



## Making Disciples who make Jesus known

# HEADLINE NEWS!



**Let's come together to celebrate Christingle.**

Christingle is a great way for communities everywhere to get together this Christmas to catch up, make some special memories, and have fun.

**Come and join us!**

<b>Location:</b> St John's Church, Bilton Lane, HG1 3DT
<b>Date:</b> 15th December <b>Time:</b> 5pm
<b>To find out more, contact:</b> <a href="http://www.stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk">www.stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk</a>

christingle.org

Scan the QR code to find out more.



### VOLUNTEERS THANK YOU EVENT Sunday 26th January 5.30-7.00pm at St Luke's



Everyone that helps at either church, or in a church related group in any way is warmly invited to this event hosted by the clergy team to say Thank you! If you are planning to come please let the office know so we can cater for the right numbers.

The **TEAM RECTOR VACANCY** advertisement goes live on Monday 16th December. Please pray that the right person sees the vacancy and is called to apply at the first time of asking so that we may have a new rector in place as soon as is possible.

# TODAY'S SERVICES AND EVENTS

- SUNDAY 15TH DECEMBER** (*Third Sunday of Advent*)
- 9.00am Holy Communion (SJ)
  - 10.30am Morning Worship (SJ)  
*Readings: Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18*
  - 4.00pm Morning Worship (SL)  
*Readings: Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18*
  - 5.00pm Christingle Service (SJ)
  - 6.30-7.45pm Ignite Christmas Party (Year 7+ Youth Group) (SL)

Dear Friends,

This year, for advent and Christmas 2025, the Church of England's theme is **Follow the Star: Calm and Bright**, which draws on the world-famous carol, Silent Night: *"Silent Night! Holy Night! All is calm, all is bright..."*

One of the reasons that this carol is so universally loved is the way it invites us into the still centre of the Christmas story, to contemplate Mary holding the new-born Jesus, the Light of the World.



It's that time of year where when the streets and shops are lit with bright, seasonal lights and we start to think about getting our own strings of Christmas lights down from the loft to see if they still work ready for this year's Christmas tree.

We can probably connect with the 'bright' part of this theme, even those who are struggling can identify with the truth that Jesus' light always shines, even in times of darkness. But what about the 'calm' element? As we join other frantic shoppers, as we prepare for guests and organise food, as workload increases, it's easy to lose a sense of calm.

When we watch the news and look at events in other part of the world, 'calm' doesn't seem to be the right word to describe what is currently going on beyond home. Bethlehem certainly isn't calm this Christmas.

In the midst of all the noise and hurry, both around us and within us, the call of Advent is to pause — to make space for stillness and reflection. The image of Mary holding her newborn child in a simple stable is a reminder that even in the most unlikely of places, peace can be found.



The star that guided the wise men to Bethlehem, shining brightly in the dark of night, offers more than just light; it points the way to something greater than the chaos of the world.

Perhaps, in this Advent and Christmas, more than ever, we need to recapture that sense of calm. To allow ourselves time to reflect, to breathe deeply, and to remember that the Christmas story isn't just about busyness and preparations, but about the quiet moments that speak of hope and renewal. In a world often marked by uncertainty and unrest, these quiet moments offer a sense of peace that can't be found in the noise. We may not be able to change the circumstances of the world overnight, but we can choose how we respond. In this season, let us follow the star — a symbol of hope, shining brightly in the darkness and guiding us through.

Wishing you all a peaceful and blessed Advent and Christmas season.

**Laura and the team of St John's and St Luke's**

# CHURCH LIFE



## UNEXPECTED GUEST

Will you join our tradition of setting a place for an unexpected guest (who might be Jesus)?

Rather than turkey and all the trimmings, we put onto the plate what the meal would have cost, and bring that to either church.

This year all donations received will go to **Harrogate Homeless Project.**

Plates are available for collection now.

## JOINT SERVICES IN DECEMBER

Please note changes to the usual Sunday pattern of services in the parish this month:

Sunday 22nd December - Joint 10.30am service at **ST LUKE'S**

Sunday 29th December - Joint 10.30am service at **ST LUKE'S**

There will be the 9.00am Holy Communion service at St John's each Sunday throughout December as usual and also on Christmas Day morning.

For all other services please check out the leaflet on the page opposite.

**USED POSTAGE STAMPS** are once again being collected by local Girlguiding to raise funds to finish off the rebuild of Birk Crag. Stamps can be dropped off in the parish office, at 22 Albany Avenue or 52 Hill Top Avenue

Come and join us to sing Christmas Carols at **LILYPAD** on Kings Road on Thursday 19th December, 8pm.



## YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S WORK

- Games!
- Evil Secret Santa!
- Party Food!
- Best dressed comp!

**ST LUKE'S**  
**6.30-7.45PM**

a St Aidan's  
lunchtime club

**10:10**

**DOES CHRISTMAS!!**

A PLACE TO CHAT,  
PLAY GAMES,  
MAKE FRIENDS,  
EXPLORE THEMES

wednesdays  
12.35-1.20  
in the chapel.  
bring your lunch

St John's Church, Bilton Lane, HG1 3DT

St Luke's Church, Franklin Square, HG1 5EL

[www.stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk](http://www.stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk)



## **Advent and Christmas Services and Events at St John's & St Luke's**

Saturday 14th December

Christmas Coffee Morning 10am-12noon @ St John's Church Hall

Sunday 15th December

Christingle Service 5pm @ St John's Church

Sunday 22nd December

Nine Lessons & Carols 6.30pm @ St John's Church

Tuesday 24th December

Nativity Service 4.00pm @ St John's Church

Midnight Holy Communion 11.30pm @ St John's Church

Wednesday 25th December

Said Holy Communion 9.00am @ St John's Church

Christmas Holy Communion 10.30am @ St John's Church



## The Past of Focus

The absence of Focus for the past 3 months confirms what we all knew: that Jean Burton did a huge amount of work for the church family including editing the parish Focus magazine for many years. As we celebrate God coming to earth as a baby, we thank God for Jean, for her dedication and commitment to the work of the church. Our thoughts are with her family and friends as they face Christmas without her, and we pray that they find some peace and tranquillity this season.

## The Future of Focus

We would like to get together a group to produce Focus and develop content for it. We have a couple of initial volunteers and would greatly welcome more. Please do get in touch with Laura or the office if you would like to help, or even give us ideas for what you would like to see in the magazine.



## KIDZ KLUB

A huge thank you to more people than I could begin to name, for the wonderful total of 74 hampers this year. This unprecedented amount is due partly to a grant from Foresters Financial [well done Val], but the contributions from both churches and beyond have held up very well, and are probably at an all time high. You are such a generous group of people. Thank you.

This year was the 21<sup>st</sup> year that we have taken things over to Leeds, and who could have guessed how the 4 hampers in 2004, of which we were very pleased, would have risen to this. The formal acknowledgement from Kidz Klub will come in the New Year, but their lead worker with families said of our hampers: " This is incredible and it is going to make such a difference to those families this Christmas!"

Bless you all. Caroline

## DO YOU FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA?

Find us on Facebook at

[www.facebook.com/stjohnsandstlukes/](http://www.facebook.com/stjohnsandstlukes/)



# NINE LESSONS & Carols



22ND DECEMBER 2024, 6.30PM  
*St John's Church, Bilton Lane, HG1 3DT*



FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO  
[www.stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk](http://www.stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk)

The Social Committee have organised a **GIRL'S NIGHT OUT** on Thursday 23rd January 2025 at 7pm at Kismet on Kings Road. We were keen to support a local business and we'll have exclusive use.

The menu looks delicious and you have a choice of 3 courses for £30.75 or a main and dessert for £25.25, both prices include a service charge, a glass of wine or beer or a soft drink.

The venues capacity is 28 so please let Juliet Duke, Liz Jones or Naiomi Kempton know as soon as possible if you would like to attend. A £10 deposit will be payable by Friday 10th January, or you could ask someone to treat you as a Christmas present! If you wish to pay directly into a bank account please email [juliet.duke2@gmail.com](mailto:juliet.duke2@gmail.com) and she will provide bank details. The balance, plus any additional drinks, will be due on the night.

Please also advise of any allergens or dietary needs.

Watch this space men, something will follow for you in the New Year!

## Set Menu



# M E N U

### APPETIZER

Lentil Soup & Sourdough vg gf  
Hummus & Lavash vg gf  
Haydari & Lavash vg gf  
Aubergine Ezme & Lavash v gf  
Endive Salad w/ Kisir vg

### MAIN

Chicken Shish w/ Lavash & Chermoula Salad gf  
Lamb Kofte w/ Lavash & Chermoula Salad gf  
Falafel w/ Hummus & Chermoula Salad vg gf  
Monkfish Kiev w/ Bubble and Squeak & Peas  
Smoked Haddock Squid Kedgeree w/ Zesty Veg gf

### DESSERT

Pistachio Baklava w/ Clotted Cream Mousse v  
Candied Pumpkin w/ Pumpkin Seeds  
Praline, Tahini & Raspberry Sorbet vg gf  
NY Vanilla Cheese Cake w/ Turkish Raki  
& Raisin Ice Cream v

v: Vegetarian vg: Vegan, gf: Gluten free  
We have gluten free lavash bread available.



146 Kings Road  
HG1 5HY  
[www.kismetharrogate.com](http://www.kismetharrogate.com)



## CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

This year's Christmas trees that have filled St John's are wonderful, thank you to all the groups, schools and individuals that are taking part and making it such a success, it really is bringing more joy and light into St John's. The church is open Monday to Thursday mornings and on Sundays at services, come along to see them and vote for your favourite.

## THE GREEN TEAM

### HOW TO HAVE AN ECO-CHRISTMAS

#### Wrapping it up!

- Shiny wrapping paper is pretty, but it's not recyclable, neither is anything with glitter on. Try using brown paper for a lovely vintage look.
- Sellotape is made of plastic but you can get brown paper tape instead, or use ribbon or string. Better yet, go for a reusable option like a bag or cloth.
- Christmas cards – the same rules go for glittery and shiny cards. Try to find ones sold loose or have a go at making your own.
- Save any Christmas cards and cut them up to use as gift tags for next year.



Do you know about **HARROGATE CLOTHES BANK**? They are a facility where people in need of good quality second hand clothing can go and get clothes for free (no proof of referral or income is needed). People can also donate good quality used items to them (see website for details).

(<https://harrogateclothesbank.co.uk/>)

Do you know that we recycle printer cartridges and batteries at both churches? Do you also know you can bring in other items to be recycled at St John's too? Bring in your **DENTAL PRODUCTS, MEDICINE BLISTER PACKS, WRITING INSTRUMENTS AND CONTACT LENSES**. These can all be taken to various shops/outlets to be recycled and there are bags available, so if you know you will be near one of the recycling hubs, maybe you could take the products with you? Let's work together!



Bronze Eco Church  
Award Certificate

Congratulations to our Green Team and to **ST LUKE'S** for being awarded the Bronze A Rocha Eco Church Award. A fantastic achievement and acknowledgment of the work happening there to care for God's creation. And they aren't stopping there, they are working towards the silver award already.



For unto us  
a child is born!



# Nativity Service

4.00pm

24th December 2024,  
St John's Church, Bilton Lane,  
HG1 3DT

Invite your friends and family to join us on a Journey to Bethlehem as we hear the Christmas story unfold. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Fancy dress welcome!

Website: [www.stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk](http://www.stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk)  
Phone: 01423 565129  
Email: [church@stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk](mailto:church@stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk)

## SUPPORTING MINISTRY & MISSION

Many of us give regularly to our churches, but beyond our regular lifetime, a **GIFT IN A WILL** can be a final and powerful expression of gratitude and thanksgiving towards God that will help transform a churches future and support mission here in this country, and overseas. Here at St Johns and St Lukes we welcome all gifts in wills, however large or small, and we promise to use your gift to make a difference in our parish. Our PCC legacy policy is to use gifts to help fund significant development projects; whether this be to buildings, to purchase equipment, or to support mission. If you would like to have more information on this, pick up a leaflet in church, visit our website [here](#) or contact Rob Bath on 07817 799640, or by email [robertabath@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:robertabath@yahoo.co.uk).

Could you help process our **GIFT AID CLAIMS**?  
If you could give some of your time to help and would like to find out more please contact the office.

*giftaid it*

**easyfundraising turns  
your online shopping  
into everyday magic**



easyfundraising

You shop, brands donate to us

A big thank you to our amazing supporters who raise free funds for us on **EASYFUNDRAISING**. If you're not signed up yet, please join today and you can raise free donations for Bilton St John & St Luke - Yorkshire every time you shop online for Christmas. All the big names like John Lewis & Partners, M&S, Argos, eBay and many more are ready to make a free donation at no extra cost to you. Join here: <https://join.easyfundraising.org.uk/biltonstjohnandstluke/3K3MLA/c2s/ZdU7Z020/CE941/facebook/>



Choose the UK's most trusted home insurer and we'll donate **£130** to your church. At Ecclesiastical, we pride ourselves on providing honest and specialist insurance, and our home insurance is no different. To benefit, all you have to do is quote **'Trust130'** when you take out your policy, and we will arrange the rest. To get a quote: speak to one of our team who will be happy to help: phone 0345 777 3322; or email [household@ecclesiastical.com](mailto:household@ecclesiastical.com); or visit [www.ecclesiastical.com/trust130](http://www.ecclesiastical.com/trust130)



We love welcoming everyone into our churches, whether it's to mark an important time in someone's life, to worship regularly, or to come together in the heart of the community.

If you'd like to support your local church, perhaps you'd consider making a gift?

You can make a regular or one-off gift simply and safely online, through the

PGS, scan the QR code to find out more.



PARISHGIVINGScheme™

# THIS WEEK'S DIARY

## MONDAY 16 DECEMBER

- 9-9.30am Morning Prayer (SJ)  
11.00am Funeral: David Walker (SJ)  
2.00pm Coppice Valley Primary School Service (SJ)  
5.00pm Nativity Rehearsal (SJ)

## TUESDAY 17 DECEMBER

- 9-9.30am Morning Prayer (SJ)

## WEDNESDAY 18 DECEMBER

- 9-9.30am Morning Prayer (SJ)  
10.30am Holy Communion (SJ)  
10.30am Thirst—Coffee at Dene Park Community Centre  
12.00pm Thirst Table at Dene Park Community Centre  
2.00pm Interment of Ashes: Peter Louis Thurley (SJ)  
6.00pm New Park Primary School Nativity (SJ)

## THURSDAY 19 DECEMBER

- 9-9.30am Morning Prayer (SJ)  
9.30-11.30am Little Fishes (Parent & Child Group) (SL)

- 10.30am Richard Taylor Primary School Carol Service (SJ)  
8.00pm Carol Singing at Lilypad on King's Road

## FRIDAY 20 DECEMBER

- 1-3.00pm Wellbeing Café Christmas Party (SL)  
6.30-7.15pm Junior Choir Practice (SJ)  
7-7.45pm Adult Choir Practice (SJ)

## SUNDAY 22 DECEMBER (*Fourth Sunday of Advent*)

- 9.00am Holy Communion (SJ)  
10.30am **JOINT** Holy Communion (SL)  
followed by mulled wine & mince pies  
*Readings: Micah 5:2-5a  
Luke 1:39-55*  
5.00pm Choir Practice (SJ)  
6.30pm Nine Lessons & Carols (SJ)

The **PARISH OFFICE** will be **CLOSED** from Friday 20th December until it reopens on Monday 6th January. There is **NO MORNING PRAYER** from Monday 23rd until it restarts on Monday 6th January.

## CONTACT US

### SAFEGUARDING

For any queries or concerns, contact

**Gill Clarke (Parish Safeguarding Officer)**

[safeguarding.sjsl@outlook.com](mailto:safeguarding.sjsl@outlook.com) Tel: 07837 186435 / 01423 565129

### THE MINISTRY TEAM

**Laura Martin (Team Vicar)**

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[laura.martin@leeds.anglican.org](mailto:laura.martin@leeds.anglican.org)

**Emma James (Young People's Worker)**

Tel: 07803 586556

[youthwork@stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk](mailto:youthwork@stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk)

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