



CHURCH OF OUR LADY IMMACULATE AND ST ANDREW

16 Nightingale Road, HITCHIN, SG5 1QS
(In the care of the Augustinians of the Assumption)



Mass Times
Saturday 6pm
Sunday 8.30am, 10.30am
Monday – Saturday 10am
Reconciliation Saturday 10.30am
during Exposition. All Masses are
livestreamed [Livestream Mass](#)



Newsletter No 2023

26th November – 3rd December 2022 – FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT - Year A

Prayer for Ukraine: God of peace and justice, we pray for the people of Ukraine; for peace and the laying down of weapons. Give comfort to those who fear for tomorrow. Grant wisdom, discernment and compassion to guide those who have power over war and peace. Hold and protect your precious children, at risk and in fear. We pray in the name of Jesus, Prince of Peace. Amen.

Readings: [Is 2:1-5](#), [Rom 13:11-14](#), [Matt 24:37-44](#)

Entrance Antiphon: To you, I lift up my soul, O my God. In you, I have trusted; let me not be put to shame. Nor let my enemies exult over me; and let none who hope in you be put to shame.

Psalm: I rejoiced when I heard them say: 'Let us go to God's house'.

Intercession: Lord in your Mercy

Response: Hear our Prayer!

Next Week: [Is 11:1-10](#), [Rom 15:4-9](#), [Matt 3:1-12](#)

Ramblings Advent: a time of waiting and hope; a time of expectation, of new birth, a time of Light. One would think that by now, after so many Advents, we would know how to wait and benefit from it even more than we have done before. Yet the business of life suggests otherwise.

Has offered us many lessons about waiting: a year or more for our first teeth, pregnancy lasting 9 months, 6 years of Primary and secondary education and three years of university. Four weeks of advent should be a walk in the park! The creative world has many more examples of the importance of waiting. We begin our fellowship with Christ and all his followers in Baptism which in the Greek means "dipping in a liquid." In Mediterranean antiquity, water, fire, and wind (or spirit) were viewed as liquids that could be poured upon or into people.

Maybe we should call John, **John the Dipper** who recognised the important symbolism of water, fire, wind-spirit. But he also understood that his symbolic dipping of repentant Israelites in warm water will eventually be replaced with a judgmental dipping by "him who is to come" in the liquid of "holy wind or spirit" and fire. Which is itself a new birth. Reflecting on our baptism through the short period of advent will help prepare ourselves for the renewed coming of Christ who wishes to bring peace to our world through us. In baptism we receive the light of Christ:

In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us; to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. (Lk 1:78-79)

Diary Dates

Sun 27 Nov

Coffee Morning after 8.30am and 10.30am
Masses in support of the **The Bereavement Group.**



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3pm Advent Service in the church to start our time of preparation for the birth of Christ and led by Ann Milner. With a theme of **Peace and Hope**

Monday 28 Nov

6pm Beavers & 7.15pm Cubs Scout Hall

Tuesday 29 Nov

10.30am Coffee Morning Hall

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2pm Craft Circle LCR

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7pm Scouts Hall

Wed 30 Nov **St Andrew**

6pm Feed Up Warm Up Scout Hall

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7pm RCIA EC

Thurs 1 Dec

Due to vital electrical work being done in the hall all day there will be no heating in the hall block and no electricity in the kitchen. There will still be lighting/ power in the other rooms but also no heating in the church prior to Mass so dress warmly. All user groups have been informed.

1pm Italian Club Hall

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6.30pm Brownies Scout Hall

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7pm Finance Meeting LCR

Fri 2 Dec

10am-5pm Warm Spaces Hall

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2-4pm Hitchin Pantry Scout Hall

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2.30pm Scripture Group Emmanuel Centre meeting room.



Sat 3 Dec **St Francis Xavier**

2-4pm Hitchin Pantry Scout Hall

🙏 **Prayer diary** 🙏

Opportunities for communal prayer

- Tuesday** 11.30am **Meditation** Emmanuel Centre
7pm **Eucharistic Service** Church
To Zoom click on [Eucharistic Service](#)
 - Wednesday** 9.30am **Rosary** Church
2pm **Charismatic Prayer** Church
 - Thursday** 6.30pm **Meditation** Emmanuel Centre
- All are welcome for private prayer at any time in the church which is open 8.30am - 7pm*

10.30 Mass this Sunday is a Children's Mass with the theme of **Advent** and colouring sheets have already been sent out to the parish. Please bring your sheet to Mass and if you make an Advent Wreath please bring that in to show us too.



In the porch there are Advent booklets for Infants and Juniors priced 50p and an Adult booklet with prayer for Advent priced £1. There are also Advent calendars for children



which are free.

Our **Advent Service** on **Sunday 27th November** at **3pm** heralds our time of preparation for the birth of Christ and will be led by Ann Milner. With a theme of **Peace and Hope** it will give us some time to think about what we are preparing for this Christmas. Please come along to have some prayer time.



Once again we are offering a copy of the Backward Advent Calendar where you buy items to give the Hitchin Pantry instead of getting something from your calendar. All items can be placed in the white grid box in the porch. If there are no more calendars in the porch you can download one at

<https://www.caritaswestminster.org.uk/files/1976-1-1.pdf>



Our **Selection box collection** for Christmas hampers is going very well. We only need 69 more packs to reach our total of 200

packs. Thanks for your generosity and please keep giving.



Training for Ministry of the Word a course led by Dana Sample and Bridie Duffy for those, young and adult, who'd like to proclaim the readings at Mass. Two sessions - **4.30-5.30pm** on **Tuesday 29th November** and **Tuesday 6th December**. Please contact us on bridie.duffy@yahoo.com asap to register your interest. Thank you.



We pray for Helen Hemmings whose funeral is on Monday 19 December 2022 at 11.30am. May she rest in peace and rise in glory and may the Lord comfort her family.

Friday 2nd December 2.30pm is the start of a **new Scripture Study Group with Fr Andrew**. He will start with an overview so that everyone is clear about the basics of how the gospels were formed. Then he will move onto the gospels generally. The session will last about an hour. Please can you advise Cheryl if you plan to attend.



3pm Sunday 4th December, we are holding our next **Service of Healing and Wholeness**. Parishioners who feel the need for these gifts are invited to share in this time of prayer, during which the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Anointing will be celebrated.

Quarterly offertory figures for August 2022 – October 2022

Figures in brackets are for the previous quarter

Envelopes	(£ 3237.71)	£3434.91	
Standing Orders	(£18452.25)	£18018.25	
Offertory Online	(£ 1085.00)	£ 815.00	
Offertory Loose Plate & Contactless	(£ 4525.03)	£4739.96	
TOTAL	(£27299.99)	£27008.12	

Minutes scribe for the Pastoral Parish Council
We are very grateful to Maria Greene who has been the minutes scribe for the Pastoral Parish Council for a number of years. She has decided to step down so we need someone else to help. We have 6 meetings per year. If you are willing to give 2-3 hours every 2 months to support the PPC please can you contact [Roger Hyde](#) Chair of the PPC.

Feed Up Warm Up (FUWU) need Admin support – about an hour a day which they are willing to pay for. If you have some time to help this worthy project which operates out of the Scout Hall on a Wednesday evening please contact [Liz Wills](#)

Eucharistic Ministers needed at 6pm Mass. If you regularly attend the 6pm Mass and are willing to be trained in this ministry to assist the Priest with the distribution of communion please contact [Trish](#). A training course will be arranged soon.



Warm Spaces Starting 1st December



Our Churches in Hitchin welcome everyone to

visit and meet others, in a warm, friendly environment, some with refreshments provided. Times and facilities offered vary. See below for full details. Please let people know of this service if they want a warm and friendly place to spend some time as things start getting colder and energy prices are going up. Our day is Friday 10am-5pm which also fits in with Hitchin Pantry. We will be offering a light lunch. **We still need volunteers to help support this service from 10am-1pm. Please speak to [Trish](#) asap if you can help for an hour or three occasionally.**



Welcomes you to our warm spaces



Starting 1st December

Our Churches in Hitchin welcome you to visit and meet others, in a warm, friendly environment, some with refreshments provided. Times and facilities offered vary. See details below.

Monday Walsworth Road Baptist Church Walsworth Road SG4 9SP
07340 837769 <https://www.wrbchitchin.org.uk>



2-4pm (currently except Bank holidays) Renew 2-9 - a quiet space for sharing hobbies or simply to be. Refreshments and board games available.



Tuesday Christchurch Bedford Road SG5 1HF
01462-451720 www.christchurchhitchin.org.uk



10am-1pm Refresh – starting 6th December 10am-1pm and then 10am-3pm every Tuesday thereafter a cuppa and a chat, a listening ear, a quiet space, a meeting place, board game buddies,



a knit and natter, tech support from our IT clinic. Find them all and more.

Thursday Tilehouse Street Baptist Church Upper Tilehouse Street SG5 2EE
01462 456765 www.tsb-baptist.org.uk



10am-1pm Open Church for hot drinks and chat. Wifi available.

Friday Our Lady's Church 16 Nightingale Road SG5 1QS
01462 459126 <http://inparish.reclow.org.uk/hitchin/>



10am-5pm Community hub and Hitchin Pantry – chat, computer access, refreshments, light lunch, more to come.

Saturday Walsworth Road Baptist Church Walsworth Road SG4 9SP
07799 905997 <https://www.wrbchitchin.org.uk>



10am-12pm Coffee Plus - offering refreshments, a social space to chat & play board games plus activities/ play area for children.

There are also leaflets and posters with the Warm Spaces details on in the porch. Could you please take a poster and display somewhere near you and also take some of the leaflets and pop through your neighbour's doors. We want to get the message out to as many people as possible. Thank you for your help. Urgent appeal for help with Terracycle Recycling scheme mid-Dec 2022 to mid-Jan 2023

Deolinda and Michael Eltringham will be visiting family overseas over the 4 weeks from mid-Dec 2022 to mid-Jan 2023, and are appealing to parishioner to help cover that same period, in maintaining a Terracycle recycling service to the parish and the town, to ensure we can continue to raise funds for the chosen charities.



Up until Monday 12th Dec, we will be able provide the usual service. After that, to all supporters and contributors to this recycling scheme, if you can collect your separated waste at home, and keep it with you, and only bring it to the parish from the weekend of the 14/15 Jan 2023 onwards, that would be a great help and much appreciated.

We are also appealing for a couple of volunteers or so, to monitor the five Terracycle collection bins, so that they are emptied, the bin liners replaced, and the collected waste over the 4 weeks from mid-Dec 2022 to mid-Jan 2023 are stored in a safe dry space, until we get back, so it can be sorted, and sent for recycling. That way, we can avoid overwhelming the parish with waste delivered, and not lose its value for our chosen charities. Let's offer such a service as a Green loving present to the mother Earth and our community! And does anyone have lots of space in their garage for storage of the collected items?

Please contact us on home phone: 01462 451359 or by email: rmdmelt@btopenworld.com

Other Dates

3rd December. 10.30 to 11.20 am Sylvie Nicholls, the author of 'Treasure on the Shore', is speaking at Christchurch. Her theme is 'life, loss, love and seeking treasure on the shoreline of grief', a message she hopes will be helpful to those who remember absent loved ones particularly at Christmas. Copies of her book will be on sale - £3.00 from the sale of each will go to Macmillan Cancer Support. Members of all churches are welcome to come to the talk and stay for refreshments afterwards.

St Ippolyts Church Nativity Crib Festival December 3rd & 4th 11am-5pm

**Get into the spirit of Christmas.
Come and see our fabulous display of
Nativity Crib sets**

**Try and win a crib of
your own.
Enjoy a cuppa and a
cake.**

**Entry £4.00
Children are free**



Raising funds for St Ippolyts Church

11th December 4.30pm Join the churches in the Town Square for carols led by The Hub Church, alcohol-free mulled wine and hot chocolate. If it's raining (or snowing!) then come to Church House.

Other items of interest

Message from Bishop Paul - A decision has been made to close St Elizabeth's Adult Care Home in Much Hadham with effect from 30th November 2022. Understandably this decision has caused distress and anxiety among families of residents and residents themselves, many of whom have lived in St Elizabeth's for decades. You may have heard of this development particularly if any of your parishioners have relatives residing at St Elizabeth's. At the time of writing 69 of the 83 residents have found alternative accommodation. The School and College at St Elizabeth's will remain operational. There are vacancies on the Governing Bodies of the School and College. I would be grateful if you would insert a note in your weekly newsletter

requesting that if anyone wishes to be considered as a prospective Governor of St Elizabeth's School or St Elizabeth's College to please contact me on my email address paulmcaleenan@rcdow.org.uk More information about St Elizabeth's centre can be found on the website <https://www.stelizabeths.org.uk/>

From **Tuesday 29 November** until midday on **Tuesday 6 December**, any donations made to Herts Young Homeless via The Big Give Website, will be doubled at no extra cost until their target of £12,000 is reached! The campaign will last for one week. Please visit hyh.org.uk/thebiggive





Caritas have released a film that was produced to show supporters and partners the impact of our social justice work across the Diocese. This is the link: <https://youtu.be/Vgxvkd-8Ug>

It lasts 25 minutes, and shows examples of work happening and the difference made in our parishes and schools respectively.


Caritas are conducting some research to better understand how well their work is known and understood by clergy and parishioners. They have partnered with Bayes Business School's Centre for Charity Effectiveness, asking them to lead some focus groups that will help them to understand how to inform and communicate Caritas more effectively. You are invited to join a focus group, via Zoom, on 1, 6 or 7 December to help with this. If you wish to help contact Julie on juliechristiewebb@rcdow.org.uk

Looking after your mental health and wellbeing through winter For details of all the help and support available please go to [Mental Health and Wellbeing](#)

 Fr Emmanuel d'Alzon founder of the Assumptionists and the Oblates of the Assumption died on November 21st 1880. At the time of his death there only about fifty professed members of our Congregation, Today we are present in 32 countries. Recent foundations have been made in the Ivory Coast and in Angola. As we continue to pray for Fr d'Alzon's beatification we also ask God to bless our work for the coming of His Kingdom by sending more vocations.

 **Amoris Laetitia the joy of love 311** Love made fruitful - An expanding fruitfulness By their witness as well as their words, families speak to others of Jesus. they pass on the faith, they arouse a desire for God and they reflect the beauty of the Gospel and its way of life.

Safeguarding reminder EduCare (now part of Tes) leaflets can be downloaded from our website at <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hitchin/diocese/safeguarding-in-our-parishes/>

 If you have a need for prayer, please contact **Mary** on **07759195487** and let her know your prayer intentions

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Parish Tel no 01462 459126	Website: https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hitchin/
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01462 459126 press 4