



Follow the Star – join the song!



Over the last few days, we have hosted almost 7500 visits to St Mary's to stand and reflect 'under the SUN. A great variety of groups; children and adults, a rich diversity of cultures and an endless stream of people came and enjoyed the SUN installation. Thank you to the team who installed and helped people explore the Sun and to our own team of volunteers (over 35 of us) who welcomed everyone and supported them in lighting candles and encouraged donations.



At the heart of the week was a running theme of light and darkness and how we can live in the light. As we look at the world around us, we are aware of darkness in so many ways – on an international, national, local, and personal level. There are times when the darkness threatens to overwhelm us. Our calling is to be those who walk in the light and reflect that light in our lives and our world. The season of Advent also draws us to this theme -as we prepare to welcome Jesus, the Light of the World, we reflect on our lives and acknowledge those times when we add to the darkness (and so need to ask for our Father's forgiveness) and to consider how we may walk more closely with Christ and so reflect his light each day.

You are invited to join us (and Christians across the county) **as we mark the season by following the Star and preparing to sing with joy at the light, life, and peace He brings.** We will be doing this in a variety of ways, and we hope that you will find something that suits you.

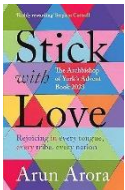


Join us in worship and prayer

You could perhaps **make a commitment to share regularly in our public worship (either each Sunday) or during the week.**

You could also join us wherever you are in **pausing to pray at 9am and 6pm each day**. You can be still for that moment and pray that you may reflect Christ's light through eh day or night; or you can follow our daily posts on social media and join in the prayers there.

Join us in conversation and reflection



You can join with others in conversations arising from the Archbishop of York's Advent Book – **'Stick with love'** by Arun Arora. The book provides daily readings and reflections which help us to consider the image of the Church as the people of God, drawn from every tribe, every tongue, and every nation.

If you would like a copy of the book, we have some available (at £5).

We will be meeting:

On Zoom with Revd Wendy May on Mondays at 7.30pm

starting on Dec 4th (and then on 11th and 18th). **Please contact her for the link.**

At Fellowship lunch (following Noon Mass – bring your own lunch) at St Mary's on Wednesday Nov 29th, Dec 6th, 13th, and 20th.

At Breakfast at St Mary's at 9am on Saturday Dec 9th and 16th – please let Fr Bob know by the Thursday before if you hope to attend for catering etc.

Join us in caring for others



Comfort and Joy Christmas Vouchers

As in previous years this year we are inviting you to join the Churches Homeless Action Christmas campaign.

Could you **donate a Gift Voucher or Card (£5 or £10)**

and a Christmas Card to share with someone who is living on the margins this Christmas?

Please bring to Church by Dec 12th for us to share with 12 agencies in our city on Dec 15th at a Noon Carol Sing In ...

Join us in donating flowers and remembering



If you would like to donate money for flowers to decorate our Churches for Christmas – either in memory of a loved one, or in thanksgiving for something – then please do so in a clearly marked envelope or if paying by BACS reference ‘Flowers’. You can also place a star on one of our Christmas Trees to remember those who have died.

Sharing the Chalice at Communion

Over the last few months, the PCC and Standing Committee have been reflecting on when and how to re-introduce the Common Cup following the COVID restrictions. The PCC is aware that there will be a divided view on this – there are both those who wish to return to receiving direct from the chalice, and others who are not yet ready to do so.

After much thought and discussion, **the PCC agreed that we should for a period offer both options on a Sunday** and then review again as to how people were feeling. So, **from Advent Sunday (Dec 3rd) at St Mary’s you can chose to continue to receive by Intinction by coming to the Dais to receive; or if you wish to receive from the Chalice then please go the Font area to receive.** St Faith’s will be considering their own arrangements at a meeting soon. For the moment 8am and midweek services will continue to administer just by intinction.

We will monitor how this goes and may revise arrangements as necessary – this will always be explained at the start of the service.

If you have any questions or concerns, then please do not hesitate to share them with one of the Ministry team.

Join us for other services and events

There are a variety of services and activities through Advent (if you would like to help with welcoming, car parking etc – please see list in Church- it is a busy time and your help will be invaluable!)

Fri Dec 1st 6pm at St Mary's Radio Solent Carol Concert – fully booked, but helpers needed.

Sat Dec 2nd 10am – Noon Messy Advent – a range of activities and craft preparing for Christmas -ending with a free lunch. Contact Fr Rajiv for details.

7.30pm Renaissance Choir Carols at *St Mary's*

Sun Dec 3rd Advent Sunday 6pm at *St Mary's* – service of music and readings – reflecting on the light that shines in the darkness.

Mon Dec 4th 7pm District Scout Christingle at *St Mary's*

Tues Dec 5th 7pm PCC meets at *St Mary's*

Fri Dec 8th 11am at *St Mary's* Can you come and help us make **250 Christingles** Coffee/Tea and Mince Pies will be supplied!

5.30pm News Christingle Service at *St Mary's* – with local schools, Panto Stars and others – invite family and friends!

7pm Fratton Awards with Stephen Morgan MP and Fratton Big Local at *St Mary's*

Sat Dec 9th 6pm St Mary's Choir sing Carols for Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress to raise funds for their appeal at *Guildhall* – see Brian Moles for details and tickets

Sun Dec 10th 2.30 & 5pm Barrells' Services at *St Mary's*

Mon Dec 11th 7.30pm Julian Prayer Group meets for stillness and

reflection *at St Faith's*

Weds Dec 13th 1.30pm onwards – can you come and help us **count and sort the vouchers** and cards donated to the Comfort and Joy campaign.

**Thurs Dec 14th 7.30pm Royal Marine School of Music
Christmas Concert (1) at St Mary's**

Fri Dec 15th Noon Churches Homeless Action Carols and distribution of donated vouchers for Comfort and Joy
7pm Reindeer Drive in aid of Charity – bring your own antlers! *At St Faiths*

**7.30pm Royal Marine School of Music Christmas
Concert (2) at St Mary's**

**Sat Dec 16th 7.30pm Portsmouth Choral Union –
Handel's Messiah at St Mary's**

Tues Dec 19th 6pm Join us at St Mary's as we **Carol Sing around
the local streets** for about an hour or so.

**Fri Dec 22nd 7pm Traditional Service of 9 Lessons and Carols
at St Mary's**

Sat Dec 23rd Join us at St Mary's **from 9am to help clean and
decorate** the Church for our Christmas celebrations –
ending with a light lunch.

For **church decoration at St Faith's** - contact Revd
Wendy May for details

Christmas dates to follow in next leaflet