

ST GUTHLAC'S COMMUNITY NEWS



Christingle: Jesus is the light of the world

CHURCH OF ST GUTHLAC

Holbrook Rd, Knighton, Leicester LE2 3LF

<http://www.stguthlac-knighton.co.uk/>

Minister: Revd Richard Bonney 2125677

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Churchwardens:

David Hunt

Tina Jarvis

13 December 2015

**10.30 am Communion for All: Guest Speaker Barbara Taylor
(Children's Society)**

**5.00 pm Christingle: interactive service (helping you to make
your own Christingle)**

WELCOME TO ANY OF YOU VISITING US FOR THE FIRST TIME!

Please announce yourself to one of our welcomers and sign in the welcome book so that we get to know you by name! Also, please introduce yourself to Revd Richard or one of the Churchwardens. St Guthlac's is YOUR local church. We feel part of the local community and we hope that you will feel part of the church community. **We have a welcome sheet:** please ask for one if it is not handed to you on arrival.

Newsletter No 185

FORTHCOMING SERVICES AND MEETINGS

Thursday 17 December, 9.30 am	Holy Communion. NB: there will be no further weekday Communion until Thursday 7 January
Thursday 17 December, 7.30 pm	Choir Practice at St. Mary's
Friday 18 December, 7.00 pm	Youth Alpha
Saturday 19 December, 12 noon	Wedding of Beth Stevenson and Charles Ellul
Sunday 20 December, 10.30 am	Advent 4. Nativity Gift Service in Holbrook Memorial Hall

PRAYERS FOR THE FAITHFUL We have been asked to keep **David Pallot, Ann Spring, Dorothy Wollaston, John and Flo McVey** and **Saty French** in our prayers. Please also pray for the soul of **Jean Swanson** who has died recently. For other prayer requests, please speak to the Revd Richard.

Stewart, Ann, Katherine & David would like to thank all at St Guthlac's Church for keeping Jean Swanson and family in their prayers at what has been a difficult and sad time.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sun 20 th December, 10.30am	Nativity Gift Service (Holbrook Hall)
Tues 22 nd December 7.30pm	Service of Nine Lessons and Carols
Thurs 24 th December, 4pm	Crib service
Thurs 24 th December, 8pm	First Eucharist of Christmas
Fri 25 th December, 10.30am	Christmas Morning All Age Eucharist
There is no service at St. Guthlac's on Sunday 27 th December	
Sunday 3 January, 10.30 am	All Age Communion: Epiphany
Thursday 7 January, 9.30 am	Holy Communion
Friday 8 January, 8.00 am	Ecumenical Morning Prayers
Sunday 10 January, 10.30 am	All Age Worship and Holy Baptism
Sunday 10 January, 4.00 pm	Advent Book discussion (Welcome Area)
Sunday 17 January, 10.30 am	Matins

THE REVD RICHARD WRITES The Report of the Commission on Religion and Belief in British Public life was published this week. Over the past half century, Britain's landscape in terms of religion and belief has been transformed beyond

recognition. There are three striking trends: **The first is the increase in the number of people with non-religious beliefs and identities.** Almost a half of the population today describes itself as non-religious, as compared with an eighth in England and a third in Scotland in 2001. **The second is the general decline in Christian affiliation, belief and practice.** Thirty years ago, two-thirds of the population would have identified as Christians. Today, that figure is four in ten, and at the same time there has been a shift away from mainstream denominations and a growth in evangelical and Pentecostal churches. **The third is the increased diversity amongst people who have a religious faith.** Fifty years ago Judaism – at one in 150 – was the largest non-Christian tradition in the UK. Now it is the fourth largest behind Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism. Although still comprising less than one in ten of the population, faith traditions other than Christian have younger age profiles and are therefore growing faster.

Learning to live with difference The resulting uncertainties about national identity, cohesion and community can lead to over-simplistic conclusions about the negative impact of such changes on society. These, in turn, may feed the very anxieties about immigration and the fear of ‘the other’ that need to be addressed. Certainly the development of public policy related to religion and belief has too often been piecemeal and kneejerk. The report is intended to be an alternative to such approaches: systematic, consistent and rational, looking at the areas of education, the media, law, dialogue and social action. It seeks to provide a basis for deliberation and policy-making based on research and evidence, the needs of society and the daily experiences of increasingly diverse communities. **Learning to understand and live with differences** is the recurring theme throughout the report. It argues that religion and belief are a combination both of conscious choice and of the circumstances of birth, community and public perception. Whether or not we might want to, we cannot ignore or escape the differences that religious traditions make to our sense of personal identity, narrative, relationships and isolation. Religious and belief identities, the report points out, can serve as forces both for good and for ill. And so the challenge for policy-makers is to create an environment in which differences enrich society rather than cause anxiety, and in which they contribute to its common good.

Vision The commission’s vision is of a society at ease with itself in which all individuals, groups and communities feel at home, and in whose flourishing all wish to take part. In such a society all: **feel a positive part of an ongoing national story** – what it means to be British is not fixed and final, for people in the past understood the concept differently from the way it is seen today and all must be able to participate in shaping its meaning for the future **are treated with equal respect and concern** by the law, the state and public authorities; **know that their culture, religion and beliefs are embraced** as part of a continuing process of mutual enrichment, and that their contributions to the texture of the nation’s common life are valued; **are free to express and practise their beliefs, religious or otherwise**, providing they do not constrict the rights and freedoms of others; **are confident in helping to shape public policy**; **feel challenged** to respond to the many manifest ills in wider society.

[Further extracts from the Report and comments will follow].

HELPING OTHERS THIS CHRISTMAS

There are 3 ways in which members of the congregation are invited to support charities through St Guthlac's this Christmas:

- There will be a donation box available for those who would like to make a donation in lieu of giving Christmas cards to members of the congregation. This collection will go to help fund health clinics in Malawi, a scheme set up by Bishop Christopher.

- **Our Christingle service in aid of the Children's Society is TODAY.** Collection candles and envelopes are available and can be returned at the service or any time until Christmas.

- Gifts of non-perishable food will be collected at the Nativity service on 20th Dec and will be taken to Open Hands for their food bank. The delivery will be made after Christmas and given to individuals or families therefore tins and packs of everyday foods (especially tinned main meals, meat and fish, cereal and long life milk) rather than festive food are ideal.

Thank you for your support. PCC.

CHURCH CHRISTMAS CARD There is now a large card in the welcome area. If you wish to donate to charity rather than exchanging cards this year, please sign the communal card and put your donation in the box. Thank you. PCC

THANK YOU to everyone who helped at, or supported the Christmas Fayre.

The total raised to date amounts to almost £1000, with an additional £168 raised from the raffle which has been sent to Bishop Christopher to help fund a monthly visit of a mobile health clinic to Mfula and Chamalala in Northern Malawi - villages which are so remote that they have no regular access to health care. There are still a few items for sale at the back of church, it would be wonderful if we could reach £1000. Thank you.

EDGE PROJECT: TOASTIES VOLUNTEER URGENTLY NEEDED. We are desperate for a volunteer to help in the kitchen at the Youth Cafe on a Wednesday night (term time only) 5:30 - 8:30. We are looking for at least one volunteer who is able to offer some time. This could be monthly, fortnightly or as little as an hour every week to help run our kitchen. Little experience of working with young people is needed as you will mainly be in the kitchen completing toastie orders and making hot drinks etc. Please contact Ali Simpson-Smith (Richard has details) if you feel able to volunteer for this role.

THERE WILL BE NO NEWSLETTER W/C SUNDAY 27TH DECEMBER.

Information to be included in the following newsletter must be received by Tuesday 29th December. Thank you.

FOR THE NEWSLETTER Please contact us at the latest by **10pm Thursday** for material to be included in the next weekly newsletter. **administrator@stguthlac-knighton.co.uk**