days across the world; a world filled with doubt and conflict, inequality and
injustice.
Make this time of waiting we pray, the time of a new awakening, of thought, consideration,
endeavour and action, by all leaders and all nations, to bring about health, peace, freedom and
understanding.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Almighty and merciful God, whose son, Jesus Christ, understood people's fear and pain
before they were aware of them, have mercy on those in need, for the hungry and the
homeless, for those in refugee camps, hospitals and care homes, for those who are cared for in
their own homes.
Bless those who work to bring them relief, inspire generosity and compassion in all our hearts at
this time of goodwill to all men.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Advent and Christmas Intercessions (option 2)

Let us pray to Jesus our Saviour.
Christ, born in a stable, give courage to all who are homeless.
Jesus, Saviour, **hear our prayer.**

Christ, for whom the angels sang,
give the song of the kingdom to all who weep.
Jesus, Saviour, **hear our prayer.**

Christ, worshipped by the shepherds,
give peace on earth to all who are oppressed.
Jesus, Saviour, **hear our prayer.**

Christ, before whom the wise men knelt,
give humility and wisdom to all who govern.
Jesus, Saviour, **hear our prayer.**

Christ, whose radiance filled a lowly manger,
give the glory of your resurrection to all who rest in you.
Jesus, Saviour, **hear our prayer.**

**Jesus, Saviour, child of Mary, you know us and love us,
you share our lives and hear our prayer.
Glory to you for ever. Amen.**

Advent and Christmas Prayers:

In this Advent of expectation draw us together in unity, that our praise and worship might echo in these walls and also through our lives.

In this Advent of expectation draw us together in mission, that the hope within might be the song we sing, and the melody of our lives.

In this Advent of expectation draw us together in service, that the path we follow might lead us from a stable to a glimpse of eternity.

Father, this Advent, we eagerly await Jesus drawing near to us again. In a world that can feel overcome by the sins of violence, poverty and injustice, we pray that we can be instruments of peace and hope in Your name. Amen

Lord Jesus, Master of both the light and the darkness, send your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas.

We who have so much to do and seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day,

We who are anxious over many things look forward to your coming among us.

We who are blessed in so many ways long for the complete joy of your kingdom.

We whose hearts are heavy seek the joy of your presence.

We are your people, walking in darkness, yet seeking the light.

To you we say, "Come Lord Jesus!" Amen.

By Henri J.M. Nouwen

Lord of beauty and majesty, you revealed to simple shepherds the very joy of heaven in Jesus. You were proclaiming to the whole of creation that things had changed forever. The Messiah, the anointed one, had come. Lord, we thank you that that same Jesus is the one we meet by faith today. The Jesus of new life, forgiveness and hope is with us. Hallelujah, we praise your name and join with all creation in celebration. Amen.

Father,

Help me to become rooted and established in your love. Please give me the power, together with all your people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that we may be filled to the measure of all your fullness.

Amen.

Advent Wreath Prayer

Lord our God, We praise you for your Son, Jesus Christ:

He is Emmanuel, the hope of the peoples,

He is the wisdom that teaches and guides us,

He is the Savior of every nation.

Lord God, Let your blessing come upon us as we light the candles of this wreath.

May the wreath and its light be a sign of Christ's promise to bring us salvation.

May He come quickly and not delay.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Christmas Tree Blessing

Holy Creator of Trees, Bless with your abundant grace this our Christmas tree as a symbol of joy. May its evergreen branches be a sign of your never fading promises.

May its colourful lights and ornaments call us to decorate with love our home and our world.

May the gifts that surround this tree be symbols of the gifts that we have received from the Tree of Christ's Cross.

Holy Christmas tree within our home, may Joy and Peace come and nest in your branches and in our hearts. Amen

Christmas Eve Prayer

Christmas Eve is filled with anticipation, and distractions. A simple prayer before bed can be a nice way to close the day, refocus on the birth of Jesus and connect the day that's passed with the big upcoming celebration come morning.

The Christmas Eve prayer attributed to Robert Louis Stevenson, a Scottish poet and author from the 19th century, remains a popular choice:

Loving Father, Help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world.

Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting.

Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children, and Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Christmas Day Prayer

Holy Jesus, by being born one of us, and lying humbly in a manger, you show us how much God loves the world.

Let the light of your love always shine in our hearts, until we reach our home in heaven, and see you on your throne of glory. Amen

Christmas Dinner Grace

Dear God, we thank you for everyone gathered around this table, for the food we will enjoy, and for the love we all share. We give thanks this day for the birth of our Savior. In His name we pray. Amen.



Weekly Prayers for January – Faith for the future

Monday: Together with hope

‘May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.’ *Romans 15:13*

O Lord, open my eyes that I might see the needs of others Open my ears that I might hear their cries; Open my heart so that they need not be without succour;

Let me not be afraid to defend the weak because of the anger of the strong; not afraid to defend the poor because of the anger of the rich.

Show me where love and hope and faith are needed and use me to bring them to those places.

And so open my eyes and my ears that I may be able to do your will.

Elizabeth Stickney

Walk with us in our journey of hope

Tuesday: Encounters with God

‘Great is the LORD! He is most worthy of praise! No one can measure his greatness. Let each generation tell its children of your mighty acts; let them proclaim your power. I will speak of the glorious splendour of your majesty and meditate on your wonderful works.’ *Psalms 145:3-5*

‘Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.’

Romans 12.2

Lord, just as the lives of men and women in the Bible were transformed as they experienced Your living presence, may we be changed as we encounter You afresh today.

This we pray in your name.

Disturb us, O Lord when we are too well pleased with ourselves when our dreams have come true because we have dreamed too little, because we sailed too close to the shore.

Disturb us, O Lord, when, with the abundance of things we possess, we have lost our thirst for the water of life; when, having fallen in love with time, we have ceased to dream of eternity; and when, in our efforts to build a new earth, we have allowed our vision of Heaven to grow dim.

Stir us, O Lord, to dare more boldly, to venture into wider seas where storms show Thy mastery, where we are losing sight of land, and where we shall find the stars.

In the name of Him who pushed back the horizons of our hopes and invited the brave to follow.
Amen

Desmond Tutu from an original prayer by Sir Francis Drake

Walk with us in our journey of hope

Wednesday: Blessed assurance

The Lord gives strength to his people, and the Lord blesses his people with peace. *Psalm 29:11*
To you, O Lord, we bring our lives, Troubled, broken or at ease, A sacrificial offering for you to use.

Take away our selfishness and teach us to love as you loved, Take away our sense of pride and show us the meaning of humility. Take away our blindness and show us the world through your eyes. Take away our greed and teach us how to give as you gave.

Show us your ways, teach us your paths, That we might walk with you more closely. Our hand in your hand, our feet in your footsteps; From the baby in a stable to eternity.

This we pray in your name. Amen.

Liz Pullen

Walk with us in our journey of hope

Thursday: A reconciling presence

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. *John 14:27*

The words 'Father Forgive' are used as the response in the Coventry Litany of Reconciliation: 'All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.' Romans 3:23

The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class, **Father forgive.**
The covetous desires of people and nations to possess what is not their own,

Father, forgive.

The greed which exploits the work of human hands and lays waste the earth,

Father, forgive.

Our envy of the welfare and happiness of others,

Father, forgive.

Our indifference to the plight of the imprisoned, the homeless, the refugee,

Father, forgive.

The lust which dishonours the bodies of men, women and children,

Father, forgive.

The pride which leads us to trust in ourselves and not in God,

Father, forgive.

Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another,

as God in Christ forgave you.

(The Coventry Litany of Reconciliation, by Canon Joseph Poole in 1958, is prayed in the new Cathedral every weekday at noon, and throughout the world by partners in the Community of the Cross of Nails.)

Walk with us in our journey of hope

Friday: Faith in the family

'I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in Love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge – that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.' Ephesians 3:14-19
Heavenly Father, thank you for marriage, which reflects Christ's love for us. May it continue to be honoured and recognised within society as a means of providing security and love to a family. Today we remember all those contemplating marriage, those attending marriage preparation and those seeking marriage enrichment.

Lord of love, we thank you for every marriage and family where love is at the centre. We pray for an increase in understanding and of grace and love to grow in their lives.

We remember the adults and children in relationships badly affected by poverty, conflict, unfaithfulness, neglect or cold-heartedness. May they know your healing presence.

We bring before you, those who have lost a loved one and are experiencing grief and loneliness.

God of all comfort prompt caring friends and family members to express their love and support at this difficult time.

Lord in your mercy **Hear our prayer**

Walk with us in our journey of hope

Saturday: Holy Ground

'The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it: for he founded it on the seas and established it on the waters.' *Psalm 21:1-2*

Creator God, you made the goodness of the land, the riches of the sea and the rhythm of the seasons; as we thank you for your gracious providing may we cherish and respect this planet and its peoples.

Living God, you call us to be good stewards of this earthly home: strengthen us to care for your creation; forgive us when, through our greed and indifference, we abuse its beauty and damage its potential. Empower us, through your Spirit to so nurture and love the world, that all creation sings to your glory.

God of creation and Lord of life, you entrusted us to care for our environment, but in many parts of the world we have failed. Help us to realise how fragile and unstable our surroundings are, because we are not looking after creation. Help us to understand how the most insignificant little flowers, and the tiniest insects, each creature and each individual are all part of a wondrous whole, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Walk with us in our journey of hope

December



3rd December	First Sunday of Advent		
St Margaret's Church	St Leonard's Church		St Mary Magdalene Church
9:30am	9:30am	4pm	10am
Holy Communion Service	Sunday Morning Worship	Advent Carol Service	Family Christingle Service
10th December	Second Sunday of Advent		
St Margaret's Church	St Mary Magdalene Church		St Leonard's Church
9:30am	9:30am		11am
Sunday Morning Worship	Holy Communion Service		Family Christingle Service
17th December	Third Sunday of Advent		
Coleview Community Centre	11am		Team Christmas Carol Service
St Margaret's Church	6pm		Christmas Carols by Candlelight
22nd to 25th December	Christmas Services Please See Our Other Poster		
31st December	First Sunday of Christmas		
St Margaret's Church	10am		Sunday Morning Team Worship

Please see our website for the most up to date information www.strattonteamministry.co.uk

We will endeavor to give as much notice as possible to any changes but that may not always be possible.



22ND DECEMBER		FRIDAY		
St Mary Magdalene Church	7pm	Christmas Carol Service		
24TH DECEMBER		CHRISTMAS EVE		
St Margaret's Church	St Mary Magdalene Church		St Leonard's Church	
11pm	5pm	9pm	3:30pm	7pm
Holy Communion Service	Crib service	Holy Communion Service	Walking Nativity	Carols by Candlelight
25TH DECEMBER		CHRISTMAS DAY		
St Margaret's Church	10am	Holy Communion Service		

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January



7th January	Epiphany 1 Baptism of Christ	
St Margaret's Church	St Leonard's Church	St Mary Magdalene Church
9:30am	9:30am	10am
Holy Communion Service	Sunday Morning Worship	All Age Worship
14th January	Epiphany 2	
St Margaret's Church	St Mary Magdalene Church	St Leonard's Church
9:30am	9:30am	11am
Sunday Morning Worship	Holy Communion Service	Family Service
21st January	Epiphany 3	
St Leonard's Church	10am	Sunday Morning Team Worship
28th January	Epiphany 4 Presentation of Christ in the Temple Candlemas	
St Margaret's Church	St Leonard's Church	Coleview Community Centre
9:30am	9:30am	11am
Sunday Morning Worship	Holy Communion Service	Holy Communion Service

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SATURDAY SCENE AND BUMPS & BABES CELEBRATE CHRISTINGLE



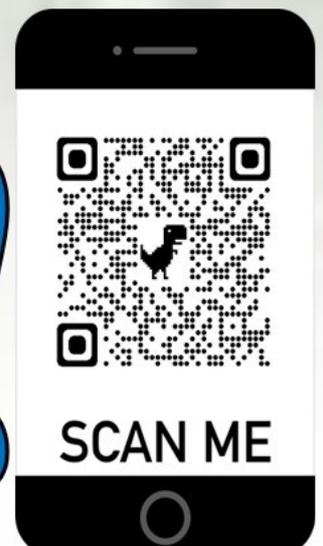
AT ST MARGARET'S CENTRE

(KENWIN CLOSE, OFF ERMIN STREET, STRATTON ST. MARGARET)

SATURDAY 9TH DECEMBER

@ 4PM

FREE!



St Margaret's Church Stratton



at

St Margaret's Centre
Every Thursday

9:30am - 11:30am

Sundays after Church Services

Tea also available

Everyone Welcome

On Thursday the 14th December the
Children from St Margaret's Pre-
School will visit to sing some
Christmas carols.



St Mary Magdalene Church South Marston

Hosts

MEETING POINT

A 'drop in' for all members of our
community

Come and Join Us for Coffee

In the Village Hall

10:00 - 12:00

Saturday

16th December

20th January 2024

Enquiries or for table reservations
please call

01793 824339

stm



St Leonard's Church Stanton

Hosts Coffee Morning now at
Stanton House Hotel

10:15am - noon

On Wednesday

20th of December 2023

17th January 2023

Everyone Welcome



With Carols, memories and
mince pies in Dec



St Leonard's Church Stanton

Hosts Coffee Morning now at

Stanton House Hotel

10:15am - noon

On Wednesday

17th of January 2024

Everyone Welcome





5th Swindon Boy's Brigade

- . Do you enjoy meeting friends?
- . Do you enjoy playing sports and games ?
- . Learning new skills ?
- . Making crafts ?
- . Taking part in events and competitions ?

We have vacancies for Boys aged 5 - 11 years.
Based at St. Margaret's Church Centre,
for nearly 50 years.

For more information

contact:- T. Daglish
5swindonbb@gmail.com

<https://boys-brigade.org.uk/join/>



**THE BOYS'
BRIGADE** 
>the adventure begins here

Bumps & Babes

ARE YOU A NEW
OR EXPECTANT PARENT?

Register Now

forms.gle/fM4NesmSPYWTNuiC7

Come and join Stratton Team Ministry for our Bumps and Babes group on Tuesdays.

Bumps & Babes is a place for expectant parents and parents with babies (up to one year old*) to meet and chat over a coffee – sharing in the experiences of pregnancy and the joys and challenges of the early months of parenthood.

Mats and toys are available for you to play with your babies, as well as time for a few songs!

We are joined by guests each a month to share with us about subjects from weaning to breastfeeding; faith to reusable nappies!

Register for your place now via the link or complete a form on arrival – we look forward to welcoming you!

When: Tuesdays 11.15-12.15
(term time only)

Where: St Margaret's Centre,
Kenwin Close, SN3 4NY

Cost: Free

Contact Us & Useful Links



Bumpsandbabes9@gmail.com



www.strattonteamministry.co.uk/explore/kids-and-youth/bumps-babes/



Register for your place now
<https://forms.gle/fM4NesmSPYWTNuiC7>



Bumps and Babes St Margaret's Swindon



Warm and **Welcome** Space

Stratton Team Ministry

**Providing spaces with respect,
warmth & accessibility.**

**At St Margaret's Centre
Every Thursday
9:30 - 14:00**

This Warm and Welcome Space can be used as a place to spend time, stay warm and feel safe.

You do not have to pay to attend, tell people why you're here or participate in activities.

Jokes

A Seasonal Assortment.

Help Wanted

Santa needs new reindeers. The first bunch has grown old.

Dasher has arthritis, Comet hates the cold.

Prancer's sick of staring at Dancer's big behind

Cupid married Blitzen and Dancer's lost his mind

Dancer's mad at Vixen for stepping on his toes

Vixen's being thrown out-she laughed at Rudolph's nose

If you are a reindeer we hope you will apply

There is just one tricky part: You must know how to fly



The Christmas Tree Light Stringers Lament

I strung the lights on the Christmas tree and gingerly plugged them in.

That's when I noticed a bulb was out and my troubles did begin.

I found my box of spare bulbs in my top workshop drawer

I quickly changed the bulb but then out went two more

I got two more replacements and carefully plugged them in

Then I gathered all the burnt out bulbs and trashed them in the bin

As I walked back to the tree the whole string started to blink.

Now this wasn't a twinkle light set and my stomach began to sink

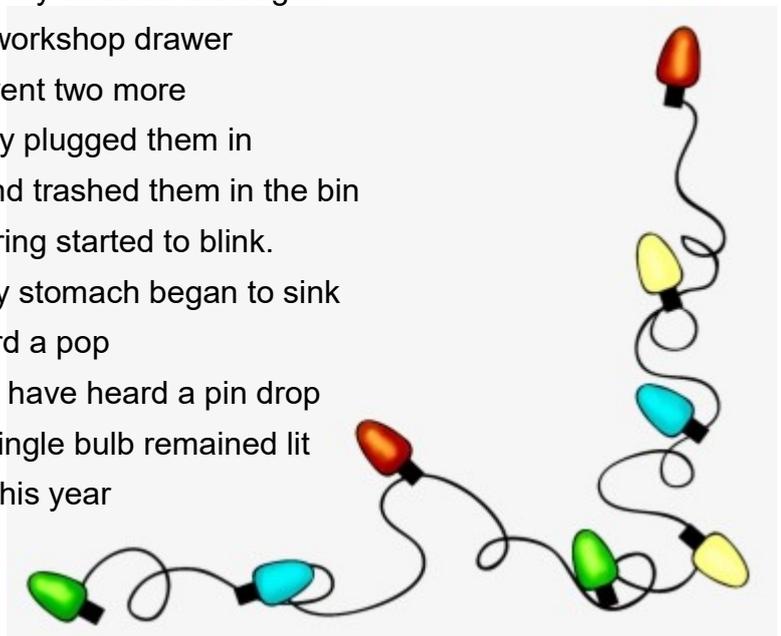
Suddenly I heard a sizzle and then I heard a pop

Then everything went so silent you could have heard a pin drop

The whole darn thing just died, not one single bulb remained lit

So the tree will just have to remain dark this year

Because the light string has just quit.



*
** Why did the Christmas turkey form a band? It had the drumsticks!

*
** What do snowmen eat for breakfast? Ice Krispies

*
** What do you get if you cross Santa with a duck? A Christmas Quacker

A few quotes:

Are you going to kiss me under this mistletoe? I wouldn't kiss you under an anaesthetic

Coronation Street

I'm not saying a friend of mine is not pretty, but last Christmas she stood under the mistletoe waiting for someone to kiss her and she was still stood there at Lent.

Les Dawson

I gave my wife a gift certificate for Christmas she ran out to exchange it for a bigger size

Milton Berle

Three phrases fill the air at Christmas time:

'Peace on Earth', 'Goodwill to all men', and 'Batteries Not Included'.

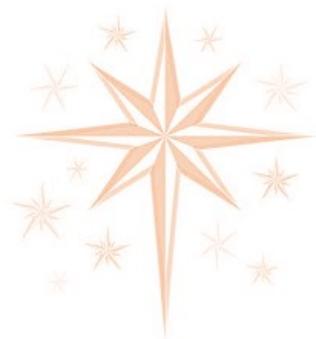
Tony Deyal

The time draws near the birth of Christ. When everything is overpriced.

Sylvia Townsend Warner

Christmas Star.

A diamond shines no brighter than the lovely Christmas Star
It shines in all its brilliance, it's seen from near or far
A symbol of the Christ child, as he lay upon the hay
It tells to all the waiting world a king was born that day.
Oh Bethlehem star keep shining, give us faith and hope and love
Keep our thoughts forever turning to the Saviour up above.
Give us strength, and hope and courage, to do our best by far.
And never falter in our faith, as we watch that Christmas Star.



Wishing you a Christmas like those of long ago
With sleigh bells and fir trees all covered with snow
An old fashioned Christmas of joy and good cheer
Shared with those you love best and who hold you dear.

The Joker



GIVING

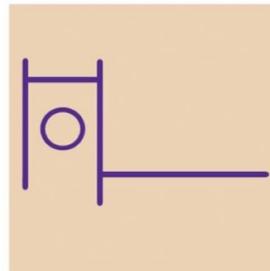
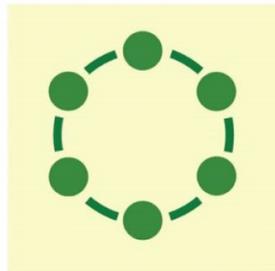
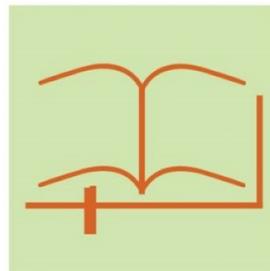
You may be aware that many charities and organisations are struggling at this time, this includes churches.

Great News! You can now sign up to join the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) online. There is a link for this on the Giving page of our website:

<https://www.strattonteamministry.co.uk/giving/>

If you haven't considered the PGS before, we would ask you to prayerfully consider doing so. It's very easy to sign up and it works in a similar way to a Direct Debit (that it is intended to replace), in that a regular payment authorised by you goes out either weekly, monthly or yearly straight to the church. It is perfectly safe and can be stopped or changed at any time.

PGS is a great way to give to the work and mission of St Margaret's Church. Donations given through PGS come straight to the Church, there are no admin fees or bank charges for us to pay. 41 people have now signed up to do this - Thank you



TM

PARISH
GIVING
SCHEME



Recycling @ St Margaret's Centre

**RECYCLE YOUR
CRISP PACKETS HERE!**



RECYCLE FOR



**WILTSHIRE
AIR AMBULANCE**

In support of

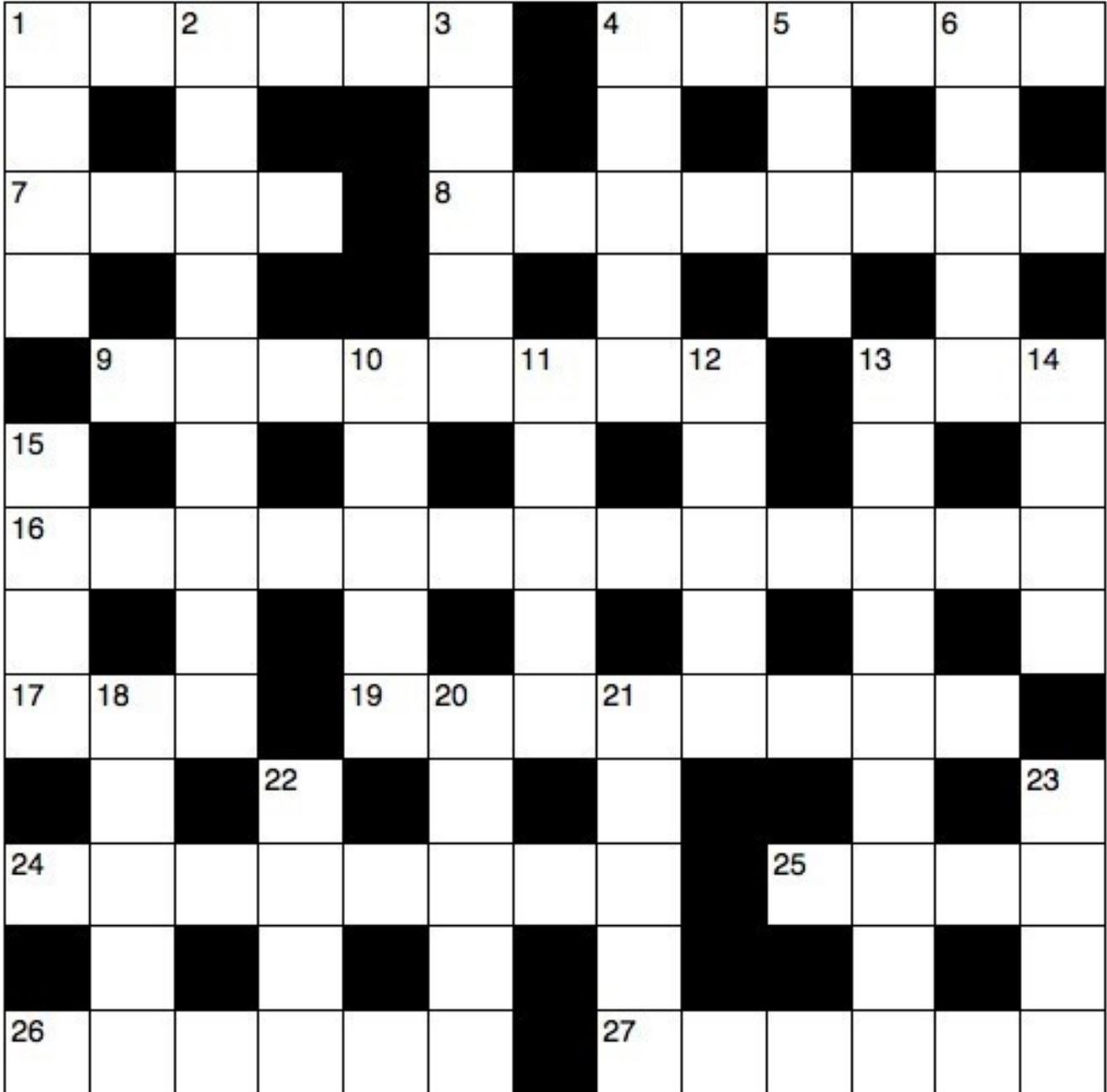
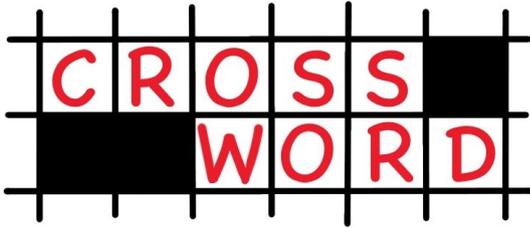
**WE ARE
MACMILLAN.
CANCER SUPPORT**

Recycling @ St
Margaret's Centre



WE ARE PLEASED TO SAY WE
CAN TAKE
MEDICINE BLISTER PACKS
THANK YOU FOR YOUR
SUPPORT





Across

- 1 Rely (Psalm 62:7) (6)
- 4 'He stretches out the heavens like a — , and spreads them out like a tent to live in' (Isaiah 40:22) (6)
- 7 What the dove carried the olive leaf in, when it returned to Noah's ark (Genesis 8:11) (4)
- 8 Annoy (1 Samuel 1:6) (8)

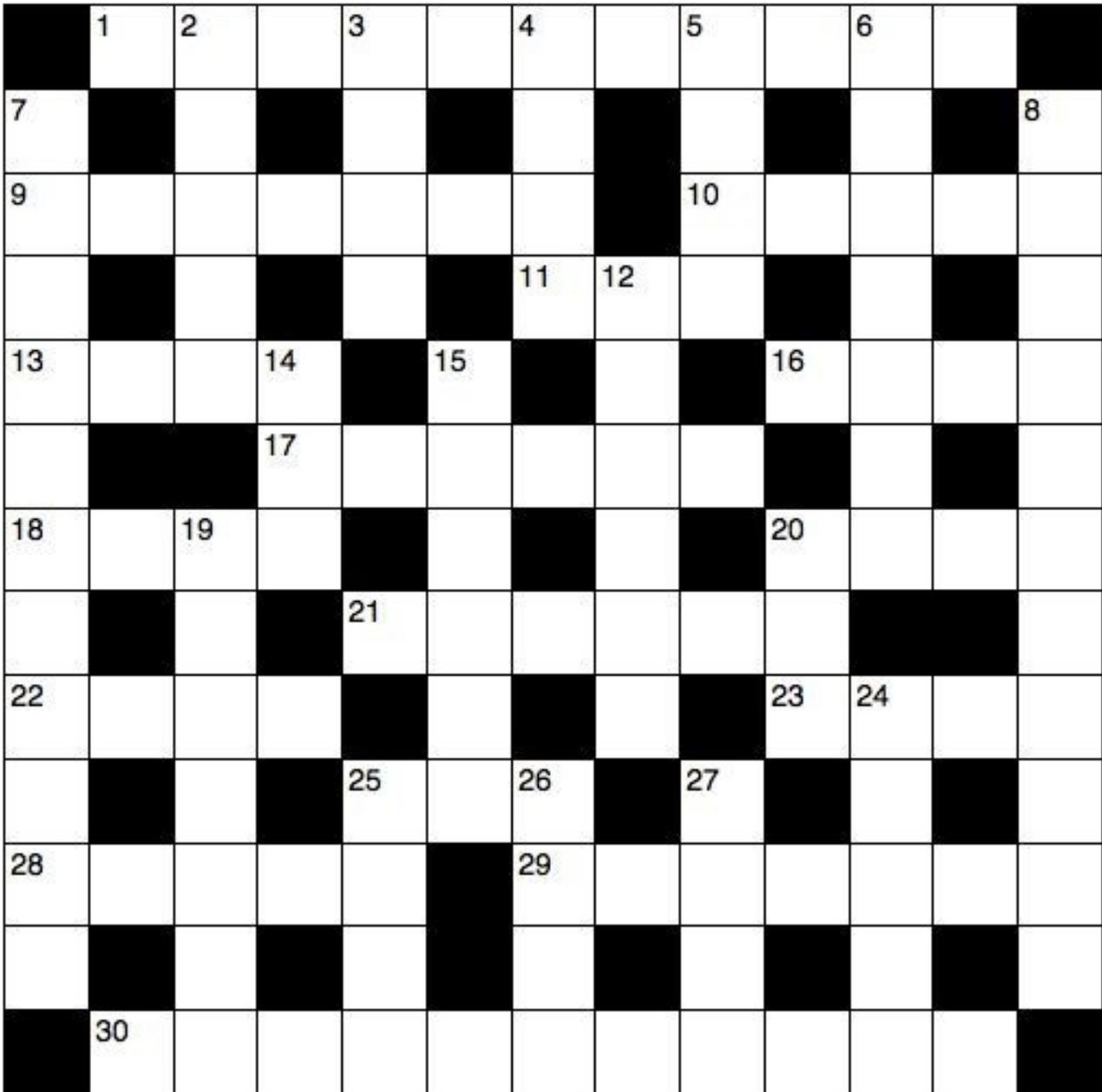
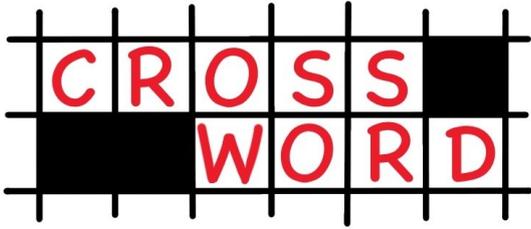
Across

- 9 Judah's last king, who ended his days as a blind prisoner in Babylon (Jeremiah 52:11) (8)
13 'They all — and were satisfied' (Luke 9:17) (3)
16 Eliphaz the Temanite was one; so was Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite (Job 2:11; 16:2) (4,9)
17 National Association of Evangelicals (of the USA) (1,1,1)
19 Popular song for New Year's Eve, Auld — — (4,4)
24 Able dock (anag.) (8)
25 The number of stones David chose for his confrontation with Goliath (1 Samuel 17:40) (4)
26 Elgar's best-known 'Variations' (6)
27 Soak (Isaiah 16:9) (6)

Down

- 1 Money owing (Deuteronomy 15:3) (4)
2 Conciliatory (Titus 3:2) (9)
3 'Do this, whenever you — it, in remembrance of me' (1 Corinthians 11:25) (5)
4 A group assisting in the governance of the Roman Catholic Church (5)
5 One of the gifts Joseph's brothers took with them on their second journey to Egypt (Genesis 43:11) (4)
6 'Reach out your hand and — — into my side. Stop doubting and believe' (John 20:27) (3,2)
10 Be outstandingly good (2 Corinthians 8:7) (5)
11 'What — — that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?' (Psalm 8:4) (2,3)
12 Horse's feet (Judges 5:22) (5)
13 Notice (Deuteronomy 17:4) (9)
14 Comes between 2 Chronicles and Nehemiah (4)
15 One of Israel's northern towns conquered by Ben-Hadad (1 Kings 15:20) (4)
18 Narnia's Lion (5)
20 One of the two rivers in which Naaman would have preferred to wash (2 Kings 5:12) (5)
21 Avarice—one of the evils that come from inside people (Mark 7:22) (5)
22 Knight Grand Cross of St Michael and St George (1,1,1,1)
23 Jacob's first wife (Genesis 29:23) (4)





ACROSS

- 1 Paul said the wrath of God 'is being revealed from heaven' against this (Romans 1:18) (11)
 9 Go smite (anag.) (7) 10 'But — I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee'(Matthew 26:32) (5)

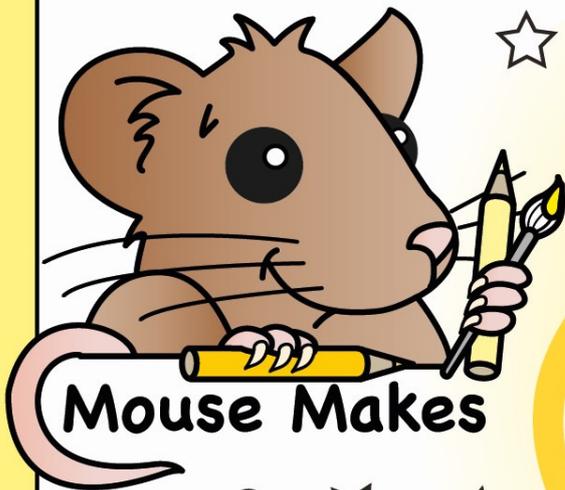
ACROSS

- 11 'Take and —; this is my body' (Matthew 26:26) (3) 13 Type (2 Thessalonians 2:10) (4)
16 'Woe to those who — iniquity' (Micah 2:1) (4)
17 'How shall we — if we ignore such a great salvation?' (Hebrews 2:3) (6)
18 Opposite of evens (4)
20 Previously cited (Latin) (4)
21 'There is surely — — of God in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife' (Genesis 20:11) (2,4)
22 The Thessalonians were warned to keep away from every brother who was this (2 Thessalonians 3:6) (4)
23 Beat (anag.) (4)
25 To trouble or afflict (Job 16:3) (3)
28 Part of a roof (1 Kings 7:9) (5)
29 Attain (Job 5:12) (7)
30 Insect noted for its gymnastic ability (Psalm 78:46) (11)

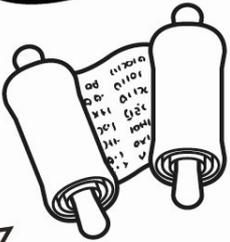
DOWN

- 2 Smell (John 11:39) (5)
3 Lion's home (Jeremiah 25:38) (4)
4 'Jesus Christ is the — yesterday and today and for ever' (Hebrews 13:8) (4)
5 Tidy (4)
6 Made their home (Genesis 47:27) (7)
7 Their task was to carry the curtains of the tabernacle (Numbers 4:25–26) (11)
8 Timothy's was called Lois (2 Timothy 1:5) (11)
12 The Lover likened the fragrance of the Beloved's breath to these (Song of Songs 7:8) (6)
14 Times Educational Supplement (1,1,1)
15 Eight-tentacled sea creatures (6)
19 'And lead us not into temptation, but — us from the evil one' (Matthew 6:13) (7)
20 D.L. Moody's legendary song leader, — D. Sankey (3)
24 Rarely used musical note (5)
25 'Your will be done on earth — it — in heaven' (Matthew 6:10) (2,2)
26 and 27 'The Lord Almighty will — them with a — , as when he struck down Midian at the rock of Oreb' (Isaiah 10:26) (4,4)
27 See 26 Down





Mouse Makes



GOD'S PROMISE

Isaiah 9:6-7

CHILD • BORN • SON
GIVEN • WONDERFUL
COUNCELLOR
MIGHTY • GOD
EVERLASTING
FATHER • PRINCE
PEACE • LORD



AN ANGEL MESSENGER

Luke 1:26-38

ANGEL • GABRIEL
JOSEPH • MARY
FAVOUR • SON
JESUS • GREAT
THRONE • REIGN
FOREVER • HOLY
SERVANT • WORD

V	R	P	R	I	N	C	E	L	R	O	D
W	O	R	D	C	F	A	T	H	E	R	E
J	A	G	M	A	N	G	E	R	G	E	B
O	W	H	O	E	V	E	R	W	I	I	J
S	J	O	Y	B	O	R	N	O	S	G	E
E	S	L	S	E	R	V	A	N	T	N	S
P	P	Y	J	C	H	I	L	D	E	P	U
H	R	O	S	H	E	P	H	E	R	D	S
F	A	V	O	U	R	E	F	R	W	S	O
B	I	R	T	H	S	W	O	F	O	D	L
I	S	A	V	I	O	U	R	U	R	L	O
F	E	C	O	U	N	C	E	L	L	O	R
A	N	G	E	L	B	J	V	K	D	V	D
B	E	T	H	L	E	H	E	M	G	E	S
L	A	N	G	E	L	S	R	G	O	D	V
I	G	A	B	R	I	E	L	T	D	S	M
F	P	G	I	V	E	N	A	H	U	O	A
E	E	H	G	A	V	E	S	R	W	N	R
S	A	E	G	R	E	A	T	O	N	L	Y
O	C	H	R	I	S	T	I	N	N	J	O
N	E	O	G	O	O	D	N	E	W	S	N
F	L	O	C	K	M	I	G	H	T	Y	B

ADVENT
comes from
the Latin
'AD VENTO'
which means
ARRIVAL

In Advent we
celebrate Jesus' birth
and look forward to
the time when Jesus
will come again.



A LONG JOURNEY

Luke 2:1-20

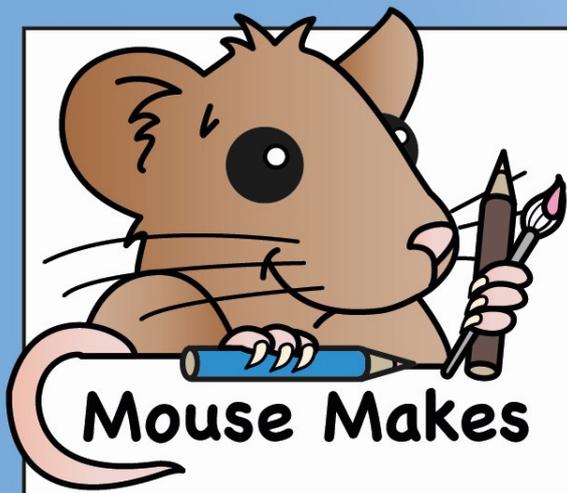
BETHLEHEM
REGISTER • BIRTH
MANGER • INN
SHEPHERDS • FLOCK
ANGELS • JOY
GOOD NEWS • PRAISE
SAVIOUR • CHRIST



THE BEST GIFT OF ALL

John 3:16

GOD • SO • LOVED
WORLD • HE • GAVE
ONLY • SON
WHOEVER • BELIEVES
ETERNAL • LIFE



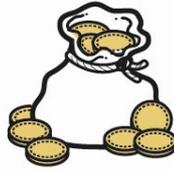
Mouse Makes

EPIPHANY is the time in the Church year that we remember when the 'wise men' or 'Magi' followed a star that led them to the Christ child Jesus. They bowed down, worshipped him and left *three* special gifts.

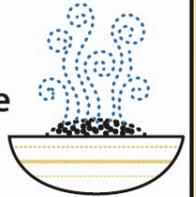


Where was Jesus born?

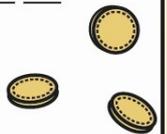
 Luke 2:1



What three gifts did the wise men give Jesus?



 and -----
 Luke 2:11



Who was the king?

 Luke 2:1

Where did the wise men come from?
 the -----
 Luke 2:1

How were the wise men warned not to return to Herod?
 In a -----
 Luke 2:12

What had the wise men seen?

a -----
 Luke 2:2




Look up the Bible verses, fill in the blanks, find them in the word search then look for the words opposite.

JESUS
 WISEMEN
 WORSHIP
 SHEPHERD
 KING • JEWS
 CHRIST • CHILD
 BORN • RULER
 ISRAEL • REJOICE
 JOY • HOUSE • MARY
 GIFTS • EPIPHANY

How many other words can you make from the letters in EPIPHANY?

SWINDON SCOUT POST

ONLY
35p
per stamp

ON
SALE
HERE

Scouts



PLEASE CLEARLY address
cards including **POSTCODE**
and post in the
Special Green Scout
Post Boxes.

2023

Swindon
CHRISTMAS CARD
Delivery Service



All profits go to run
Scouting in the
Swindon areas.



Swindon Scout Post

Only post cards in the special GREEN Scouts Post Boxes

The law says we can ONLY deliver Christmas Cards. NO MONEY OR CHEQUES should be sent through this service.

NO RESPONSIBILITY WILL BE ACCEPTED FOR VALUABLES, INCORRECTLY ADDRESSED CARDS OR ANY ADDRESSED TO AREAS OUTSIDE THOSE STATED BELOW.

POST
DELIVERY
AREAS

WE DO NOT DELIVER
OUTSIDE THESE AREAS

- Ashbury
- Badbury
- Basset Down
- Bishopstone
- Blunsdon
- Broad Hinton
- Broad Town
- Bourton
- Burdrop
- Bushton
- Castle Eaton
- Chiseldon
- Clyffe Pypard
- Coleshill
- Cricklade
- Greatfield
- Hampton
- Hannington
- Highworth
- Hodson
- Inglesham
- Latton
- Liddington
- Lydiard Millicent
- Purton
- Royal Wootton Bassett
- Swindon
- Salthrop
- Sevenhampton
- Shrivenham
- South Marston
- Stanton Fitzwarren
- Tockenham
- Wanborough
- Watchfield
- Wroughton

LAST TIME FOR POSTING

4.00pm on Tuesday 12th December

Please **DO NOT USE** Scout post stamps on cards posted through **Royal Mail post boxes**.
THEY ARE NOT VALID, AND THE RECEIVER OF THE CARD WILL HAVE TO PAY A SURCHARGE.

www.swindonscouts.org.uk/post • [email post@swindonscouts.org.uk](mailto:post@swindonscouts.org.uk)



Introducing ...

Breakfast Club!



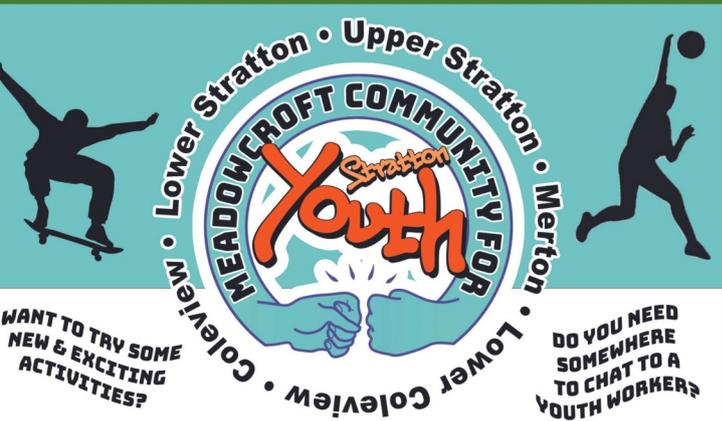
Stratton St Margery
Parish Council

Every Monday from 7:00-8:30am
At Meadowcroft Community Centre!

This is free for parents & children of all school ages.



STRATTON ST MARGARET PARISH COUNCIL'S COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES!



For More Info, Please Contact Us At:
01793 823761
info@strattonstmargaret.gov.uk

Our Weekly Free Community Cafe Groups Held At Meadowcroft Community Centre - SN2 7JX:

Every Monday morning from 7am until 8:30am we have a Breakfast Club providing cereals, toast, sweet treats, fruit and drinks, for parents and children of all school ages.



Every Friday morning from 10am until 12pm we have a Community Cafe which you can chat with your neighbours and housing officers from Swindon Borough Council, over a cup of tea, coffee and biscuits, and take home surplus food from local supermarkets.



Monday

7 - 8:30 AM
BREAKFAST CLUB
@ MEADOWCROFT CENTRE
*FOR PARENTS & CHILDREN
OF ALL SCHOOL AGES

Wednesday

3:30 - 5:30 PM
LGBTQ+ CLUB (AGES 9-14)
@ MEADOWCROFT CENTRE
6 - 7 PM
NEURODIVERSITY/ADDITIONAL
NEEDS YOUTH CLUB
@MEADOWCROFT CENTRE
7 - 9 PM
EVENING STREET SESSION
@ HERTON



Tuesday

3:30 - 5:30 PM
YOUTH CLUB (AGES 9-14)
@ MEADOWCROFT CENTRE
5:30 - 6:30 PM
OUT REACH SESSION
@ MEADOWCROFT

Thursday

3:30 - 5:30 PM
YOUTH CLUB (AGES 9-14)
@ MEADOWCROFT CENTRE
5:45 - 8 PM
OUT REACH SESSION
@ GRANGE/COLEVIEW



@SSMPCSWINDON



@SSMPCSWINDON

01793 823761
HERRY.RILEY@STRATTONSTMARGARET.GOV.UK

LIBRARY



Beechcroft Library Activities:

01793 680030
beechcroft.library@strattonstmargaret.gov.uk

- Public Engagement Session - every 1st Tuesday of each month 6pm to 7pm, At Beechcroft Library!

Meadowcroft Community Centre Community Groups:

Mon	Carers Cuppa - Monday 25th 1:15-3pm	Martial Arts - 5:30-9:30pm	
Tue	Swing Out Swindon - 7:30-8:30pm	Singing for Fun - 10am-12pm	
Wed	Open Minds - 27th 1:15-3pm		
Thur	Thursday Club (7th&21st) - 1-3:30pm	U3A Dressmaking Group (14th&28th) - 1-4pm	Martial Arts - 5:30-9:30pm
Fri	U3A Discussion Group - Friday 8th 2-4pm		

Older Generation Walking Club!

Friday's from midday, starting at Meadowcroft Community Hall and ending at the Beechcroft Library for a cup of tea and a natter! Monday morning's at 9am starting outside the Coleview Community Centre and ending at Costa Greenbridge, to relax and unwind!



December Activities at Beechcroft Library



- Fri 1st 11:00am - Visit by Wiltshire Bobby Van Home Security
- Tue 5th 10:00am - 12:30pm - Cost of Living Help/Advice - Citizen Advice Bureau
- Sat 9th 10:30pm - 13:00pm - Music & Mince Pies, With Christmas Raffle and Children's Activities
- Tue 12th 11:30am - 12:30pm - Kelly Foundation - Mental Health Support and Advice

Regular Free Activities & Group

Tues	13:30 - 15:30	Fun Art Group
Wed	10:00 - 12:00	Friendship Group
	14:00 - 16:00	Tea and Tech
Thurs	10:30 - 11:15	Toddler Storytime
	10:30 - 12:30	Stratton Advice Point
	13:30 - 15:30	Bereavement Group
	16:15 - 18:30	Family History Research
Fri	11:00 - 12:30	Knit, Sew & Natter Group
Sat	10:30 - 13:30	Chess Club & Board Games
Sat	11:00 - 11:45	* Saturday Story Time



*Every 1st & 3rd Saturday of the month (2nd & 16th December)

PARISH DIRECTORY & CENTRE USERS

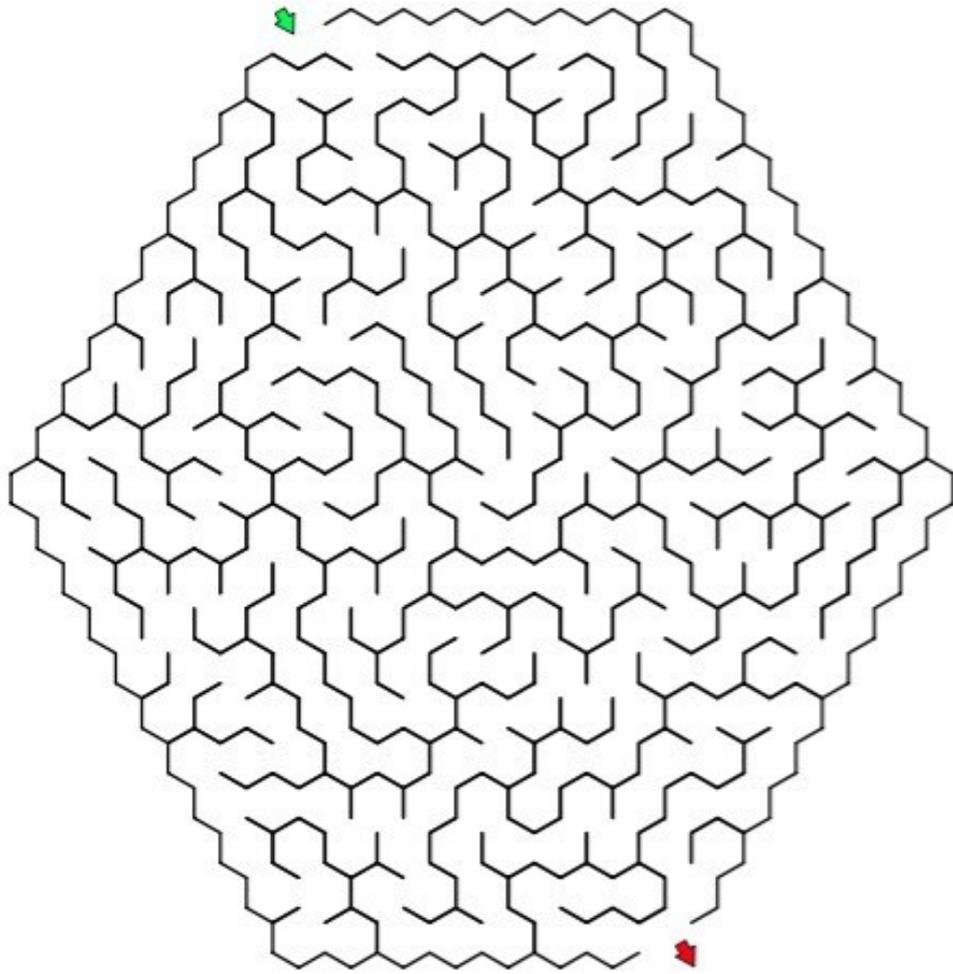
ORGANISATIONS

Babies & Toddlers	Georgina Martin	07768 243675
Bell Ringers	Wendy Sears	07769 788821
Boys' Brigade	Teresa Daghish	07796 925621
Brownies - Mon	Yvette Webster-May	825398
Bumps and Babes	Bekki	bumpsandbabes9@gmail.com
Cadley Dance	Maria Howse	824446
Centre Bookings	Richard Pflieger	828367
Choir	Geoff Walters	822006
Church Cleaning Rota	Pat England	822786
Coleview	Church Office	826505
Church Flowers	Richard Pflieger	828367
Evening Fellowship Group	Anne Pope	07790 730 685 email eannepope@gmail .com
FWO Envelopes	Ray England	822786
Gift Aid Sec.	David Horne	724776
Guide-Brownie Commissioner	Zoe Smith	831190
Music Group	Rob South	822811
Organists	Rob South	822811
	Geoff Walters	822006
Preschool	Hayley Woods, Supervisor	07816 547752
Wl. Stratton St Margaret	Mrs Covell	829900

Crossword Solutions 2024

ACROSS: 1, Godlessness. 9, Egotism. 10, After. 11, Eat. 13, Sort. 16, Plan. 17, Escape. 18, Odds. 20, Idem. 21, No fear. 22, Idle. 23, Abet. 25, Ail. 28, Eaves. 29, Achieve. 30, Grasshopper.

DOWN: 2, Odour. 3, Lair. 4, Same. 5, Neat. 6, Settled. 7, Gershonites. 8, Grandmother. 12, Apples. 14, TES. 15, Octopi. 19, Deliver. 20, Ira. 24, Breve. 25, As is. 26, Lash. 27, Whip.



Crossword Solutions

ACROSS:

1, Depend. 4, Canopy. 7, Beak. 8, Irritate. 9, Zedekiah. 13, Ate. 16, Job's comforter. 17, NAE. 19, Lang Syne. 24, Blockade. 25, Five. 26, Enigma. 27, Drench.

DOWN:

1, Debt. 2, Peaceable. 3, Drink. 4, Curia. 5, Nuts. 6, Put it. 10, Excel. 11, Is man. 12, Hoofs. 13, Attention. 14, Ezra. 15, Ijon. 18, Aslan. 20, Abana. 21, Greed. 22, GCMG. 23, Leah.

STRATTON TEAM MINISTRY NEWS - NEXT EDITION DEADLINE

for Articles and Information anytime before 15th January 2024

Georgina Martin: Church Office,
Tel: 826505 St Margaret's Centre
Email: stmchurchoffice020@gmail.com

Also, by hand or call Georgina Martin on 07768 243675

Errors and omissions — while we do try to ensure that all details are correct, some things may slip through and we apologise for that.



Pearce Funeral Services



92 Ermin Street, Stratton St
Margaret, Swindon, SN3 4NN
01793 832 072



Papermakers House, 1 Rivenhall Road,
Westlea, Swindon, SN5 7BD
01793 422422

Our family service caring for you

FAMILY RUN, COMPASSIONATE SERVICE
PREPAID FUNERAL PLANS AVAILABLE
RECOMMENDED IN THE GOOD FUNERAL GUIDE
COMMITTED TO THE FAIR FUNERAL PLEDGE

“Outstanding is an understatement. These people are the ultimate in care, compassion, understanding the needs of the family” Sept 2023 Online Review.



Golden Charter

www.pearcefuneralservices.co.uk