



Staple Hill

Local ... Lively ... Loving



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Sunday 12th December 2021

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3rd Sunday in Advent

*O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree,
How lovely are thy branches!*

This has to be one of the strangest 'Christmas carols' ever! There are many different versions of lyrics to this song – but the oldest versions have nothing to do with Christmas at all. The version that we most often sing today at Christmas time is based on an old 16th century German folk song with a few added Christian themes. It speaks of the hope that can be drawn from the green leaves during the depths of winter that better days will surely come. Better days that did come with the birth of Jesus.

The Christmas tree is an important part of our Christmas traditions, and few people would consider it Christmas without one. We have several beautifully decorated trees around our hall, and they always help to bring the joy of the festive season to everyone who sees them.

And have you seen the tree in Downend this year? If you haven't – it is well worth checking out when it gets dark. It really is quite a spectacular light show!

Paul Heath



COVID RESTRICTIONS:

Due to the emergence of the new Omicron variant, please adhere to the following whilst in our building:

- Please **use the sanitiser** and wash hands carefully on entry to the building and when moving around
- **Masks must be worn at all times**, even when sitting down, except when eating or drinking
- We advise everyone to **take a lateral flow test** before attending a meeting, especially the carol services
- We will temporarily stop serving refreshments after the Sunday meeting as this is a high risk time
- We will continue to **open windows** even when it is cold so come prepared for that
- Please **do not enter** our building **if you are feeling unwell**
- Please **let us know** if you experience Covid symptoms or have a positive test after attending the building

LOVING LOCAL WEEK:

This week has been incredibly busy and an enormous amount of work has been completed. It has been achieved through team work so a big thank you goes to all the Extra Slice groups who undertook a variety of tasks but also had a good time doing it! We are also really grateful to other people who sorted, lifted, cleaned, tidied, made drinks, made up parcels, and generally moved a lot of things from one place to another! There were a number of people who put in a lot of hours this week – you know who you are – thank you!

ADVENT WREATH:

My apologies for the error in the bulletin a couple of weeks ago ... the advent wreath has been provided by Lillian. Thank you!

HELP NEEDED PLEASE:

There are still some spaces on the collectors' rota for the carolling engagements on the noticeboard – please offer to help where you can, thank you.

As last year, we will need drivers to deliver Christmas dinner and other packages to people on Christmas day. Our Christmas Day meeting is going ahead at 11am and deliveries will be made after that. If you are able to help, please see Nicola or David.

PEOPLE:

- Our thoughts remain with those in our fellowship who are poorly, and in particular we continue to think of Bob, Clive, Rita, Jill, and Les and Charlie.
- Pauline is due to go into hospital next Friday for a knee operation, so we pray that will all go well
- Rita continues to recuperate after her operation but remains in hospital for the time being



**“How far is it to Bethlehem? Not very far”
Some of the band can’t even find their way to a local carolling
event, let alone Bethlehem!**

THE WEEK AHEAD:

TODAY Sunday 12th December

- 10am All Age Worship
Worship will be available online later in day
- 11:30am-1:30pm Children and Youth rehearsal for the
Family Carol Service
- 11:45am Carolling at residential homes

‘A baby like no
other. Visitors
like no other’
[Luke 2: 8-20](#)

Tuesday 14th December

- 6:45pm YP Band & Singing Company Christmas Celebration
- 8pm Senior Band & Songsters Christmas Celebration

Wednesday 15th December

- 9:30am & 11am Tots on the Hill (*booking required –
Last one before Christmas*)

Thursday 16th December

- 11am Mince Pies followed by Carol Service at 11:15am
- 12:30pm Lunch Club

Saturday 18th December

- 10am – 12noon Carolling at Tesco’s, Yate
- 10am – 4pm Carolling at Morrisons, Fishponds

SUNDAY 19th December

- 10am Family Carol Service
Worship will be available online later in day
- 5pm Carol Service (*booking required*)

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY & HOW TO BOOK:

- Sunday 19th Dec. 10am **Family Carol Service**
 - *No booking required*
- Sunday 19th Dec. 5pm **Carol Service**
 - *Booking required, Senior Band/Songsters do not need to book*
 - **As this event is now full, if you have a place and intend not to come – please let us know as early as possible**
- Christmas Eve 5pm **Carols in the Square**
- Christmas Day 11am **Christmas Day meeting**