

NETWORK

magazine

Saint
Andrew's
Histon

Follow the Star

Our Christmas robin says,
'Look out for the invitation cards!'

Christmas 2023

December/January

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Celebrating Christmas
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in dementia
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Viewpoint

St Andrew's Vicarage: Church Street, Histon, Cambridge CB24 9EP (01223 320425)



The Revd Ruth Chamberlain,
Curate

Most years in the run-up to Christmas my son asks me: 'Mum, you will be getting me socks for Christmas, won't you?' Yes, my son asks for socks for Christmas and this has become a bit of a family tradition, along with the tin of shortbread and jar of National Trust Salted Caramel Spread.

This custom started when he was studying and as a 'poor' student he appreciated not having to buy such things. These gifts go into his Christmas bag, along with all the gifts from other members of the family. Each of us has a Christmas bag, about the size of a pillowcase. I made them a number of years ago from Christmas fabric and we use them every year. We enjoy digging in to see what gifts we pull out! Now we appreciate these bags even more as a sustainable alternative to gift wrap.

Thinking about and buying gifts for the bags in the run-up to Christmas provides me with a great deal of pleasure as I think about what each family member might like, and also try to find something vaguely amusing. Like my son, we each receive things that bring us delight—as well as those we need—and we usually find a surprise gift in our bag. When our granddaughter came on the scene, she also had to have a bag because it is important for her to be part of our family tradition as much as the rest of us.

Putting gifts like socks into a bag may feel rather boring, but for my son this regular replenishment of his sock supply is important as he wears them thin. In many ways this gift of socks has become a necessity, but he takes as much delight in receiving them as he does in the gifts given just for the pleasure of them.

At Christmas, as Christians, we celebrate the greatest gift of all: the birth of Jesus, God coming into the world as a baby. Jesus came to bring what we need most—salvation, the forgiveness of our sins and the restoration of humanity's relationship with God, a relationship that had been broken through choosing to go our own way.

But not only did God send his Son to bring salvation. He also delights in blessing us with the good things in life: the beauty of creation, our families and friends, and things that bring us pleasure, however small these may be. God does all of this because he loves us—and we can be certain of this love.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ruth".

Please see
foot of page



Church Diary and Parish Register

St Andrew's Office, Church and Centre: 320420, office@standrewshiston.org

December	
Friday 1	Publication of <i>Network</i> Year Book, 2–5pm, Stable Room *Carol Service Choir rehearsal, 7.30–9pm, Impington Church
Saturday 2	Publication of <i>Network</i> Year Book, 10am–12noon, Stable Room Annual Churchyard Clean-up, 12.30–3.30pm
Sunday 3	First Sunday of Advent Holy Communion, 10.30am SJ Club, EDGE Sunday
Wednesday 6	Prayer Central, 7.30pm, Saint Andrew's Centre
Sunday 10	Second Sunday of Advent Holy Communion, 10.30am EDGE Sunday *Shine@Christmas, 3pm, Saint Andrew's Centre
Wednesday 13	*Churches Together Carols on the Green from 6pm
Friday 15	*Carol Service Choir rehearsal, 7.30–9pm, Histon Church
Sunday 17	Third Sunday of Advent Holy Communion, 10.30am SJ Club, EDGE Breakfast *Carols by Candlelight, 4pm, Impington Church *Carols by Candlelight, 7pm, Histon Church
Wednesday 20	Prayer Central, 7.30pm, Saint Andrew's Centre
Sunday 24	Fourth Sunday of Advent Christmas Eve Morning Service, 10.30am SJ Club *Crib and Christingle Service, 3pm, Impington Church *Christingle Service, 5pm, Histon Church *Midnight Holy Communion, 11pm, Histon and Impington Churches
Monday 25	Christmas Day All Age Holy Communion, 9.30am, Impington Church Christmas Cracker: Worship for Everyone, 10.30am, Histon Church
Sunday 31	First Sunday of Christmas New Year's Eve Holy Communion, 10.30am
January 2024	
Monday 1	New Year's Day
Wednesday 3	An evening of encouragement with Ian Silk, 7.30pm, Saint Andrew's Centre
Saturday 6	The Epiphany
Sunday 7	First Sunday of Epiphany Baptism of Christ Holy Communion, 10.30am SJ Club, EDGE Sunday
Tuesday 9	PCC meeting, 7.30pm, Saint Andrew's Centre
Wednesday 10	An evening of encouragement with Ian Silk, 7.30pm, Saint Andrew's Centre
Sunday 14	Second Sunday of Epiphany Holy Communion, 10.30am EDGE Sunday
Monday 15	Copy deadline for February edition of <i>Network</i> magazine
Wednesday 17	An evening of encouragement with Ian Silk, 7.30pm, Saint Andrew's Centre
Sunday 21	Third Sunday of Epiphany Holy Communion, 10.30am SJ Club, EDGE Breakfast Inspire, 7pm, Saint Andrew's Centre
Monday 22	Walking in Faith, 10.30am, meet in Histon churchyard
Wednesday 24	Publication of February edition of <i>Network</i> magazine, 2.30pm, 29 Home Close Prayer Central, 7.30pm on Zoom

If you would like to donate towards *Network* magazine costs, please scan the QR above, or contact the office.

Sunday 28 Fourth Sunday of Epiphany

Holy Communion, 10.30am SJ Club, EDGE Sunday

Wednesday 31 Prayer Central, 7.30pm, Saint Andrew's Centre

REGULAR WEEKDAY ACTIVITIES

Tuesday **Praying for our churches, 9–9.30am, Impington Church
 **Little Stars (for small babies), 10.30–11.30am, Saint Andrew's Centre
 Table Talk, 10.30am, Saint Andrew's Café
 Tuesday Fellowship, 2.30pm, Stable Room
 Bell ringing practice, 7pm

Thursday **Morning Prayer, 9.30am, Impington Church
 **EDGE Café, 3.30pm, Saint Andrew's Café

Friday **Job Club, 10–11.30am, Saint Andrew's Centre
 **Shine (under 5s) with Shooting Stars, 10.50am–12 noon, Saint Andrew's Centre
 Choir practice, 7–8pm, Stable Room (TBC)
 Men's sports evening, 6pm, Impington Sports Centre

Notes Sunday services are live streamed from 10.30am, and then available on YouTube.
 Contact the church office for more information and links to online events.
 *More details on other pages. **Generally term-time only. See website for updates.
 For details of weekly groups for children and young people, please contact the church office.

Church websites standrewshiston.org www.standrewscentre.org.uk

PARISH REGISTER

Funerals We offer our sincere sympathy to the family and friends of those whose funeral services have been held in our church:

 October 30 Marie Ellis
 November 2 Alan Haylock
 15 Brian John Dear

A wedding in the USA We warmly congratulate Tabitha Jorden and Louis Schieferdecker on their marriage on Sunday 5 November, in Florida.

Seascapes Some of Stephen Tromans' nautical paintings are currently displayed in the Saint Andrew's Café. All proceeds will go to Christian Aid's Middle East Crisis Appeal.



*The robin: a cheery bird
and a favourite on cards
(read more on the back page)*

Celebrating Christmas

Carol Service Choir



Anyone who loves singing is invited to join an ad hoc choir for Carols by Candlelight on Sunday 17 December: at Impington, 4pm and Histon, 7pm. Rehearsals are 7.30–9pm on Friday 1 December (Impington) and Friday 15 December (Histon); then at 3pm before the Impington Carol Service.

To ensure there's enough music please contact Matthew Nall (237160, matthew.r.nall@gmail.com) or Elizabeth Sadler (232194, dennizabeth@btinternet.com) as soon as possible.

Look out for the 'Follow the Star' invitation card to be delivered with your copy of the 2024 edition of Network Year Book, hopefully in early December.

Details of all the services and special events at St Andrew's are given, with a warm invitation for all ages.

Shine@Christmas

Join us for Shine@Christmas at the Saint Andrew's Centre, 3pm on Sunday 10 December. We will explore the Christmas story with a pop-up nativity, sing Christmas carols, play, and get arty and crafty. This is an event for everyone, young and old, individuals and families, and we would love to welcome you. Do dress up as a character from the nativity if you would like to! *Rachel Carr*

Carols on the Green

On Wednesday 13 December, Churches Together in Histon and Impington invite everyone to join in singing Carols on the Green led by the augmented Salvation Army band. The evening's celebrations begin at 6pm.

Crib & Christingle at Impington

Our Crib and Christingle service on Christmas Eve starts in the church at 3pm and will be an opportunity to hear the story of Christmas, build a nativity scene together and celebrate Jesus, the light of the world.

Come to the church hall from 2.30pm if you would like to make your own Christingle, but don't worry if not, because we will have lots already assembled for you. All are very welcome to join us.

Rachel Carr

Christingle at Histon

Our Histon Christingle Service at 5pm on Christmas Eve is always popular too, so we're delighted to welcome you again this year! There will be a Christingle for everyone and we'll be lighting them during the service.

Tim Blake

Christmas Day

Everyone is welcome to our special service for Christmas Day: a time to celebrate the birth of Jesus with worship, prayer and fun for all the family—including the Vicar's Christmas Day joke!

Tim Blake

Community noticeboard

Impington Music Society



How about some upbeat music to start off the joyous season? The Frida Violeta Band (voice, guitar, cello, bass and percussion) will play at IVC's Brackenbury Room on Friday 1 December, 7.30pm. Their vibrant folk music from Latin America should help you forget about autumn and look forward to Christmas.

Tickets are £10 (£5 for 18 and under), free for IMS members and season-ticket holders. Search online for 'Impington music society' for the whole season's programme.

Mike Lloyd

Repair Cafés

Repair Cafés offer a great way to restore broken items that might otherwise end up in landfill. Whilst it's some time since a Repair Café was held in Histon, several other venues are available:

Cambourne, Hub Community Centre, 2 December, 11am–2pm

Burwell, Mandeville Hall, 10 December, 2–5pm

Trumpington Meadows Primary School, 21 January, 2–5pm

Visit cambridgecarbonfootprint.org/what-you-can-do/events/ for more details.

Children's activities in the Library



Rhyme-time



Interactive Story Time continues on the first Tuesday in the month (5 December and 2 January, 2.30–3pm). Children of all abilities can enjoy taking part in a story, specially created with tactile elements.

Rhyme-time on the third Thursday in the month (21 December and 18 January, 10.30–11am) is half an hour of songs and rhymes for 0–4s to sing, chant and move to.

On Saturday 9 December, 10.30–11.15am, Shirley Lowe from Cambridge Storytellers will be telling seasonal stories and rhymes, offering free festive fun for all the family.

Please note that children must be accompanied at all activities.

Karen Foster, District Library Assistant

Choir2000 Advent Concert

Get into the Christmas spirit! Come and enjoy listening to Bach's joyful Magnificat and a variety of carols on Friday 8 or Saturday 9 December, 7.45pm at the Baptist Church. Once again, join the choir in some favourite Carols for All. TenSing will join us on Friday and the Chesterton Singers on Saturday.

Tickets, price £12, are available from Choir members, online at www.choir2000.org/tickets or on the night. There will be a charitable collection in aid of the Cambridgeshire Deaf Association.

Beatrix Bown

Archaeology Group

As usual, Histon and Impington Archaeology Group's next talks will be at 7.30pm at the Methodist Church and available by Zoom.

On Monday 11 December, Dr Trish Biers (Osteologist and Paleopathologist, University of Cambridge) will be giving a talk

on 'The stories our bones tell: what we can learn about life from death'. This talk will focus on how archaeologists analyse human remains to learn about the lifeways of past people. What stories do our bones hold? What are the sensitive issues around handling the dead for scientific analyses and museum display?

Our first talk of 2024 is on Monday 15 January: Dr Oscar Aldred (Cambridge Archaeological Unit) will speak on 'Northstowe in its context on the Roman fen edge', putting what has been learnt from the extensive excavations at Northstowe into its wider content in the landscape.

Talks are free to members of HIAG, or £4 (cash only) on the door for non-members. The Zoom link is sent automatically to members, and non-members can register for it via Eventbrite. More details and the link to our Eventbrite page are on our website.*

Penny English

*hiarchaeology.wordpress.com/hiag-talk-publicity-2023-2024-programme/

Garden Club

On Tuesday 12 December we are holding a Garden Quiz Night. Come along and team up with other members on the night or come with friends in teams of between four and six people. Tea and coffee will be served with a festive theme.

On Tuesday 9 January Geoff Hodge will talk about 'Growing your own Veg'. This will be a question and answer type talk so bring your questions and problems along to discuss.

Garden Club meets in the Methodist Church Hall at 7.30pm. For further details please contact Muriel Clements (232236).

Marilyn Harvey

Engage in the afternoon

The next talk for Engage in the afternoon is on Wednesday 17 January, 2–3.30pm at the Library. Ben Truett from 'Healthy You' will speak about 'Healthy You—activity support', covering what they do as an organisation, the benefits of activity and how they support this.

Karen Foster, District Library Assistant

Women's Institute

Jan Watt will speak about World Vision on Thursday 18 January: 7.30pm, Methodist Church Hall. Visitors most welcome (£5).

Village Society

The Village Society is now finalising its calendar of talks for 2024. Please do take a look on the society website* and see what might be of interest. It includes a wide range of talks focusing on local history and the wider history of Cambridgeshire.

The first talk, on Tuesday 30 January, 7.30pm at the Methodist Church, celebrates John E Vigar's new book on Cambridgeshire Churches. John is highly regarded throughout the UK for his portfolio of books and research on churches countryside.

Membership renewals are due shortly and new members for 2024 are warmly welcomed. For more information please email handivsoc@gmail.com or visit the website.

Katherine Mann

*histonandimpington
villagesociety.com/talks-
programme-2024/

Fresh support in dementia



Julie Uttridge

I was appointed a few months ago to the role of Dementia Support Co-ordinator for HI Friends, working in the villages of Histon and Impington. Working closely with others in the HI Friends Well-being Team and with other support services, the aim of this role is to enhance the lives of those living with dementia and memory loss, as well as their carers and families by offering advice, support and guidance. We also aim to give people details of other activities, organisations and services—both in the local community, run by HI Friends and others, and from further afield.

The service is unique to each user as it is based upon personal circumstances, support and individual needs, and builds on the significant work already established by others to build a Dementia Friendly Community in Histon and Impington. This includes the 'HI Forget-me-not' project with various dementia friendly activities such as a fortnightly Lunch Club, a weekly Support Group and a 'Love to Move' class. Activities are now in the planning stage as part of Dementia Action Week in May 2024. See the HI Friends website (HIFriends.org.uk) for further details.

I grew up in the village, raising a family here with my husband Ron before leaving for new adventures in Edinburgh. We returned to the village last year.

My professional background was initially in nursing, specialising in transplant and dialysis—including home dialysis here in Histon and Impington. This was followed by a career in clinical research across various sectors and therapies, ending with oncology. Towards the end of my career, I spent time working with vulnerable groups in the third sector, particularly with the charity Christians Against Poverty. More recently, my focus has shifted to that of pastoral, holistic and spiritual care, so it is such a privilege to be part of the HI Friends Wellbeing Team here in Histon and Impington.

Wendy Mitchell, in her book *What I wish people knew about dementia*, writes how overwhelming it is when a diagnosis is first given. Gathering information about this new disease—what it looks like, what support services and peer groups are available—is one of the first challenges.

Dementia, like everything in life, has a beginning, a middle and an end, and each person is in a different place on that journey. Our hope in this community is that we are able to help those with dementia, and their carers, live the best life they can with this disease.

Julie Uttridge

*Julie's contact details:
Mobile, 07934 817316
Email, julie@hifriends.org.uk*

Introducing Jay and Chris Hassan



Jay and Chris Hassan

Hello, my name is Jayshri but please call me Jay. I was born and raised in Edgware in North London. I recently moved to Impington as a newlywed with my husband Chris.

Why Impington? I have just begun training for ordained ministry (priesthood) at Ridley Hall, Cambridge. Previously I worked in private health care as a registered osteopath (no, it's not just backs and bones!). I have three older sisters and we are all very different; we were raised in a culturally Indian and Hindu family. I spent a lot of time praying and questioning in The Royal Marsden Hospital chapel as a young teenager whilst visiting Dad who battled with a rare cancer for four years in his forties. Unfortunately, he passed away in my mid-teens. I felt confused about who God was, but deep down I believed he hears my prayers.

After graduating in my twenties I felt underwhelmed and distracted. I worked in a gym as an osteopath and next door to my treatment room was a beautician who was Catholic. We would talk, and she used to encourage me to pray to God in the name of Jesus who would comfort and guide me. Initially, I smiled and said anything I could to get away from that conversation, but every time she saw me, she held me accountable. She would ask me, 'Did you manage to go to church? Or pray?'

Eventually, I did go to church, so the next time she asked me, I was able to say YES! I discovered that when I did pray, I felt peace—a sense of presence that took me back to those days in the hospital chapel. When I took time out in the middle of the workday to pray, I felt peace—I was meeting with the God of peace. It wasn't quiet and tranquil as we think of the word, because the peace he gives us is not as the world gives, but his peace was in the midst of the distractions (read John 14. 27). It felt like he'd always known me, and that he hadn't changed since the last time I prayed to him in my teens, nearly ten years before.

Early in my coming to faith, God had revealed to me a clear vision and awareness of Jesus Christ, who is God and who did die a human death to cleanse and purify me of my sin. In response, I went to my local church and met regularly with the vicar, the Revd Sally Baily. I was baptised by full immersion at Christmas time in what I call the 'hot tub' (the technical term is baptism!) and committed my life to Jesus in repentance.

It was hard being different from everyone else in my family, even though they always support me. However, it was truth that placed my feet on a narrow path and I could not ignore it. I didn't

get it right for a while (I still don't always) but I now know the one who lights up my path (Psalm 119. 105).

My call into ordained ministry was discerned over a period of three and a half years. During that time, I pursued dating, trying to meet an honest Christian man to do life with who was also prepared for the potential adventures of ministry. I was uncomfortable with online dating but as the story goes, if God is God and he hears my prayers, then he will be in it with me. I'm glad I got that one right: shortly afterwards I met Chris online on Christian Connection. We got engaged after one year, married the next—and here we are now.

In my spare time, I like to bake for others, keep my hands active and still dabble in osteopathy.

Chris's story

I'm Christopher (Chris), married to Jay. I grew up in Ealing, West London. I'm Assyrian, from a Christian community in the Middle East, now a diaspora worldwide. My parents moved from Iraq to the UK, following the footsteps of other relatives who came and settled here. My mother grew up in Habbaniya, a small village where Assyrians lived and where the British also had an RAF base, whilst my dad grew up in the capital of Iraq, Baghdad. I have other relatives who settled elsewhere in the USA and Australia. I can speak modern Syriac, although unfortunately I can't read it. Assyrians still practise the Jonah fast, where they remember the forgiveness God showed them when they responded to the message of Jonah.

As I grew up, my mother would take my older brother and me to a Methodist church, and I remember enjoying Sunday school, making friends, playing games, and learning about the Christian faith. I was fortunate to attend a high school with a maths teacher called Geoff Lumley, who organised Christian activities for students during the week and events during the year.

It was at high school, being around Christian friends, that I felt a tug to read the Bible for myself. Sometimes hearing my brother praying in his room made me curious to discover more about who God was and who Jesus was. I read through the New Testament but it didn't make much sense. I asked my brother, and he recommended that I reread it! So I did. The second time I read it, I became aware of God's love for me, the forgiveness of my sins and the presence of his Holy Spirit. Over the years, I've discovered more of his love for me as I continue to develop and grow in the faith.

Regarding my Assyrian Christian heritage, I enjoy reading the writings of Ephrem the Syrian. An excellent poem of his, which can be found online, is 'The Dispute Between the Cherub and the Thief'—I would recommend it as a good read.

I enjoy going for walks and being active. I also love drinking coffee and enjoying a nice glass of red wine.

Review & Preview

Saint Andrew's Office: 320420 or email office@standrewshiston.org

A new PA for the Vicar

We are delighted to welcome Sarah Davie into the Church Office as Personal Assistant to the Vicar (and to help with general admin). She has worked as a PA before, both after her law degree and whilst studying at the College of Law to become a solicitor. She has been a non-practising solicitor since having a family.

Sarah says, 'My new role suits my personality so well as I am a "people person" and I also love organising and planning ahead. I thank God for giving me this role at just the right time. It means I'll be in the heart of the community in the Saint Andrew's Centre, and working with James who, as Vicar, has been a huge part of my life for the last ten years since Chris and I moved to the village.'

A new curate

We look forward to welcoming a new curate to replace Ruth: Ben Barton, who will be joining us after his ordination next July. He is currently studying at Ridley Hall.

Ben has written a few notes about himself and his family: *I am very excited indeed to be joining the church family at Histon and Impington. I am married to the wonderful Emily and have three children; Ella, Tom and Arthur.*

I have lived in Cambridge for 25 years, working in the Science Park and then as a History teacher for eighteen years. I am passionate about pastoral care and was a Housemaster at the Leys School for ten years whilst also coaching sport and running the Christian Union.

I currently serve as Club Chaplain at Cambridge United Football Club. I enjoy cricket, a good coffee, painting and sketching—though not all at the same time.

'Riding with God'

On Thursday 30 November, 7.30pm in the Saint Andrew's Centre, Tim Blake presents the 7 Rs of his sabbatical journey, including the things he did, what God said to him and how he was changed.

*(Continued from
back page)*

Meadow. At the start of the century, some thought mistletoe was endangered but we seem to have plenty, with over 350 plants readily visible around the villages.

Ivy is a boon for many creatures, not least in providing shelter from the cold through the winter, whether for insects or larger animals. So winter is not the ideal time to remove it from trees and walls. At Abbey Fields we are only cutting ivy back if it threatens to overwhelm a valuable tree. A mature stem can be thicker than an arm; reportedly the wood makes an excellent pastry rolling pin! Just the thing for preparing mince pies.

*Jon Pavey, Trustee,
Histon & Impington Green Spaces*

Nature's festive offerings

Festive season advertising and cards often feature snow, robins, holly, ivy and mistletoe. Here snow is not guaranteed—and to have it lying around for a week or more as last year is a mixed blessing for many, beautiful though it may initially be. Possibly with climate change snow may be ever rarer, so if we do get a fall it is worth just spending some quiet moments enjoying the spectacle.

For wildlife, snow and sub-zero temperatures can be life threatening, though it is amazing how resilient nature can be. If you help out with a garden bird feeder, you can reduce the risk of spreading disease by regularly cleaning it (and fully drying it afterwards). Greenfinches and chaffinches seem particularly vulnerable to 'trichomonosis'; their numbers have plummeted in recent years and garden feeders are implicated.

Robins will maintain a winter territory; they are one of the few birds heard singing at this time of the year—and a robin is a frequent companion to our Abbey Fields work parties. They are charming when checking whether gardeners have turned up some juicy morsel, but they will readily see off any competition.

Mistle thrushes also don't like competition. They will defend 'their' holly bush vigorously against all comers until all berries have gone. They can be seen atop tall trees, where mistletoe is frequently found. Often associated with apple orchards, in our villages mistletoe is strongly associated with lime trees—for example, near the Peace Memorial or in the middle of Long

*Continued at foot
of previous page*



*Ivy: a boon for many
creatures in Abbey Fields
Photos, Guy Richardson*