

# The Buzz

November 2021



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND

## Monthly information for the Parish of Ifield

### Thought for the Month



If you were playing a word association game and someone started with the word 'Advent' then it's likely the next word spoken will be 'Calendar'. Don't you just love Advent Calendars? Every day during Advent you get that wonderful sense of journey and anticipation as you open each door, counting down the days. And what's more, behind each door there's often a little message about the Christmas story, oh, and of course... often a little chocolate treat too!

Advent and Christmas is a time of waiting and a time of promise. It is also a time for gifts. Isn't it true that the real joy of gifts - given and received - is the wait and the promise? It might be difficult to appreciate a gift when there is no expectation, hope or surprise. At Christmas the Church gets a chance to tell both stories, the one about hope, promise and expectation, as well as the story of fulfilment, joy and new life. The problem however is that the world is not very good at waiting. I suppose we're good at queuing, but when it comes to the material things in life, we often want to take the waiting out of wanting.

The 'buy now – pay later' culture is the new motto of our time and if we're not careful it can slip into to our faith and spirituality too. My hope is that this Advent, when it starts on 28<sup>th</sup> November, will be a time of great hope and anticipation and that the waiting for you will be a time to reflect on the truth of Christmas and Emmanuel, the coming of Jesus.

Whilst there are two stories of Advent, of waiting and wanting, there are also two stories of Christmas. The church looks to tell the story that impresses, captures attention, the story of the Holy Family, the magi, the angels and shepherds. Then there is the story that is rooted in fragility, pain, fear and forgiveness, the story of Herod, the story of a desperate world in need of salvation. The story of a simple refugee family looking for shelter, and of perfect love found in the squalor of a borrowed stable. My job is to tell both stories, but it pains me to say that I think the church all too often shies away from telling the latter. Is the Christmas story really just about the wonder and awe we see displayed in our cards and gift wrapping, or is there more?

Part of the problem might be in the kind of news we are used to seeing. It's harder to find good news stories nowadays. Reporters look for the dirty, and gritty stories of our time, and rarely give column inches to so called 'good news'. The unconscious reaction of the church has been to redress the imbalance by telling the good news story of Christmas but by leaving out the rough and gritty bits. The problem is, this version of Christmas is neither a good 'news story' nor 'The Good News' story.

Our lives are not neatly packaged; God doesn't ask for our glittery and polished story, he delights in knowing our whole story and loves us for it. In the same way the world doesn't need a neatly packed Christmas Story, it needs the messy, gritty, dirty Christmas. The one that reflects the fragility of the world, the one that honours the pain some people feel at Christmas. The one that acknowledges that some of us will be mourning, struggling, homeless and lonely. The truth is that Christmas was always for them, as well as for you and me.

Wishing you all an Advent season of great hope and anticipation

With every blessing  
*Christine*

Revd Christine Spencer  
Rector

## **SERVICES AT ST. MARGARET'S**

1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday	8.00 am 11.00 am	Said Eucharist Non-Eucharistic Service
2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday	9.30 am 11.00 am	FIISH for young families Sung Eucharist
3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday	9.30 am 11.00 am	All-Age Worship Sung Eucharist
4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> Sundays	11.00 am	Sung Eucharist
2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesdays	9.30 am	Said Eucharist

Current guidelines are that masks must be worn in church.

# NEW COURSES

**This November we will start a series of courses looking at one of the central tenets of our Christian faith**

The first course will begin on **Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November at 2.30pm**. The sessions will last about an hour and will be in church unless otherwise indicated.

We will begin by looking at the baptism promises that we made, or that were made for us, and consider how often do we stop and think about them. Do we take them seriously and do we live by them?

We will consider whether we can we make a definite attempt before we get to Advent and Christmas to embed them in our life?

Next February we will look at the Lord's Prayer. We will consider whether we say it all too easily or do we stop and consider what it means in our lives today.

There is currently no need to book a place on these sessions, but this may change depending on Covid and any need for local restrictions. If it becomes necessary to book a place a sign-up sheet will be put out on the Sunday before the session.

## Advent Course

In Advent there will be a course on **Tuesday** afternoons beginning on **Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> November at 2.30pm**.

This course is called 'Light in the Darkness' and its aim is to help us reflect at the darkest time of the year our calling to be lights for Christ.

It will consider our faith in the aftermath of Covid. Each week will focus on one of four words that we have heard a lot during the last 20 months, 'Distance', 'Safe', 'Trust' and 'Normal'.

These sessions will last about an hour and will be held in church unless otherwise indicated.

There is currently no need to book a place on these sessions, but this may change depending on Covid and any need for local restrictions. If it becomes necessary to book a place a sign-up sheet will be put out on the Sunday before the session.

# HOUSE GROUPS

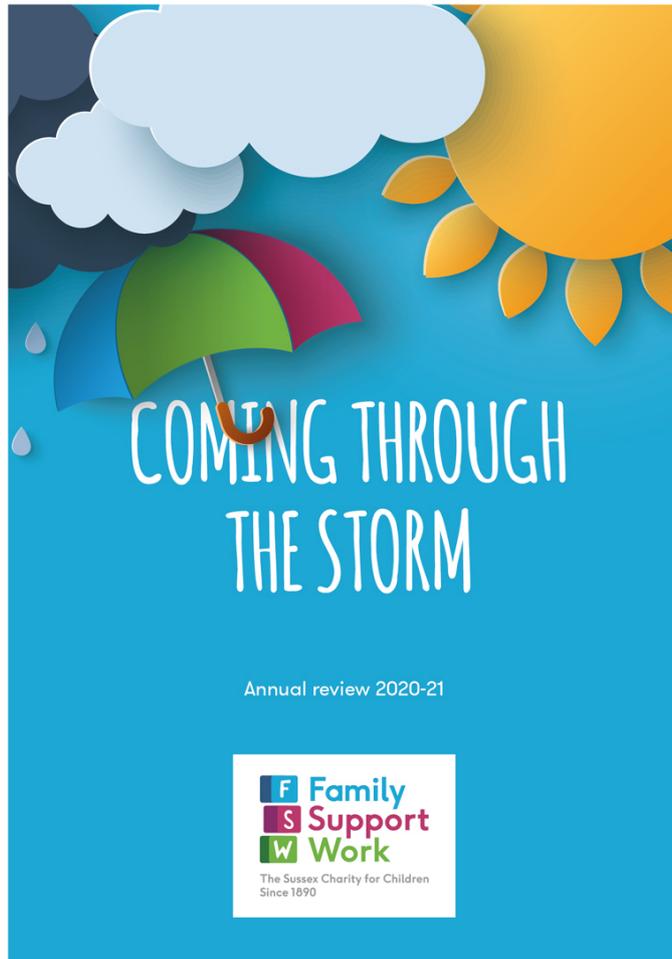


Being part of a house group is a great way to get to know other members of our congregation, as we pray, study, and socialise.

If you would like to join, lead or host a house group please speak to our Reader, Jill Bell ([reader@ifieldparish.org](mailto:reader@ifieldparish.org) 01293 521699).

# NEWS FROM FAMILY SUPPORT WORK

## *2020-21 annual review - Coming through the storm*



The annual review covering our last financial year (April 2020-March 2021) has now been published. The review talks in depth about our work during the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic and how we were able to continue our work during the lockdowns. You can read the whole review online by clicking the link below. If you would like a hard copy then please get in touch with our office by email to [admin@familysupportwork.org.uk](mailto:admin@familysupportwork.org.uk) or by calling 01273 832963.

There is also a copy available in church

## *FSW in Action*

In the last month our practitioners have been supporting families through a number of very complex issues. We have been helping many families get back into a school routine, and helping others who are struggling financially with the recent cut in Universal Credit and increase in energy bills.

A quote from one of our families: ***"The service is truly remarkable and no amount of words can thank you enough for the support you have provided us with"***

### **Quiz in aid of Tearfund on Sat 20<sup>th</sup> November at 8 pm in Church**

£5 per head – Cheese & Biscuits and soft drinks provided – Bring Your Own Wine/Drink

TraidCraft Stall and Raffle too.....bring lots of money!

If you are able to offer your help with this quiz please speak to Ines Manning.

# **GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS PILOT PROGRAMME 2022**

Bishop Martin has invited us at St. Margaret's to join in a pilot development programme designed to help church congregations pray about and reflect on our shared baptismal vocation and to encourage us to think more intentionally about church growth in all its dimensions.

There are only 16 parishes across the Diocese being asked to participate at this stage. The pilot runs from January 2022 to June 2023 although volunteers will initially be asked to commit only from January 2022 to about May 2022. Participation sessions with the Revd Canon Rob Dillingham are at 7.00 pm on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2022 and 7<sup>th</sup> April, and via Zoom on Thursdays 10<sup>th</sup> February, 24<sup>th</sup> February, 10<sup>th</sup> March and 24<sup>th</sup> March – with reflective Parish based prayer group sessions in between.

We have been twinned with the parish of St Barnabas Pound Hill and St Nicholas Worth and we will play hosts for the first session in January 2022.

I would ask you to commit to the both the Zoom sessions and the Parish prayer and reflective sessions. We will be prayed for weekly by name at the Cathedral and get the opportunity to attend evensong in the Cathedral in November next year. We will also have planned visits from Bishop Ruth and Archdeacon Angela during this time.

If anyone would like to volunteer then please find the sign-up sheet in the church.

I hope you will be enthused to join in with this pilot programme.

*Revd. Christine*

## **NEWS FROM THE EASTER TEAM**

Client numbers are increasing although it's pleasing to see that for some who have had regular food parcels in the past, things are improving, as they're asking less often now.

Your donations also help Open House which is supported from the Easter Team food bank depot.

All non perishable foodstuffs gratefully accepted but there's still a rice and pasta mountain. Thank you so much for your continued support.

# WHO'S WHO IN IFIELD PARISH

Rector	Revd. Christine Spencer	561283	rector@ifieldparish.org
Curate	Revd. Jamie Gater	852763	curate@ifieldparish.org
Reader	Jill Bell	521699	reader@ifieldparish.org
Parish Wardens	Rob Pudney	437038	rob@ifieldparish.org
	Chris Bell	521699	chris@ifieldparish.org
PCC Secretary	Clare Wilson	416438	pccsecretary@ifieldparish.org
PCC Treasurer	James May	529146	treasurer@ifieldparish.org
Safeguarding	Andy Cottee	202167	safeguarding@ifieldparish.org
Youth and Children	Naomi Gater	852763	ycofficer@ifieldparish.org
Lychgate Bookings	Lisa Hull	532337	<a href="mailto:lmhull@virginmedia.com">lmhull@virginmedia.com</a>

## OUR RECTOR'S REST DAY

Please note that Friday is our Rector's rest day

## PLEASE NOTE

St. Margaret's weekly notices can be viewed on the parish website

## IFIELD PARISH WEBSITE

[www.ifieldparish.org](http://www.ifieldparish.org)

Please send any information/photos for publication on the website to  
Carl Peirce [carl@ifieldparish.org](mailto:carl@ifieldparish.org)

Follow us:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/stmargaretsifield>

## IFIELD PARISH OFFICE

Mondays-Thursdays 9.00 am – 12 noon

1 Lychgate Cottage, Ifield Street, Crawley, West Sussex, RH11 0NN

Parish Administrator: Mave Eshun Tel: 537578 Email: [office@ifieldparish.org](mailto:office@ifieldparish.org)

Please send any updates for the December 2021 issue to Jill Bell  
[reader@ifieldparish.org](mailto:reader@ifieldparish.org) by 22<sup>nd</sup> November