



# St John the Evangelist Newsletter



SUNDAY 17 DECEMBER 2023

ADVENT 3

If you wish to contribute to the next edition of the newsletter, please email [office@stjohns-clevedon.org.uk](mailto:office@stjohns-clevedon.org.uk) marking your email 'Newsletter Article' by **12 noon Thursdays weekly**.

## Church Services (also on-line)

### Saturday 16 December

10.00 Advent Quiet Morning at St John's

### Sunday 17 December – Advent 3

10.30 Solemn Mass – Fr Brendan Clover

17.30 Lessons and Carols for Christmas

### Monday 18 December

18.00 Mass – Fr Brendan Clover

### Tuesday 19 December

10.00 Mass at All Saints, Weston Super Mare

### Wednesday 20 December

18.00 Mass – Fr Brendan Clover

### Thursday 21 December

12.30 Mass – Fr Brendan Clover

### Friday 22 December

10.00 BCP Mass – Fr Brendan Clover

### Saturday 23 December

10.00 Mass at All Saints, Weston super Mare

### Sunday 24 December – Christmas Eve

10.30 Solemn Mass – Fr Mark Smith

16.00 Christingle for Families

23.00 Midnight Mass – Fr Brendan Clover

## Words from Fr Brendan Clover

Dear friends,

Bear with me as each week I repeat this introduction...

There is a poem by Rowan Williams and it is called 'Advent Calendar'. It is a haunting piece: austere, deep, searching, suffused with wintry aches and longings we recognise as peculiar to this season. The language is as spare as naked trees, tough as hardened earth. It is intended to make us shiver. Its dense texture needs patience to grasp its complexity; its flinty Anglo-Saxon words are unsoftened by soothing Latin or French cadences.

The four stanzas each elaborate a different simile: 'he will come like' the fall of the leaf, like winter's frost, like darkness following a late afternoon flash of sunlight, like the cry of night-time. It stands in a long tradition of northern Europe poetry in which the cold short days around the winter solstice echo our wintry spirits when our light burns low.

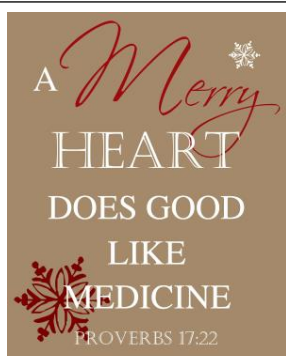
The point about imagery is that we shouldn't explain it, for that would be to explain it away, reduce poetry to prose.

Here's the third stanza:

He will come like dark.  
One evening when the bursting red  
December sun draws up the sheet  
And penny-masks its eye to yield  
The star-snowed fields of sky.

Week three takes us on towards the solstice and its 'bursting red December sun'. I imagine this as one of those days when slate-hued clouds hang low over the earth and leach all the colour from a fervour-less landscape ('as fervour-less as I' says Thomas Hardy in another famous wintry poem 'The Darkling Thrush'). Then just as the light begins to fail, there is a clearing in the west and a flash of glory reveals a setting sun. Too soon it sinks below the horizon, and it is dark and clear and cold and the 'star-snowed fields of sky' appear.

The Mass readings for this Sunday:  
Isaiah 61:1-2 & 10-11 (*Reader: Judith*)  
**Luke 1:46-50, 53-54 (The Magnificat)**  
**R: My soul rejoices in my God**  
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 (*Reader: Peter*)  
St John 1:6-8 & 19-28  
Intercessor - *Martin*



cont/...

So this is not the radiant sun that late in time rises with healing in its wings to warm the land and coax it back to life. No, this is the solstice, John Donne's weak winter sun whose strength is spent at the year's midnight. That phrase 'star-snowed fields' keeps us well and truly shivering.

So, the sun's brief splendour heralds night not day. And he will come, says the poem, not like the sun but 'like the dark' that follows its all-too-brief epiphany.

I think that like the first two stanzas, the poet wants us to read the daytime of our life in the light of its ending: just as the leaves fall and the land freezes over, day turns to night and reminds us of the night into which we must all go. And like the wind and the frost, the night brings its own truth to bear upon our condition.

What we are at night, when we are so to speak naked only to God and ourselves, that is the truth of what we are. When this night falls, the poet does not lead us indoors to seek warmth and comfort, or even wrap the darkness round us to protect us. We are still outside in the cold, watching, waiting, wondering, longing, hoping against hope that in the dark there is a kindness and a mercy. This is Advent. This is life.

With Advent love and prayers,

Fr Brendan

## PRAYER DIARY

Please include the following in your daily intercessions:-

<b>Saturday 16 December</b>	Our Blessed Virgin Mary. All pilgrims who visit shrines dedicated to her
<b>Sunday 17 December</b>	Our Church and parish and the residents of Catemead, The Hyde, Patch Croft and Freelands
<b>Monday 18 December</b>	A reminder during the frantic preparations for Christmas to take quiet time to remember just what we are celebrating – the birth of a baby who was to change the world
<b>Tuesday 19 December</b>	First day of Hanukkah. We pray today for all who practise the Jewish faith and who celebrate this festival
<b>Wednesday 20 December</b>	All who will be alone at Christmas. Is there a phone call to make or another card to write?
<b>Thursday 21 December</b>	The Clevedon market traders who hope for a very busy last Thursday before Christmas
<b>Friday 22 December</b>	All who will man the emergency services over the festival weeks. May they have time to celebrate too.
<b>Saturday 23 December</b>	Our Blessed Virgin Mary and all women preparing to give birth, that they may be delivered safely
<b>Sunday 24 December</b>	Our Church and parish and the residents of Chipping Cross

## MASS TIMES



Below are the Mass times for St John's.

Sunday – 10.30 am

Monday – 6.00 pm

Wednesday – 6.00 pm

Thursday – 12.30 pm

Friday – 10.00 (Book of Common Prayer)

On Tuesdays at 10.00 am and Saturdays at 10.00 am  
Mass will be said at All Saints, Weston Super Mare, BS23 2NL



## VOLUNTEERS PLEASE!

If you would like to take one of the Communion elements to the altar during the offertory hymn, please let one of the sidespeople know when you come into Church on Sunday morning.

### Sick List

If you need to let the clergy know of anyone who is unwell and/or is needing pastoral care, please email [office@stjohns-clevedon.org.uk](mailto:office@stjohns-clevedon.org.uk) or mention this to Betty, our Sickness Point of Contact (SPOC), after the service outside of the church building. Any requests will be passed on to Fr Brendan and names will be added to the sick list.

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**Saturday 16 December**

**Advent Quiet Morning – 10.00 – 12.30**

**Sunday 17 December**

**Celebration Sunday - St John the Evangelist**

**Lessons and Carols for Christmas – 17.30**

**Sunday 24 December**

**Christingle Family Service – 16.00**

**Sunday 7 January**

**Celebration Sunday - Epiphany**

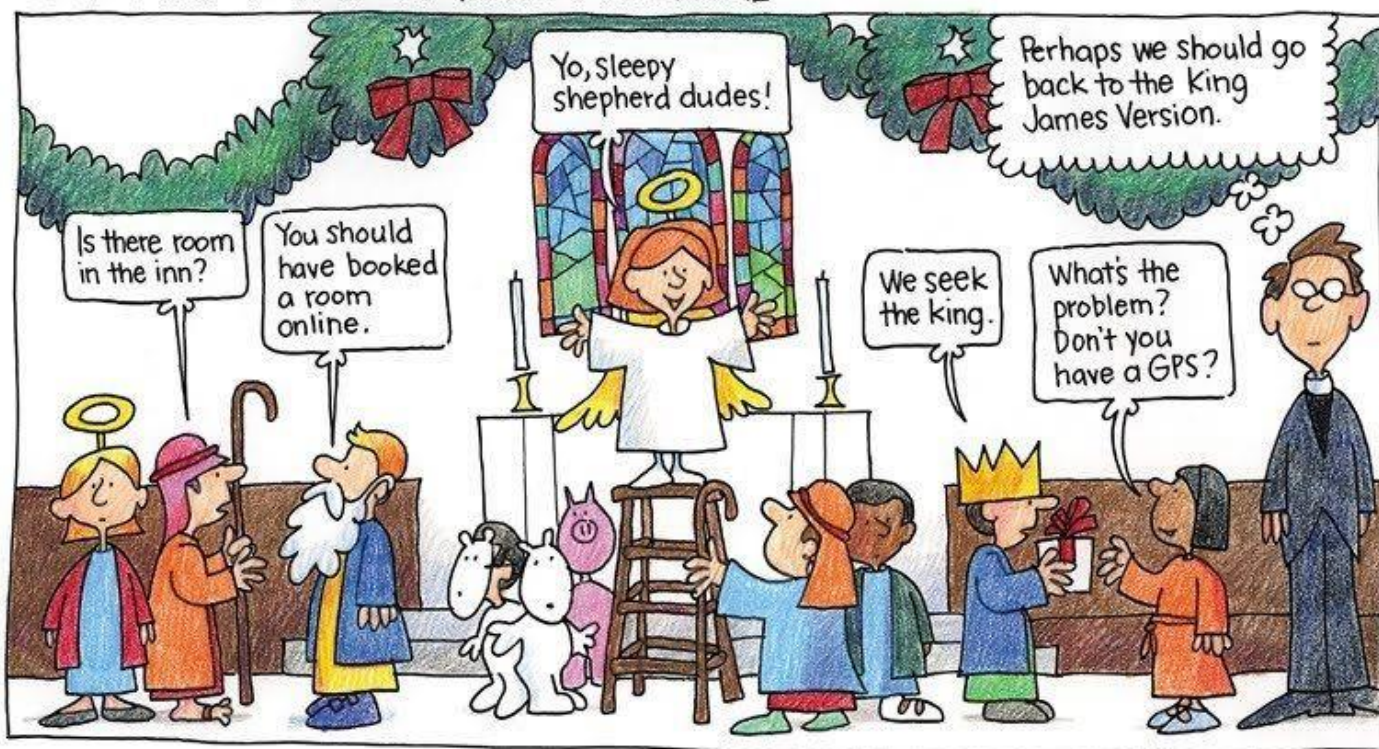
**Sunday 11 February**

**Celebration Sunday – Sunday before Lent**

**Sunday 10 March**

**Celebration Sunday – Mothering Sunday**

### THE RECTOR DROPS IN ON THE PAGEANT REHEARSAL





## ***Advent at St John's***

### **Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December - Advent Sunday**

5.30pm 'From Darkness to Light' - a service of music and readings with Henbury Singers and friends directed by Andrew Kirk

**Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> December - 7.30pm Clevedon Choral Society Christmas Concert:**  
Charpentier's 'Messe de Minuit pour Noël' and music by Gustav Holst and others

**Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December at All Saints Weston-super-Mare**  
7pm Carols by Candlelight

### **Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December**

10am-12.30pm Advent Quiet Morning

10am Mass, three talks on Prayer by Fr Brendan at 10.45, 11.15, 11.45, 12.15pm  
Benediction

### **Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December - Advent 3**

5.30pm Lessons and Carols for Christmas

### **Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December - Advent 4**

4pm Christingle Family Service

11pm Midnight Mass

### **Monday 25<sup>th</sup> December**

10.30am Family Christmas Mass





## CHRISTINGLE MAKING

### Friday 22 December, 12 noon

We shall be making Christingles on the above date and time for our Christmas Eve Christingle Service. All materials are provided; we will be grateful for all offers of help – many hands make light work.

Please come along to the James Hall (below the Church Hall) at 12 noon on Friday 22 December.

### Chat and Craft Group

continues to meet every Thursday afternoon in the Church Hall between 2 and 4pm. Bring your own project along to work on, and chat to fellow crafters. A drink and biscuits will be available. For more information, talk to Sue at church or ring on 01275 877710.



Calling all bakers! If you would like to provide a cake(s) for one of our regular Celebration Sundays, please add your name to the list at the back of Church. Alternatively, if you would like to celebrate a special occasion (perhaps an anniversary, birthday or exam success) please put your name against the relevant date and bring along your cake (it doesn't have to be homemade) on the day. Any questions, please speak to Sarah or Debra.



Do you have any pearls of wisdom which could be used in the newsletter? They don't need to be religious; perhaps a special gardening tip, favourite recipe or an interesting story you'd like to share with your Church family. You can even remain anonymous if you wish. If so, please speak to Nicola or Gary or email [office@stjohns-clevedon.org.uk](mailto:office@stjohns-clevedon.org.uk)

### Website

Please log into our website with as much frequency as you are able in order to bring it up the Google ratings...

It is <https://www.stjohns-clevedon.org.uk/>  
The website is a dynamic tool, so please send any comments, criticisms or ideas to Fr Brendan

## 2024 Parish Share Request

As we have shared with you previously, parish share receipts in our diocese have fallen significantly in recent years making it difficult to cover the cost of paid ministry and the associated support costs for parishes, school and chaplaincies. We are very aware that our request to help address that shortfall comes as we are trying to reach deeper into our communities and grow our church families, against a backdrop of a cost-of-living crisis, a fall in the number of volunteers, and the increased cost of maintaining our beautiful buildings.

Based on the parish share currently paid, only 20% of benefices cover the cost of paid ministry and support in their benefice, with the remaining 80% of benefices having their paid ministry and support subsidised through the Common Fund. This is not a sustainable financial position. If we want to maintain our ministry provision across our diocese we need to find ways to address this imbalance together.

A breakdown and explanation of your request is attached and reflects the need, as identified by the Finance Group, to increase parish share broadly in line with inflation. Bishop's Council are therefore recommending an increase of parish share by 10% for 2024. This recommendation will go to Diocesan Synod, on 25 November 2023 for approval. For parishes who pay monthly or in advance, discounts are applicable:

- 1.25% for full contribution received on or before 17 January
- 0.3% for full equal monthly contributions

Bishop's Council is also recommending a system of floors and ceilings to both minimise excessive changes to requests of parishes from 2023 to 2024 and to address the 20%/80% issue identified above. Further details are included in the accompanying breakdown.

### Parish Share allocation considerations

Since January 2022, the Consumer Price index (CPI) has exceeded 5%, peaking at 11.1% in October 2022, which is causing significant financial pressures for us all. It means costs are inflating and any increase to parish share requests below CPI would in fact mean a cut in income to the Common Fund, which funds the costs associated with providing stipendiary ministry across Bath and Wells.

In recent years, stipends have increased at a greater rate than the parish share requests. In 2022, stipends increased by 2%, in 2023 by 5% and in 2024 it is anticipated that General Synod will again recommend an increase in stipend by 5%. In comparison, in 2022, there was no increase in our parish share request and in 2023 it was 2%.

[www.bathandwells.org.uk](http://www.bathandwells.org.uk)

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## (P007) Clevedon St John - 2024 Parish Share request Appendix

**The request of Clevedon St John for 2024 is £23,628.**

This figure is based on:

- Overall diocesan budget of £15.26m for 2024
- Total diocesan parish share ask of £11.24m for 2024\*

Your parish share request breakdown for 2024

Request per regular worshipper (Category F)**	£631.65
Regular worshippers**	x 76
Parish Share calculation 2024	£48,005.66
Parish Share request 2023 (inc BMA)	£20,546
Percentage increase/(decrease) compared to 2023	133.7%
Applied ceiling or floor *** (3)	15.0%
<b>Final 2024 Parish Share request</b>	<b>(15.0%) £23,628</b>

**‘Every parish gives, every parish receives - it’s why it’s called the Common Fund’**

## CLEVEDON DISTRICT FOOD BANK CHRISTMAS APPEAL

Clevedon District Foodbank will be providing over 600 Christmas hamper bags to people and families this Christmas time.

If you would like to help, we would appreciate any of the following donations. Please drop the donations off at Neads Court Unit 3 Knowles Road Clevedon by **as soon as possible**.

- Cranberry Sauce
- Stuffing
- Christmas Cakes
- Other Cake eg Mr. Kipling
- Biscuits
- Mince Pies (dated January 2024)
- Crackers
- Pringles
- Hot Chocolate

We have enough tins of ham and tins of salmon.

People can of course donate at the Foodbank on Monday or Friday mornings between 9.30am and 11.30am.

**THANK YOU!**

### Church Flowers

Would you like to sponsor church flowers to celebrate a birthday or commemorate an anniversary?

We would be very happy to dedicate the church flowers to you or a loved one if you let us know in advance. There is a flower rota available at the back of church.

Front pedestal suggested minimum donation £10

Statue of Mary suggested minimum donation £5

We may not be able to provide specific flowers to order but will try our best. There will be a card and holder available for you to write a special message to display with the flowers.



## On-line Giving

Here is the link to our on line facility:

<https://givealittle.co/campaigns/b8e3af98-2c05-4dfb-bd27-570f15c91a21> this link has been added to our Website, our Church Near You page and all our YouTube and other online offerings including social media. Please feel free to share it with all your friends to help with the ongoing good work of our Parish and the exciting outreach plans for our near future (not to mention the maintenance of our beautiful building and Hall!!) The QR code appears further on in this newsletter.



**at St John the Evangelist, Clevedon**  
**One-off gift or give monthly, quarterly, or annually**

Your generosity is vital to enabling St John's, Clevedon to continue and grow in the way we serve our whole community. We would therefore like to invite you to consider supporting our work by joining the Parish Giving Scheme. It is quick and easy to join online or by telephone and all regular gifts given through the scheme are covered by the direct debit guarantee. You can make a one-off gift or give monthly, quarterly, or annually, whichever is most convenient and if you are a UK taxpayer you can also gift-aid this to enable us to recover a further 25% of the value of your gift from HMRC. The financial details of what is given will be confidential to our Treasurer, but I will be aware of the overall response and will write to thank all those who respond.

To start giving to Clevedon St John by PGS you can sign up online by visiting [www.parishgiving.org.uk](http://www.parishgiving.org.uk) or by scanning the QR code below. Use the search tool to find our church and then select 'Regular Giving.' Alternatively you can setup your gift by telephoning 0333 002 1271 and quote our unique PGS Parish Code - **010601377** or you can request a paper registration form by emailing [pgsregistrations@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:pgsregistrations@bathwells.anglican.org) or by calling 01749 670777

If you need further information or want to talk this through with someone, please do not hesitate to contact Nicola Coaker, Chair of St John's Finance Committee, Angela Edgar, Treasurer or Fr. Brendan Clover, whose contact details can be found at the top and bottom of this newsletter.

## **St. John's 100 Club**

The 100 club is an easy way you can help raise money for St. Johns. It only costs £12 per year (equivalent to £1 / month) and you will be entered into a drawer every month with a chance to win a prize.

Over the last 15 years the 100 club, has raised over £12,000 for the church and has paid out almost £8,000 in prizes.

Providing we have more than 80\* people join we will pay out £40 in prizes each month and any profit over £510 will be paid to the Church but there is no upper limit, the more the merrier and the more money that will be raised for the church.

The three prizes are:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Prize - £25
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize - £10
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize - £5

*\*If there are less than 80 members, there will be no 3<sup>rd</sup> prize.*

**If you join the Club before 18 December 2023, your name will go into our additional 'Special Christmas Draw' with a chance to win £30 for 2024 members only.**

We would like to thank Arlene for all the hard work she has put into setting up and running the 100 club over the last 15 year. Without her dedication, the church would have been at least £12,000 poorer. Arlene has now decided it is time to hand over the reins, so please don't let all her hard work go to waste and join today.

Please contact any of the organisers to enquire about joining, to get your application form and to be allocated a number, or two. Talk to any of us in church or by emailing using one of the email addresses below.

Remember, Christmas is just round the corner so why not buy your family and friends a number as an early Christmas present.

**Fiona Dixon**    [fional.dixon@btopenworld.com](mailto:fional.dixon@btopenworld.com)

**Angela Edgar**    [PCCTreasurer@stjohns-clevedon.org.uk](mailto:PCCTreasurer@stjohns-clevedon.org.uk)

**Nicola Coaker**    [churchwarden@stjohns-clevedon.org.uk](mailto:churchwarden@stjohns-clevedon.org.uk)

## **Fund Raise as You Shop**

We have registered St John's with easy fundraising, which means you can raise FREE donations for us every time you shop online. Over 4,000 shops and sites will donate to us when you use easy fundraising to shop with them – at no extra cost to yourself!

Although you may only raise a few pence with every purchase, these donations really mount up and make a BIG difference to us, so we'd really appreciate it if you could take a moment to sign up and support us. It's completely FREE and only takes a moment.

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stjohntheevangelistclevedon/>

# VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

## DID YOU KNOW?

49.63% of adults (25.99 million people) in the UK report feeling lonely<sup>1</sup> and that loneliness impacts your physical and mental health: you are 50% more likely to suffer from dementia, 29% more likely to suffer from heart disease and have a 32% increased risk of a stroke<sup>2</sup>.

## DID YOU ALSO KNOW?

In 2021/22 4.7 million people, 7% of the UK's population, were in food poverty. 12% of which were children<sup>3</sup>.

**CLEVEDON IS NO DIFFERENT.  
IT'S HAPPENING HERE TOO.**

St. John's are going to make a difference in our community with our new

## COMMUNITY DINING PROJECT

We have the hall, we have the kitchen, we now need the volunteers!  
We are building the team from scratch and need you: cooks to pot washers, organisers to table layers!

## WANT TO GET INVOLVED OR FIND OUT MORE?

Contact Lizzie: [elizabethwormaldkelly@gmail.com](mailto:elizabethwormaldkelly@gmail.com)



## ***Celia Quiz !!***

1. What relation was the Virgin Mary to Elizabeth?
2. In which century did Christmas begin being celebrated on 25 December?
3. Viscum Album is a plant you may see a lot of at this time of year under what more usual name?
4. Which 17th century Poet Laureate wrote the words to the carol While Shepherds Watched?
5. When was Poets Walk opened in Clevedon?
6. Which treat pre-dated the turkey for Christmas dinner?
7. Which animal is called a caribou in the USA?
8. Which Victorian author wrote a series of Christmas short stories, including a ghost story, to publish in the Household Words magazine?
9. A 17th century Christmas treat included chicken, eggs, sugar, raisins, spices and cow's tongue- with largely different ingredients what do we call it today?
10. In which year did the Queen first broadcast her Christmas message on TV?
11. Where did Mary's husband Joseph live and work as a carpenter?
12. Which winter sport vehicle can travel up to 90mph in its races?
13. Who is the patron saint of Russia and pawnbrokers as well as a better known category?
14. Boxing Day gets its name from which custom originating in the 17th century?
15. According to the Bible where did the Wise Men come from?
16. Visiting carol singers would in the past enjoy a wassail - which is what?

## **GORDON'S POSERS**

- a: Not as valuable as Gold Road; b: Infants transporter(almost!); c: Sweet water crossing.



For those technically minded, here is the QR code for our online giving. Simply scan the code with your smartphone QR scanner and be magically directed to our 'givealittle' page.



If you need to contact a Churchwarden please contact Nicola Coaker or Gary Lewis. Nicola can emailed at [churchwarden@stjohns-clevedon.org.uk](mailto:churchwarden@stjohns-clevedon.org.uk)  
Gary's email address is [churchwarden2@stjohns-clevedon.org.uk](mailto:churchwarden2@stjohns-clevedon.org.uk)

If you have any safeguarding questions or issues, please email [parishsafeguardingofficer@stjohns-clevedon.org.uk](mailto:parishsafeguardingofficer@stjohns-clevedon.org.uk)



**The Vicarage telephone number is 01275 879617**  
**The Office Number is 07522 494 504**

Please follow us on our website at: <https://www.stjohns-clevedon.org.uk/> or at [www.achurchnearyou.com/church/111185/](http://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/111185/) or on YouTube 'St John's Clevedon' or on Facebook: St John the Evangelist Church, Clevedon or join our WhatsApp group.