

WINTER 24

PARISHMATTERS

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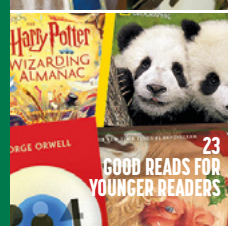
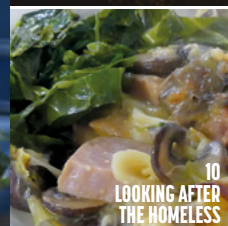


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PARISH MATTERS

WINTER 24

In this winter issue we major on the significance and importance of Christmas as a religious festival, exploring the mystery and spiritual depths of the Christmas message, inviting the whole parish to join in some of the Advent and Christmas services.

We feature the church hosting wedding services, our glebe field as an ideal venue for a reception or other celebratory event and our hall which can be hired for a huge range of activities utilising our flexible and refurbished spaces.

Our Choristers perform in concert; another stained glass window is revealed; four young people review books that have inspired them; we feature the vital work of Faith in Action working with homeless people in Merton; a further St Mary's group walk; an article celebrating the eco importance of bats; and a new Bible study group joins the parish groups.

Finally we invite you to our annual Christmas Market and Parish Players pantomime in the new year.

John Hayward
Editor

St Mary's Church is open daily 9am–4pm and Sundays 7.30am–7.30pm

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Christmas – the great mystery is unfurled

**John Hayward,
the Vicar writes:**

After the Advent season of the prophets prepares our hearts for Christmas, the Christmas story unfurls at Nine Lessons and Carols, with the *eagerness of the shepherds, the joy of the angels and the wondrous birth of the Christ-Child*. Always popular, this service is candlelit, befitting the Light of the World whom we receive with gratitude into our hearts. Well known carols for all to sing and those sung by the choir are interspersed with readings from the Old Testament and the Gospels which tell us that *God has brought us out of darkness and into his own marvellous light*.



It's virtually impossible to capture the spiritual profundity of Christmas in words alone, hence the watchword of the season: *The Word made flesh*, whose wonder and truth is often best pondered through carols and Christmas music.

From Bob Chilcott's joyful and upbeat carol of syncopated rhythms of rumba to favourites like *In the bleak mid winter* or my favourite, the joyful and bouncy *Sussex Carol*. Perhaps Morten Lauridsen's moving *O magnum mysterium* transporting us to heaven or a piece with a local touch, given the parish's many green hedges, Rutter's *Sans day carol* singing of *the first tree in the greenwood, it was the holly!*

Revealing all God's fullness, Christmas enables the world to once again experience the eternal love of God made visible in the life of Jesus Christ. Taking on our flesh with all its human frailties and wonderful possibilities, we see the face of the divine – all that greatness contained in so small a child. May we *be strengthened in faith* as we



settle our eyes at first on the manger scene, but then strain our gaze beyond the animals and the hay, to behold 'the fullness of life he came to bring'.

The Incarnation (the embodiment of God in a human person) draws us to kneel in wonder as we sense *heaven is come down to earth, and earth is raised to heaven*.

And more than that, to actually receive him into our hearts such that *we may share in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share in our humanity*. Christmas ushers in a time of human/divine exchange when we thank God who *has become one with us that we might become one with him*.

On Christmas Eve at the two Christingle services, the love of God made visible in the world is symbolised by the wondrous glow of the Christingle candles, reflected in the joy of children's faces getting involved in telling the



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Nativity story, since God has *caused his light to shine in our hearts. In him we see our God made visible and so are caught up in the love of the God we cannot see.*

One manifestation of that love of God is to offer donations at the Christingle services for the valuable work of the Children's Society. Your support over the years has made a significant contribution to their vital work and I sincerely hope we shall do so again this year— thank you.

Light again dispels the winter darkness with the Midnight Eucharist (including sermon,

anthem and congregational carols) bringing a tingle down the spine as the mystery of the Incarnation is unfurled. *In this mystery of the Word made flesh we receive the first holy communion of Christmas – Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing,* praising almighty God *who made this most holy night to shine with the brightness of his one true light.*

Christmas Morning sees families fill the church once again as joyful carols fill the air. The Eucharist feeds us to await with anticipation the arrival of the Three Kings with their Epiphany gifts in the New Year.

Will Todd's *My Lord has come* captures well the message of the Magi: *Sages, searching for love in heaven;* as the text assures us that *love will cradle me* going on to plead *lead me to see him!* as the deep sonorous harmonies of Peter Warlock's *Bethlehem Down* express *Close-huddled oxen* giving way to the *sweetness of myrrh and gold* for a crown.

A very Happy Christmas to you when it comes and finally in the words of the Christmas blessing: *Christ, who by his Incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with peace and goodwill and make you partakers of the divine nature.*

Italics: texts of carols and prayers from services of the Christmas season.

Sudoku

8		1		7			6
		9	8	2	6		
	6					7	8
		3	7	5		6	
	4			9			1
		2		8	1	3	
9	2						6
			4	1	2	7	
5			9			2	3

Solutions on page 28

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Come and join us at St Mary's to celebrate Christmas together

Candlelit Advent Carol Service

Sunday 1 December 6.30pm

Chorister Concert

Sunday 15 December 6.30pm

Candlelit Nine Lessons and Carols

Sunday 22 December 6.30pm

Christmas Eve Christingle Services

Tuesday 24 December 3.30pm & 5.00pm

The Christingle orange and its decoration symbolise important aspects of the Christmas season.

Christmas Eve Midnight Eucharist

Tuesday 24 December 11.30pm

The "Midnight" service marks the start of Christmas. Candlelight dispels the midnight darkness as we celebrate Holy Communion at Christmas.

Christmas Day

Wednesday 25 December 10.00am

Communion of Christmas Morning

With seasonal music and well-known carols we celebrate the joyful Birth of our Saviour.

Epiphany

Sunday 5 January 2025 9.30am

Sung Eucharist is celebrated as the arrival of the Three Kings concludes the celebration of the birth of Jesus.

Epiphany Carol Service

Sunday 26 January 2025 6.30pm





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Regular church services
see page 28

Sunday Club
see page 28

Children First Eucharist
see page 28

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edits each issue.
We welcome your
feedback.

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Children First Eucharists

9.30am Sunday 17 November, 19 January, 16 February

Fellowship Lunch. Noon for 12.30pm

Sunday 17 Nov, 26 Jan, 23 Mar. Tickets: 020 8543 3764

Informal Piano Concert in the church.

Sun 24 November 2.45pm. Free entry. Local piano pupils,
beginners to diploma and beyond. Drop in for part or all.

Christmas Market. Saturday

30 November 11am–2pm. See advert opposite

Candlelit Advent Carol Service

Sunday 1 December 6.30pm

Choristers Concert for the season (in place of Evensong)

including Britten's Ceremony of Carols. See page 13.
Sunday 15 December 6.30pm. Tickets on door £10

Carol singing around the parish

Monday 16 December 7.20pm. Meet at corner of Dorset/
Erridge Roads. Singers and collectors for 'Crisis' welcome.
Refreshments to follow.

Candlelit Nine Lessons and Carols

Sunday 22 December 6.30pm

Christmas Services see page 7

The Wonderful Wizard of Oz Family Pantomime

St Mary's Parish Hall. 7.45pm Thursday 9, Friday 10,
Saturday 11 January. Matinee: Saturday 11 January 2.30pm

Visiting preachers

19 January 6.30pm The Dean of Southwark
2 Feb 9.30am Revd Jeremy Clark-King, Director of Ordinands

Epiphany Carol Service

All the mystery of the Magi. Sunday 26 January 6.30pm

Ash Wednesday

5 March 7.30pm.
Begin Lent with this service and Imposition of Ashes

Helping those with no one in their corner

David Reeves meets Grace O'Neill, Manager of Faith in Action's Homeless Drop-in, whose entire career has been dedicated to supporting the most vulnerable in our community.



Long-time Wimbledon resident Grace's journey to becoming manager, last December, of the Faith in Action Merton Homelessness Project (FiA) Drop-in makes her ideally suited to such a demanding role.

Situated in Kingston Road next to Wimbledon Fire Station, FiA's Drop-in serves around 60 homeless and vulnerably-housed people twice a week. Grace's team of six professional staff, ably supported by 50 or so dedicated volunteers, provide a wide range of on-site services including a two-course hot lunch, laundry, showers, clothing, food parcels and English classes. Specialist support is also available towards getting people's lives back on track – from finding accommodation and advising on employment and training opportunities, to opening up access to local third-party services to tackle alcohol and substance abuse and other physical and mental health problems.

As a former heroin user herself, Grace is particularly well-qualified in terms of understanding the huge challenges faced by individuals with addiction issues. Now clean for 25 years, Grace was able to get her life back together, obtaining a university degree in social work and embarking on a career in addiction support services with the Kingston Wellbeing Service (KWS), initially working with people leaving prison with addictions.



Grace subsequently worked in Wandsworth in a supported accommodation team, liaising with addiction support colleagues, before returning to KWS, supporting residents in their detox and rehab journeys. A two-year spell followed in the adult safeguarding team, carrying out whole care home investigations, and also supporting people living on the streets and particularly subject to situations such as 'cuckooing', where an individual or gang exploits vulnerable individuals through financial abuse and intimidation.

After 14 years working on the front line, Grace took a well-deserved year off before moving into the charitable sector running the Norbiton-based homeless drop-in run by Kingston Churches Action on Homelessness.

During her time at KWS, which coincided with the covid pandemic, Grace had begun working with Dons Local Action Group (DLAG) who donated 'kettle food' for homeless and vulnerably-housed people. That relationship continues today, with DLAG providing generous weekly donations of food to FiA's Drop-in.

It's certainly been a hectic first year for Grace as no sooner had she got her feet under the

desk she was masterminding a temporary move of the Drop-in from its usual rented base in the Wimbledon Salvation Army hall to the 7th Day Adventist Church hall off the Broadway while a new kitchen and showers were installed.

Now back home again, Grace is planning the introduction of digital tool Charitylog, which will free up precious staff time, ensure data protection compliance and generally improve FiA's professionalism. She has also begun reaching out more to the local community by building closer relationships with faith groups, schools and local businesses across the borough.

With assistant manager Nicki Zisman (who used to run the Merton Winter Night Shelter, and now itself part of FiA) having recently joined the team, another joint priority is to increase volunteer numbers and further build team spirit and energy. And longer-term, Grace is determined to support the trustees in ensuring FiA's financial independence. Like many charities, FiA is facing significantly increased costs at a time when charitable giving has fallen.

Could you become a volunteer at Merton Homeless Drop-in?

FiA is always looking for enthusiastic and committed people to join their volunteer team. Working at the Wimbledon Drop-in on either a Wednesday or Friday, there are a variety of different roles - being a member of the kitchen team preparing lunch or serving hot drinks and toast, managing the laundry and showers, or supporting service users on a one-to-one basis under the guidance of a staff member.

Interested? Email Nicki Zisman at nicki@mertonfaithinaction.org

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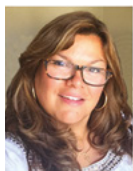
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MUSICMATTERS

St Mary's Choristers Christmas Concert

Sunday 15 December 6.30pm

Celebrating Christmas at St Mary's Church is a long-standing tradition for many local people. This year there's another joyful opportunity to mark Christ's birth – our talented young choristers will be performing Benjamin Britten's Ceremony of Carols as the centre-piece of a seasonal concert of choral music.

One of Britten's most famous and performed works, it's written for three-part treble chorus, solo voices, and harp. It has 11 short movements, with words principally in Middle English, with some Latin and Early Modern English. It has some stunningly beautiful melodies and exquisite harmonies. This year, the choristers are being joined by the Gaia Singers (who performed earlier in the year at St Mary's), and professional harpist Anwen Mai Thomas, a graduate of the Royal Academy of Music.

The choristers will also be singing a specially selected programme including

Anwen Mai Thomas. Guest harpist

Anwen Mai studied at the Royal Academy of Music where, in 2023, she was awarded a distinction and the 'Harp Prize for the highest recital mark' at her MA graduation, along with a DipRAM. She has since gained the 'Foyle Future First' harp position with the London Philharmonic Orchestra for 2023-24. Anwen has performed with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, including at their BBC Proms concert, Sinfonia Smith Square, and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.



Eleanor Daley's Lake Isle of Innisfree, and Joanna Forbes L'Estrange's Give us grace.

Do come and immerse yourself in Britten's masterpiece – the perfect preparation for the festive season. All are welcome, tickets are £10, payable on the door (cash or card) and there will also be a bar serving alcoholic and soft drinks.

St Mary's has a fine, long-standing musical tradition. Our young choristers currently number 23, with ages ranging from 7 to 18. Led by Musical Director Tristan Weymes, himself a former St Mary's chorister, the choir also includes adult altos, tenors and basses. Leading the worship each Sunday in term-time, the choir also sings occasionally at other venues, including, in 2023, Choral Evensong at Westminster Abbey.

The choir has spaces for people of all ages, from choristers on the front row, to teenage Choral Scholars singing ATB, or adults as part of the back row. We also offer Organ Scholarships to young organists in the local area who are keen to develop their service playing skills.

If you'd be interested in joining, or know someone who would be, please email info@stmarysmertonchoir.com

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- Dressed up for a shindig?
- None of the above?!

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PRESENTS



Parish Players' pantomime in January will be The Wonderful Wizard of Oz, written by Nigel Holmes and directed by Peri Kennedy and Angela Kinsella. The panto is based on the book by L Frank Baum, Warner Bros being notoriously protective of the 1939 film. It features all the elements of the original – Dorothy, Munchkins, Scarecrow, Tin Man, Cowardly Lion, witches both good and bad and, of course, the Wizard. Add (dame) Aunt 'Em, a conceited Prince, a fragile Princess along with 'dynamic' duo Ugg and Lee and you have a potent panto concoction!

This is only the second time Parish Players have performed this panto, the first time being back in 2010. Several members of that cast feature again, but we are also delighted to welcome both new members and members who have only recently made their debut with us. We depend on new blood and if you would like to appear in our next production or help behind the scenes, please get in contact. You will find details on our website at www.parishplayers.net, where you will also find details of our past productions, including 66 previous pantomimes.

9th-11th Jan 2025

Show starts at 7.45pm
(bar opens 7.00pm)
Saturday matinee at 2.30pm

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Nick Foxton writes:

Many of us will be familiar with the brief sight of bats flitting around the churchyard, the church field or along the roads of Merton Park. Bats have traditionally received a rather bad press, at least in the West. Charles Darwin's reports of the real vampire bat feeding on blood in South America were (mis) appropriated by Bram Stoker who spun eastern European folklore into the Gothic romance of Dracula, linking vampirism with bats in the popular imagination. American poet Theodore Roethke wrote:

Something is amiss or out of place

When mice with wings wear a human face

The poet's description here is erroneous, but reflects the tendency seen in many European languages of conflating bats with mice (Fledermaus in German, chauve-souris in French, letucaja-mys in Russian). In fact, bats are more closely related to us than they are to mice.

The reality of bat lifecycles is equally fantastic

The bat family group is 65 million years old, dating back to at least the extinction of the dinosaurs at the end of the Cretaceous Period. Like many mammal groups (our own included) bats radiated widely after the demise of the dinosaurs to fill now empty ecological niches.

They have two extraordinary adaptations; firstly being the only mammals capable of true flight and secondly being able to navigate and locate prey through echo location using sound waves.

Britain has 18 species of bat, with 17 of those being breeding populations and all are insectivores. When we see bats flitting around the churchyard they are either feeding or commuting to a feeding ground – they are prodigious consumers of insects. Our smallest and commonest – the common



Bats at St Mary's

pipistrelle (see photo) can eat up to 3000 insects a night or a third of its bodyweight.

As top of the food chain predators, bats are key indicators of ecosystem health and all British bats are in varying degrees of trouble, given changing numbers of insects and land use changes. All British bats have the highest level of legal protection and roosts are protected. Bats do not build nests but roost in buildings, trees or caves. In buildings, roosts are usually under tiles or in roof voids, depending on the species of bat. One of the highlights of my bat season, this year, was observing a roost at a house in Surrey where 35 serotines (one of our largest bats, known colloquially amongst bat workers as the flying brick) emerged from the roof void.

Modern bat detectors and infra-red cameras now mean that all of us can see and hear bats as they echolocate their prey and I hope to be able to run some sessions to demonstrate to anyone interested next season.

I have only had time to conduct a single late-season survey this year due to work commitments and results were relatively poor (a single sighting and two recorded but not seen), but come the insect rich warmer nights I look forward to seeing what bats we are sharing St Mary's with.

Let St Mary's be the venue for your special day

... and guarantee memories to treasure forever



Not only is Grade 2 listed St Mary's blessed as a picturesque and historic church, we also have a beautiful 'glebe field' just a short stroll through the churchyard – the perfect setting for your marquee.

Music has always played an important role at St Mary's. Our glorious pipe organ or grand piano can lead the music, a choir can support the singing and the ancient bells can be rung in celebration.

Brides may arrive in a variety of ways, but once at church the bride need not step into another vehicle until the dancing is done. Having emerged through the decorated north door and been greeted by family, friends and a shower of confetti, the newly weds can walk



hand in hand to their reception in the 'glebe field' surrounded by trees and wild flowers.

There's plenty of room for marquees and teepees, or if you prefer you could opt for the parish hall with access to the fully refurbished kitchen and other facilities.



You don't need to be a regular church-goer to be able to get married here. We can help you plan your wedding with a willingness to tailor the day to suit individual taste, style and budget. Weddings, and other celebrations, can be conducted at any time of the year, on weekdays as well as at weekends.



"I always dreamt of a Church wedding"



If you are interested in getting married at St Mary's or would like to chat through the possibilities, contact the parish office at office@stmarysmerton.org.uk

The Letter in The Window...

When I first saw the advert in the pharmacy window, it broke my heart. I thought, 'That could be my own mum in a few years time'.

I wasn't looking for a new career or anything, but I knew I could give someone a bit of help here and there. So, when I saw the ad, I went for it and called the number.

I spoke to a lovely lady called Sophia who filled me in on what Home Instead Wimbledon and Kingston were looking for and how they helped so many older adults. Honestly, it really didn't feel like I was talking about a job. For the first time in ages, I felt like I could really contribute something good to another person's life.

Deciding to offer a few hours of my week was a simple decision. Those few hours quickly turned into a full-time commitment. Leaving my job at the shop wasn't easy, but what I've found in return is so much better.

Home Instead stands out because everyone is so friendly and welcoming. The immersive training was incredible - it really felt like being in Betty's flat. It didn't just prepare me for the everyday 'tasks' I'd need to do but it helped me understand depth of care, the importance of dignity, and the value of companionship to someone's life and wellbeing.

Now, four months in, I can't imagine doing anything else. The clients I visit, the stories I hear, the smiles we share - I love it. So, to anyone who felt the same as me when they read that note in the window, I'd say, make the call.

Caring and companionship, giving back to the community, that's what life is all about.

All the best,
Aanya



The St Matthias window in St Mary's

In the fourth in our series of short articles on the stained glass windows in the church, Simon Hillson looks at St Matthias.

The climax of Part I of Elgar's moving oratorio, *The Kingdom*, about the fragile community of Jesus's followers in the period immediately following his Ascension is the selection by lot of Matthias to replace Judas Iscariot as one of the twelve Apostles. The scene is drawn from chapter 1 of the Acts of the Apostles in which Matthias becomes the only one of the Twelve not to have been called personally by Jesus. The prominence given to him by Elgar is particularly striking as this is the sole reference to Matthias in the New Testament. All we know about him from the Bible is that he was a follower of Jesus throughout Jesus's ministry from his baptism to the Ascension, and that he was a witness to the Resurrection – the two essential qualifications for an Apostle as stated in Acts – and also that he was amongst those who received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

As with the other Apostles, there are stories in the traditions of the early Church about his later activities. It was said that he preached the gospel in Judea, which is plausible enough, but later references to work in the regions of Cappadocia and the Caspian Sea, and another tradition linking him with Ethiopia, are dubious. Likewise, the now lost apocryphal Gospel of Matthias was most likely a second century work, and certainly not one written by Matthias.

We do not know why St Matthias was chosen to appear in one of the windows in



The St Matthias and St Matthew window viewed from the churchyard with the church lit in preparation for Evensong.

the south aisle of St Mary's Church, where he keeps company with St Matthew, a coupling that does nothing to lessen the confusion between the two saints which goes back to the earliest times. Of various legends about Matthias's death – that he was crucified, that he died peacefully in Jerusalem, that he was stoned there and then beheaded – our window reflects the last. In the traditional way, he is depicted holding the instrument of his death, in this case a halberd, a long-handled axe with a spike on the other side of the head from the blade.

While we may know little about St Matthias as a historical figure, Elgar was correct to give him a place of prominence in his oratorio, and it is right that he should be venerated by the Church, as he is in the West on 14 May each year. For, as the first person to be commissioned to the ministry of the Apostles after Jesus's Ascension, he was the pioneer for all Christian people, who through the ages since have been, and still are, called to share in that same commission to proclaim the Gospel of the risen and ascended Lord.

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Regent's Canal

Simon Hillson recommends an interesting London walk

When the days are short in winter and the Surrey countryside is awash with mud, there is no shortage of interesting walks to be found closer to home in London. In early 2023 and 2024 the St Mary's walking group explored the Regent's Canal, which links the Grand Union Canal and the Thames. Part of a masterplan devised by John Nash, work began on the canal in 1812, and the first stretch to Camden Lock opened in 1816, with the remainder in 1820. The canal was originally a vital part of the commercial artery for the transport of goods between the Thames and the Midlands, but the increasing use of rail and road transport meant that it went through a long period of decline from the early twentieth century. There were even plans from time to time to convert the route into a railway. In the 1970s the canal was adapted for leisure use, and the towpath is now a popular green corridor route for walkers and cyclists.

A walk along the first half of the canal as far as Islington is a little under five miles in length, beginning at Paddington Station (easily accessible from Wimbledon on the District Line).

Walking along Paddington Basin to Little Venice you meet the junction between the Grand Union and Regent's Canals. The route is obvious and easy to follow, even where occasionally it's necessary to leave the towpath, for example where the canal goes into a tunnel, as it does at Aberdeen Place. Especially in this initial stretch, interest is enhanced by the many attractive houseboats and narrowboats which line the canal. Shortly after a mile of walking, the canal reaches Regent's Park, of which it forms the northern boundary. Much fun is to be had trying to spot animals in London Zoo on the other side of the canal. At the striking Feng Shang Princess, a floating Chinese restaurant, the canal turns sharp left towards the famous market at Camden Lock, with its offering of craft stalls and street food. A mile or so further on from the lock, having passed through the attractively landscaped King's Cross redevelopment, the canal enters the Islington Tunnel, almost 1000 yards long.

At this point, it's about half a mile's walk through the side streets of Islington to the Angel tube station for the Northern Line train to South Wimbledon.





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A good read...

Many thanks to our younger readers for their recommendations.



The Harry Potter WIZARDING ALMANAC JK Rowling

The Almanac is a fascinating book about the wizarding world. It introduces characters such as Albus Dumbledore, Rubeus Hagrid, Professor Snape and of course, Harry Potter and his friends. It delves deeper into Hogwarts wand lore and Diagon Alley. But that's not all! The illustrations are fantastic so bravo to all seven of the illustrators. The compendium also has quotes from the real books on different subjects like homework at Hogwarts and Hagrid's pets. I loved the bit where it tells you all about Quidditch, the most popular magical sport. A fun and enjoyable read! **Adrianna, age 8**



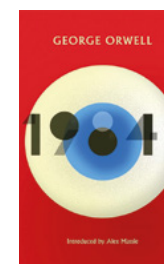
National Geographic Animal Encyclopedia Dr Lucy Spelman

Animal Encyclopedia is a book with a wide range of information. It has pictures of many diverse animals. The book includes information such as what they eat and how they live. There are different chapters, each including a different type of species. There are mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish and birds. The other interesting part of the book is the section on invertebrates. The photographs are 10 out of 10! An interesting thing I learned from this book is that elephants migrate in search of water, and that they go the same route each year. I recommend this book to animal lovers of all ages! **Sienna, age 8**



The Night before Christmas Clement Clarke Moore

I would like to review this book because every time I read it, it gets me into the Christmas spirit. As well as this, it will tell you all the names of the reindeer like Rudolf, Donner, Blitzen, Prancer, Dasher, Dancer, Vixen, Comet and Cupid. This is what the story is all about: On the night before Christmas someone heard Santa on their roof and sometimes they call him by his real name (St. Nicholas). So that's why I want to review this book. **James, age 8**



1984 George Orwell

I have recently started the George Orwell novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. It is a masterpiece, wherein a dystopian future Britain is ruled by a tyrannical government.

This government is called 'The Party' and is invasive in every citizen's life. The riveting story follows a party member, Winston Smith, from his initially monotonous and unsuspecting life through a new-found need for rebellion. He feels as though 'The Party' and its vitriolic ignorance of the past and clear truth are utterly evil. Is our protagonist going to end the indoctrinating tyrants once and for all? I'll try not to spoil any more of the twisted, but brilliant plot, as I believe this book is an indisputable must for readers from avid to amateur. It's the most thought-provoking thing I've read for a very long time and has me already wanting to re-read it. Get a copy now! **Daniel, age 14**

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PARISH TOGETHER

In addition to our services in church, St Mary's offers several activities which are open to all in our local community. You are sure to receive a warm welcome.



Wednesday Club

Meeting in the parish small hall every Wednesday 2.30–4.30pm. The monthly programme includes two film sessions, an afternoon tea, quizzes and lively topic talks. Suggested donation of £5 pp, or £8 per couple/pair.

For further information contact:
Barbara Moreland 020 8542 3427
bmoreland43@gmail.com
Lindsey Jones 020 8715 6398
lindsey6456@hotmail.co.uk

Book Club

Meeting monthly in different houses across the parish. About two hours.

For further information contact **John Combs**
johncombs46@gmail.com

Bible Study Group

Meeting in the parish small hall at 10.30am on the following Tuesdays: 19 November, 3 and 17 December, and into the New Year. Studying St John's Gospel.

For information contact **Hugo Summerson**
07808-959869



Pilgrim Group

The group meets on alternate Thursday evenings, and offers an opportunity for informal study, prayer and fellowship.

For further information, contact **Simon Hillson**
simonhillson@me.com

Fellowship Lunch

Join us for an inexpensive lunch in good company – especially for those who might not cook a Sunday roast for themselves.

To book call **Anita Simpson** on 020 8543 3764 or 07960 324 371 or email her at adsimpson68@yahoo.co.uk

Walking Group

The Occasional Walking Group meets five or six times a year after the Sunday Parish Eucharist for short walks (maximum six miles), usually in the Surrey countryside.

For further information contact **Simon Hillson**
simonhillson@me.com

Regular Sunday Services

8am Said Eucharist (Book of Common Prayer, fourth Sunday of each month)

9.30am Sung Eucharist ('Children First Eucharist', third Sunday of each month)

NB. On some Festivals the main morning service is at 10am.

6.30pm Evensong

Monthly midweek Eucharist. 3rd Sunday of the month

Third Thursday of each month. Said Eucharists 10.30am (30 mins)

Sunday Club for children. 1st Sunday of the month

Meet in the parish hall at 9.30 am, and joining the end of the service in church.

Children 3+ welcome. Parents/carers are asked to stay with under 3s.

judithbersweden@stmarysmerton.org.uk

Children First Eucharist. 3rd Sunday of the month

A family-friendly service at 9.30am. Please check website for details, or contact

judithbersweden@stmarysmerton.org.uk

Parish Office

Open four mornings each week from

9.30am–1pm (closed Wednesdays).

Email office@stmarysmerton.org.uk

Telephone 020 8542 1760

Parish Hall

There is information about hiring the hall or glebe field and events and activities in the hall displayed on our website (under 'hire the hall'). For more information or to hire an event space please contact Laura Crosby on 020 8543 4777 or Email bookthehall@stmarysmerton.org.uk

Sudoku Solution. Page 5

8	3	1	5	4	7	9	2	6
4	7	9	8	2	6	1	3	5
2	6	5	1	3	9	4	7	8
1	9	3	7	5	4	6	8	2
6	4	8	2	9	3	5	1	7
7	5	2	6	8	1	3	9	4
9	2	4	3	7	5	8	6	1
3	8	6	4	1	2	7	5	9
5	1	7	9	6	8	2	4	3

St Mary's Church Merton

Church Path, Merton Park,
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