



Weekly news, readings and prayers

Sunday 14th December

Third Sunday of Advent



Joy

When I think about Gaudete Sunday - *gaudete* being latin for 'rejoice' I cannot help but be reminded of a very happy moment in time listening to an acapella choir singing a version of [this](#). You might be familiar with other versions. I remember a tambourine keeping rhythm at various points which draws me back to the psalms - how with tambourine, voice and other instruments God's people joyfully go up the mountain to offer songs of praise and thanksgiving to God.

Rejoice, rejoice!
Christ is born
Of the Virgin Mary –
Rejoice!

The time of grace has come—
What we have wished for;
Songs of joy
Let us give back faithfully.

God has become man,
With nature marvelling,
The world has been renewed
By the reigning Christ.

The closed gate of Ezekiel

Is passed through,
Whence the light is risen;
Salvation has been found.

Therefore, let our assembly
Now sing in brightness
Let it bless the Lord:
Greetings to our King.

Happy moments are all too easily forgotten: especially as we gaze on the world around us - the call to rejoice can seem daunting. As we live through this advent season of waiting, we'll be exploring the cost of that call in tomorrow's services.

Yet one thing is sure: in worship, in prayer, in communion with God, we can readily rejoice - because our joy comes from giving back faithfully to the one who is renewing us, blessing us and bringing light in the darkness, even if we can't quite yet see or understand how.

Rejoice. Christ was and is and is to come.
Amen, come Lord Jesus.

December Prayer Diary

Services

Livestreamed services are marked (L). Please use the button below to view services at the times given or to catch up at anytime.

8 am BCP Holy Communion

9.30 am Rise & Shine - with conversation or creative activity

11 am (L) Parish Communion.

We look forward to welcoming you to St Margaret's Church.

Parking is available in St Margaret's School car park during these services. Please drive slowly and carefully through the gates. We are grateful for our partnership with the school.

The church will be open daily for private prayer, reflection and visiting from 10am to 3pm.

Livestreaming

Lectionary

This Sunday

8 am BCP Holy Communion

1 Corinthians 4.1-5

Matthew 11.2-10

9.30 am Rise & Shine

James 5.7-10

11.00 am Parish Communion

Isaiah 35.1-10

James 5.7-10

Matthew 11.2-11

Church News

Services from January 2026: Sundays 8am, 10am & 6pm: Wednesdays 12pm

Click [here](#) for all the details of the outcome of the Refreshing Worship consultation process. The services from January 2026 are all set out inside the Christmas leaflets, so do take a copy home to put on your fridge.

Today: Saturday 13th December

9.00-10.30 Advent Breakfast - in the church centre. Food and fellowship followed by worship. No charge - give as you can.

Christmas Cards

For those who enjoy writing and receiving cards... yay! Others struggle to keep up, for all sorts of valid reasons. We also create a lot of paper to be recycled. If you are sending cards to church family members, please use the trays in the shelves at the back of the church - in alphabetical order by surname. Please check your initial regularly - especially if you are newer to the community... you never know, there may be a card there for you.

If you would like to send electronic '[Christmas Greetings to the Church Community](#)' - [send an email to the office](#) and we will compile a special Christmas Card newsletter with all the messages and pictures you contribute (greetings to be received by no later than Monday 22nd December). Finally, please save your Christmas cards - in the new year we will be collecting them all up to gift to All Hallows Church who will re-use them in the making of Christmas Cards for next year, which they sell to raise funds.

Advent Calendars

We are reading a chapter of Luke's gospel every day - if you prefer to listen instead of read, you can find recordings uploaded to the church [Facebook page](#) daily between 1st and 24th December.

In Memoriam

We keep in our prayers this week the friends and family of Martin Howse whose funeral takes place at Ipswich Crematorium at 4.15 on Wednesday, 17th December.

We also remember Eveleigh Beaton, praying for her family and loved ones as they prepare for her funeral in January. Details to follow in due course.

May they forever rest in peace.



Church Christmas 'To Do' List: HELP!

Christmas celebrations don't just happen without some preparation! Will you help with the following please? If you don't get a chance to speak to the person mentioned below, drop an [email to the church office](#) and we'll put you in touch!

- Finish delivering the Christmas leaflets
- Set up the Nativity Scene in the children's area (Bethlehem on the notice board and dressing up/costumes to explore the story) - ask Maggie Conder or Margaret Llewellyn how to help.
- Put up the Christmas services banner on the fence at Park Manor care home (junction Tuddenham/Constable Road): will need a screwdriver/screws and washers - Ask Rev Sarah how to help.
- Put up the prayer/care Christmas tree - thank you to the mystery team that have already dressed one of the Christmas trees! ask Rev Sarah how to help.
- Set up the wicker crib scene in nave sanctuary. Ask Rev Sarah how to help.
- Set out a galaxy of star lights in the churchyard - and 'the star' to follow. Ask Rev Sarah how to help.
- Be a steward for any of these services: Ask Stuart Quinton how to help
18th at 2pm, St Margaret's Primary School.
23rd at 11am, Headway Carol Service.
Christmas Eve 4pm, Crib Service
Christmas Eve 6pm, Carols by Candlelight Service
Christmas Eve 11pm, Midnight Mass/First Communion of Christmas
Christmas Day 10am, Festive Family Communion
- Decorate the church pillars with lights (will involve careful use of a ladder) - ask Rev Sarah how to help.
- Put candle trails on the churchyard pathways for Nine Lessons and Carols and Midnight services - ask Frederike Jacob how to help [Frederike has done this in the past]
- Be on the coffee rota and offer refreshments on Christmas Day following the 10am service - ask Adam Geileskey what's involved.

If there's anything not on this list that you think it would be good to do and you can make happen, please speak with Rev Sarah.



**Advent Zoom
Group - Gospel of
Luke
Tuesday 16th Dec.
at 7.00pm**

To receive the zoom links [click here](#) or scan the QR code (once registered you should receive an email via churchsuite with all the zoom login details). Alternatively, contact the church office by
email: office.stmagsips@gmail.com phone
or text 07833 609661.

On the Move

Last week John and Helen Elliston have moved to live closer to family - thought this has meant moving away from their Church family here at St Margaret's. At the back of the church you will find a 'New Home' card that we would invite everyone to add their name and a few words to. We keep them in our prayers for this new beginning for them and their family as they continue to live life in faith, trusting in God's hope and knowing love.

Gifting to FIND



Ann Whitear will be taking as many food and toiletries gifts to the FIND food bank ready to pack Christmas hampers. Please ensure any **FIND gifts** you would like to give are in the box at the back of the church by the **end of Sunday, 14th December**. If you, or someone you know, are in need of support from organisations like FIND, please speak discretely with Revds Sarah or Helen, Maggie Conder (Pastoral Lead), or ask Ann Whitear how to access FIND support.

FIND are always very grateful to receive gifts - writing to us to thank us for the Harvest Gifts and feedback from Ann Whitear who volunteers there regularly reminds us how important these donations are. Thank you for anything you can do to support this work - there will be some among us who, at times in our lives, have relied on the generosity of others.



Decorating the Church for Christmas

The Church will be open for decorating on Saturday 20th December. The car park will be open from 9am to 12pm. If you are arranging flowers/windows and you need containers from the cupboard, please do come before 9.45am as Gill Barton needs to leave the Church at 10am and the flower cupboards may not be accessible after that. Please just come and decorate a window of your choice!

You must remove your decorations as soon as possible after Sunday, 4th January please. Thank you for continuing to support Angie Cable and Gill Barton in decorating the church. Special thanks indeed to Gill and Andrew, for the many years they have quietly prepared and installed the Advent Wreath, including this year!

Forsake what is past, live in the present, prepare for the future.



What's on? Sign up at...
www.stmargaretsipswich.org.uk
 welcoming people of all faiths and none

Advent

from fear to hope

a new Church year begins

Read a chapter of Luke's Gospel every day
Take-away JOY Advent-in-the-bag

Sunday 30th November 10am Family Communion

We welcome Archdeacon Sam to license Revd Sarah as 'The Vicar'. Celebratory nibbles after the service.

Sunday 30th November 6.30pm Advent Carol Service

A choral service with Advent carols, readings and poetry.

Tuesdays 2nd, 9th & 16th Dec at 7-8pm Zoom Advent Group

Sign up for reflection and discussion on Luke's Gospel.

Sunday 7th Dec 4-5pm Heigh-ho: Holly! Hexachordia Concert

Medieval instruments play carols. Music, mirth, merriment, hot drinks and cake. Tickets £8/£5 in advance or on the door.

Saturday 13th Dec 9-10.30am Advent Breakfast

In the Church Centre: sign up for food, fellowship and worship.

Thursday 18th Dec 3.15ish-5pm Together for Advent

In the Church Centre: reflective storytelling, activities and a meal for everyone. Especially child-friendly, though all are welcome.

Saturday 20th Dec 9-11am Decorate for Christmas

Bring local foliage & decorations and we'll find you a space. Eco-friendly and 'oasis-free' as much as possible please!





Christmas

God with us

Emmanuel, Prince of Peace

The Light of the World is born in us today

Sunday 21st Dec 3-3.45pm The Longest Night Service
Music, prayers and reflection in solidarity with all
| who find the Christmas and New Year season difficult.

Sunday 21st Dec 6.30pm Nine Lessons and Carols
A traditional choral service of readings and carols with
candlelight, and poetry reminding us of the Christmas story.

Christmas Eve 4pm Crib Service
Come dressed as your favourite nativity character, in your new
Christmas outfit or wearing a Christmas jumper. All welcome.

Christmas Eve 6pm Carols by Candlelight
A joyful service to which all are welcome.
A heartwarming beginning to the Christmas celebration.

Christmas Eve 11pm "Midnight Mass"
A traditional service with choral music and Christmas anthems.
Visitors of every Christian tradition are welcome.

Christmas Day 10am Festive Family Communion
We share good news and celebrate a shorter communion
service as we give thanks for the birth of Jesus Christ.

Sunday 28th Dec 10am Communion and Carols
We sing carols and celebrate Emmanuel, God with us.



www.stmargaretsipswich.org.uk
welcoming people of all faiths and none


St. Margaret's Church
I P S W I C H

Community Carol Services

We welcome friends and neighbours
to celebrate Christmas with us.



**Wednesday 10th December 7pm
Northgate School Carol Service**

Students, staff, governors and families
gather for this annual celebration.
Arrive early - all are welcome.



**Thursday 18th December 2-3pm
St Margaret's VA Primary
School Carol Service**

Pupils and families from Y3-Y6 are all
welcome to this special service where
the pupils will lead us in music,
readings and prayer.



**Tuesday 23rd December 11.30am
'Headway' Carol Service**

The Headway community gathers to
celebrate a special Christmas service.
All friends and supporters welcome.



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welcoming people of all faiths and none



Thursday

Forum

at Christ Church
Tacket Street (next to Cox Lane car park)

Thursday Lunchtimes

Refreshments at low cost 12 noon - 1.00 pm

A short talk 1.10 - 1.50 pm

You are welcome to either or both



Season 2025/2026

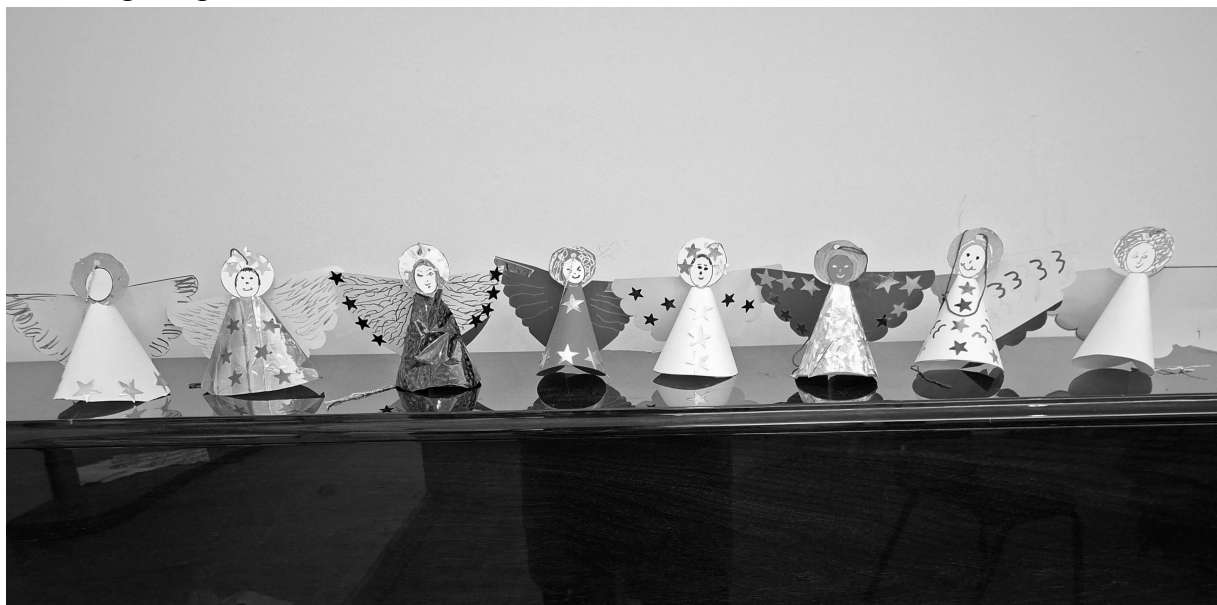
- Dec 4th** **Has the Church of England passed its 'use by' date?**
Father John Thackray
- Dec 11th** **Seasonal Music**
The Belstead Singers; conductor Jenny Jones
- Dec 18th** **Food, Singing and Readings to celebrate Advent and Christmas**
- Jan 8th** **Hearing dogs for Deaf People**
Malcolm Taylor and guest, with dog

Growing Deeper

Prayer

Praying for our community: residents, visitors, businesses passers-by this week as we pray for Greenways Close, St Edmunds Place, Warrington Road, St Edmunds Road, Constitution Hill and Dale Hall Lane.

Thanksgiving



Cornerstone met this week and enjoyed making Christmas Angels... pray for those who joined in, and pray too that as a church we can find new ways of being together during the week.

Support

Remember our Pastoral Team are here to support members of the St Margaret's community whether ill or in need of a friendly listening ear, details can be found towards the bottom of this email.

Social Action

Do not forget to pray for those in authority and lend your voice to the working out of justice and peace by supporting and challenging our politicians. You can follow what is on the agenda each day for both Houses of Parliament: www.whatson.parliament.uk or you can find out more about www.christiansinparliament.org.uk

Growing Greener

Green Tip of the week

As you prepare for the big day, keep an eye open for eco-friendly crackers or indeed make your own from loo rolls and wrapping paper. You can also buy ready-made ones that you can fill yourself with small zero waste gifts. People appreciate the thought behind each gift and you are not adding plastic toys to the plastic waste problem.

We thank Revd Richard Stainer for the weekly tips.

Loving God • Care for Creation • Love Our Global Neighbours

Services Calendar

Sunday 14th December

8am BCP Communion

9.30am Rise & Shine

11am Parish Communion

16th December

8am Morning Prayer in Church

17th December

9am St Margaret's School Service

18th December

2pm St Margaret's School Carol Service

3.15-5pm Together - a service with story telling, craft and a shared meal for all in the Church Centre. No charge for the meal - give as you can.

19th December

8am Morning Prayer in Church

Sunday 21st December

8am BCP Communion

9.30am Café Church

11am Parish Communion

3pm Longest Night Service - in solidarity with those who find Christmas a difficult time

6.30pm Nine Lessons and Carols

23rd December

8am Morning Prayer in Church

11.30am Headway Carol Service - all welcome

24th December : Christmas Eve

4pm Crib Service

6pm Carols by Candlelight

11pm First Communion of Christmas - Midnight Mass

25th December : Christmas Day

10am Festive Family Communion followed by drinks and nibbles after the service

Sunday 28th December

8am BCP Communion

10am Communion and Carols

30th December

8am Morning Prayer in Church

2nd January

8am Morning Prayer in Church

Sunday 4th January

8am BCP Holy Communion

10am Family Communion (with special provision for children and families)

6pm Service of Prayer & Praise

Forward Dates

14th February 2026

4pm Trianon Concert

Offertory

The life and mission of St Margaret's is financially sustained through generous giving. If you have been giving regularly as part of your practice of gratefully living in God's service, thank you. If you're new to the community, or would like to think about celebrating life in this way, you may find the following helpful: we receive no income from 'The Church'... we are the church! So, thank you – for anything and everything that you are able to give in response to God's generosity.

In church you can give in a couple of ways on the day:

- **Collection plate** – during services a collection plate is sometimes passed among the congregation, but you will more often find it at the South door as you leave or arrive. Do use a yellow envelope if you're a tax payer so gift aid may be re-claimed.
- **Tap giving** – during services a tap giving machine is located on the pillar on the west wall, to the left of the bell tower – do consider tapping your card or device. As well as giving regularly, this is also a good way of offering an occasional additional gift.
- **Regular Giving** – St Margaret's is registered with the [Parish Giving Scheme](#), allowing you to be in control of your giving and to give securely and safely online by Direct Debit.
- **Online giving** – If you wish to make a one-off or extra gift online, you can do so securely via the [Parish Giving Scheme](#).
- **Gift Aid** – if you are a tax payer, St Margaret's can claim back the basic tax you have already paid to the government. To make the appropriate declarations, please speak with the treasurer, [John Grierson](#).
- Leaving a **gift in your will** or making a **donation in memory** of a loved one – no matter how large or small, every gift makes a difference. If you would like to talk about this with someone, in confidence, then please consider speaking with the treasurer, [John Grierson](#) or the Vicar, [Sarah](#).

Contact us:**Revd Sarah Geileskey - Priest-in-Charge**Email: revsarahgeileskey@gmail.com

Address: The Vicarage, 32 Constable Road, IP4 2UW

Telephone: 07841 687879

Sarah's rest days are usually Thursday each week and the second Friday of each month**Revd Helen Prior-Townsend - Curate**Email: helenptstmags@gmail.com

Telephone: 07541 707543

Helen's rest days are usually Monday each week and every fourth Tuesday of each month.**George Woodward - Licensed Lay Minister (Reader)**Email: reader.stmagsips@gmail.com

Telephone: 07990 573258

George's quiet days tend to be Wednesdays and Fridays.**Churchwardens**

Margaret Woodward

Email: churchwardens.stmagsips@gmail.com**Office**Email: office.stmagsips@gmail.com

Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9.30am - 2.30pm

Number: 07733 609661 and leave a message.

Church Office and Contacts during the Church Administrator's period of Maternity Leave

We are taking the opportunity to rationalise email addresses. With immediate effect, please use office.stmagsips@gmail.com for all correspondence. The verger.stmagsips@gmail.com will be monitored until the end of August. There is a plan in place to maintain the current office opening hours: Tuesday, Wednesday and Fridays 9.30am - 2.30pm. However, if you have a particular reason for visiting the office, do email or call ahead of time to confirm.

Pastoral Support: The Pastoral Care Team are a small group of volunteers who try and support people in a variety of situations by offering a listening ear, a helping hand or by providing useful information. Please click [here](#) for more information or contact Maggie Conder at pastoralteam.stmagsips@gmail.com.

Safeguarding: This parish recognises that the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults is paramount and that we have a duty of care when they are in our charge. We will do everything that we can to provide a safe and caring environment whilst they attend our activities. When there is a disclosure of harm or there are concerns about the welfare of any children, young person or vulnerable adult, all adults in our church community are expected to share their concerns and allegations with one of the following:

Carol Klug - Parish Safeguarding Officer. Email safeguarding.stmagsips@gmail.com

Frederike Jacob is our assistant Parish Safeguarding Officer

More information on how you can report any safeguarding concerns is available from The Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich [here](#)

Newsletter Contents

Please send any items for next week's newsletter to the Church Office (office.stmagsips@gmail.com), ideally by email, by **Thursday lunchtime please**. If you would like to receive this mailing each week please [complete this form https://stmargaretsips.churchsuite.com/connect/mydetails/submit](https://stmargaretsips.churchsuite.com/connect/mydetails/submit)