

UNITED BENEFICE OF

ST. MARY'S ST. MARK'S
SLAUGHAM STAPLEFIELD COMMON

Serving the communities of Handcross, Pease Pottage, Slaugham, Staplefield & Warninglid

CONTACT

Church Office:

01444 400221, slaughtam@btinternet.com

Office hours: Monday & Thursday 9am-12pm

Rector, Rev'd Carl Smith:

01444 400221, handcrossrectory@gmail.com

 [@stmarysandstmarks](#)

December 2022



Church Services in December

Weekly services are taking place at our churches, and everyone is welcome.

Our current plans are as follows but they are subject to change. Please look out for email communication, and keep an eye on our social media pages, website, YouTube channel and weekly notice sheet.

4 th	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship Communion
	10.45am	St Mary's	All Age Toy Service
	4pm	All Saints	Christingle
6 th	7.45pm	St Mark's	Prayer gathering
11 th	10.45am	St Mary's	Communion
	4pm	St Mark's	Carols by Candlelight
14 th	10.30am	All Saints	Spotlight
15 th	4pm	Woodgate, Pease Pottage	Carols on the Green
18 th	9am	St Mark's	Common Worship Communion
	6.30pm	St Mary's	Carols by Candlelight
23 rd	6pm	All Saints	Carols
24 th	4pm	Staplefield Common*	All Age Crib Service
	11.15pm	St Mary's	Midnight Communion
25 th	9am	St Mark's	All Age Christmas Celebration with Communion
	10.30am	St Mary's	All Age Christmas Celebration
1 st Jan	10am	All Saints	Communion

* *St Mark's if raining too much*

Everyone is welcome!

All Saints: Horsham Road, Handcross, RH17 6DF

St Mark's: Brantridge Lane, Staplefield, RH17 6EJ

St Mary's: Staplefield Road, Slaugham, RH17 6AG

The St Mary's services are put onto YouTube and we hope they will be a blessing to those who still cannot attend in person. They can be found here:

https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCBQ0W4r1m39ixogQWR3TxoA?fbclid=IwAR2vLqbm97Iq9StSwn8qvgX_vTF11-tq0LV7z80cVFC8BZE034WNbNHhc4

Or search for: United Benefice of St Mary's and St Mark's.

You can subscribe to the sermons as a podcast too. All links are on the website at <https://www.stmarysparish.org.uk/podcasts/> .

Parish Magazine

We are in the process of reviewing how we communicate to the wider community through the Parish Magazine. If you are passionate about editing or design and would be interested in being involved in future production and development of the magazine then please speak to Carl Smith or Fae Widdowson on 01444 400221.

LOVE AT CHRISTMAS

In 1980, the day before Christmas, Richard Ballenger's mother in Anderson, South Carolina, was busy wrapping packages and asked her young son to clean her shoes. Soon, with the proud smile that only a seven-year-old can muster, he presented the shoes for inspection. His mother was so pleased that she gave him a quarter.

On Christmas morning, as she put the shoes on to go to church, she noticed a lump in one shoe. She took it off and found a quarter wrapped in paper. Written on the paper in a child's scrawl were the words, "I done it for love."

This little story appears on December 24th in a much loved daily devotional that I sometimes use by Brennan Manning. It always touches me.

"I done it for love" captures so much of the spirit of Christmas. We give gifts because we love people - often agonising over what might be just the right thing. We receive gifts from people who love and care for us.

The tradition of gift giving is tied to the story of the Magi bringing gifts to Jesus at His birth. The gifts were each very symbolic and meaningful - just the right things for a baby who would die one day on a cross and rise to become King of Kings.

Why ever would the son of God choose to enter our world in the poorest place possible, in the most vulnerable and defenceless form imaginable - a baby in a manger? I have a feeling that Jesus would reply in the same vein as the little seven-year-old in the story: "I done it for love!"

In His great love for us, God comes into the poverty of a manger to show us that He can also find his way into the darkest and poorest places of our lives. In His great love for us, God comes as a baby to make Himself as vulnerable and accessible to our hearts as He possibly could.

May the message of Christmas resound in your heart this Advent Season - God has come to us. He has entered into our world. He is Immanuel - God with us; with us in our fears, our loneliness, our darkneses, our joys, our comforts, our ordinariness. Because of Christmas, we are never alone.

Liz Cox

Handcross Community Pantry

The Pantry was set up and is run by the churches in our Parish: All Saints in Handcross, St Mary's in Slaugham and St Mark's in Staplefield. Pease Pottage, Woodgate and Warninglid are also in the parish. We offer weekly provisions of food to those within the parishes who are in need of help and support.

As a Parish Church, we invite anyone in need to get in touch via our rector Rev Carl Smith at handcrossrectory@gmail.com or on 01444 400221. You are very welcome to call in to All Saints on a Saturday morning between 10 and 11.30am. Stay for free tea, coffee and biscuits, and chat to someone on our friendly team.

You can donate non-perishable items at the Handcross Hardware & Craft shop in the High Street, at All Saints on a Saturday morning, or at our churches – St Mary's and St Mark's are open all day. Financial donations can also be made: cash, marked 'Pantry', to the hardware shop, or by BACS (sort code 40-24-33, account 81842242, account name Slaugham PCC, reference 'Pantry' or 'CP').

If you would like to be a donation point for collection, or need any other information, then please get in touch. For any Pantry questions, please contact Barbara Butfoy at butfoybabs@hotmail.co.uk or on 01444 401706 or 07853 228605. Thank you.

Christmas preparations!

As Christmas approaches, it would be nice to have some special items in stock at the Pantry, with the intention of making hampers for the families.

Suitable items would include the following.

<i>Boxes of biscuits (e.g. Family Circle)</i>	<i>Shortbread</i>
<i>Small selection boxes</i>	<i>Chocolate bars</i>
<i>Chocolate Biscuits (e.g. KitKat, Penguin)</i>	<i>Mince pies</i>
<i>Small cakes (similar to Mr Kipling sizes)</i>	<i>Crisps, Twiglets, Pringles, Cheddars</i>
<i>Biscuits for cheese, cream crackers</i>	<i>Lemonade, cola</i>
<i>Squash, cartons of fruit juice</i>	<i>Trifle mixes in packets</i>
<i>Sauces (e.g. brandy, cranberry, apple)</i>	<i>Pickles, stuffing</i>

Donated items can be left in the usual places, or cash donations marked 'Christmas Hamper' can be given to Barbara Butfoy, **by 11th December**. Thank you.

Jesus is Born

¹ In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

¹⁰ But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.'

¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ 'Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests.'

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.'

¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

Cleaning Help Needed

St Mark's Church needs regular cleaning, and we would be very grateful if any person, or group of people, feel they can help. It involves sweeping and polishing and really is not a big task if undertaken regularly.

If you can help, please contact the church office (01444 400221), Lizzie (07887 637084) or Helen (07540 816170)

Many thanks.

*Lizzie and Helen
(Wardens)*

Handcross Hardware - New Opportunities

Do you enjoy getting to know people in the area? Do you want to be able to contribute to re-building community after months of isolation? Could you spare some time to help serve customers in the store, or co-run a weekday or evening group meeting of your interest?

As society has almost completely re-opened, and we have begun to feel more settled in our new role managing the store, we feel it is the right time to re-start some community groups from Handcross Hardware's Upper Room.

We have many opportunities of varying commitment and are interested in moulding the future of the Handcross Hardware Project based on your interests and needs. Please call the store on 01444 400212 and ask to speak to Asher, or email dudleyhousetrust@gmail.com, if you have any ideas to put forward or would like more information about volunteering opportunities.

We are excited to see how the project will develop over the coming months and years.

Asher and Damaris (Joint Project Managers)