



Sunday 15th December 2024
10:30am

Family Communion
in the Church and online
Reading: Luke: 3 1 - 18
Leading: Michael Norman (Vicar)
Speaking: Dave Clarke (Leader)

4:30pm
Carols Round the Crib
Leading and speaking: Michael Norman (Vicar)



If you are new to St Luke's Church (online too!) – welcome. Please email your details to office@stlukeswatford.org and we will email back a welcome form for you to complete.

Weekly updates by email – contact church office if you would like to receive them.

✉ **St Luke's Church Office** ☎ 01923 246161 **Church Website:** www.stlukeswatford.org

Church Office closed Tuesdays

Tuesday 17th

10am

Holy Communion in Church

8pm

Focus Prayer Meeting zoom

Thursday 19th

7:00pm

Carols at the Essex Arms

Friday 20th

10-11am

Hour of Prayer in the Chapel

Sunday 22nd

10:30am

Nativity

5:30pm

Carols by Candlelight

Luke 3 1-18

1 In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene— 2 during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the desert. 3 He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 4 As is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet:

“A voice of one calling in the desert,
'Prepare the way for the Lord,
make straight paths for him.

5 Every valley shall be filled in,
every mountain and hill made low.

The crooked roads shall become
straight,
the rough ways smooth.

6 And all mankind will see God's
salvation.'” (Isaiah 40 3:5)

7 John said to the crowds coming out to be baptised by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? 8 Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. 9 The axe is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”

10 “What should we do then?” the crowd asked.

11 John answered, “The man with two tunics should share with him who has none, and the one who has food should do the same.”

12 Tax collectors also came to be baptised. “Teacher,” they asked, “what should we do?”

13 “Don't collect any more than you are required to,” he told them.

14 Then some soldiers asked him, “And what should we do?”

He replied, “Don't extort money and don't accuse people falsely—be content with your pay.”

15 The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Christ. 16 John answered them all, “I baptise you with water. But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. 17 His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

18 And with many other words John exhorted the people and preached the good news to them.

Celebrations: Please let the office know of any celebrations you would like to share.

Stamp Collection Christmas is coming and we hope to receive Christmas cards. Please save the stamps, trimming at least 2 centimetres around them and deposit them in the box in the welcome area. They all go to support the Peace Hospice. Thank you. Pamela W

Rainbows We are marking Catherine Farman's extraordinary and faithful service for Rainbows during our **Nativity Service** at 10:30am on Sunday 22nd December. Catherine and her mother started Rainbows at St Luke's in February 1997 and it's been going strong ever since! Please let any ex-Rainbows know so they have the opportunity to attend.

PROPS needed For the Daniel plays starting January 5th 2025 we still need some props: a clear orb or globe, glass or otherwise, divining sticks, small bunch of artificial flowers that a magician might pull from his sleeve, or a hat and stuffed rabbit. Walking sticks, a baton, leather or fake belts, brass or gold-coloured goblets or cups. See Pam N if you can help. Or email Pam.stlukes@gmail.com

We thank the Santa's Hampers team for their hard work in buying, shipping, preparing and packing the 50 boxes for Watford's refugee families last Friday. We were very grateful to Neil, Fran, the youth team and also the younger members who all worked tirelessly on the Friday evening to get everything boxed up and ready for collection. There is still time to donate to this fabulous cause. A box costs around £45. Any donations gratefully received via the church office/website or in the white envelopes in church. Please label all giving 'Santa's hampers'.

Confirmation Service at St Luke's with the Bishop of Hertford – Sunday 9th February 2025

If anyone is interested in being baptised and confirmed on this date please contact Michael. Preparatory classes for adults and young people will be announced in the New Year.
michael.stlukes@gmail.com

Myrtle Paterson's Funeral Monday 16th December at 12 noon followed by refreshments. All welcome to attend and celebrate Myrtle and all she has contributed to the life of St Luke's.

Christmas is nearly here!

Sunday 15 th December	4:30pm	Carols Around the Crib
Tuesday 17 th December	5 – 7pm	Christmas Holiday Club Short
Thursday 19 th December	7:00pm	Carols at the Essex Arms
Sunday 22 nd December	10:30am	Nativity Service
	6:30pm	Carols by Candlelight
Tuesday 24 th December	4:30pm	Christingle please note: no morning communion
	11:30pm	Midnight Communion
Wednesday 25 th	9:00am	Holy Communion with Carols
	10:30am	Family Celebration with shortened Holy Communion
Sunday 29 th December	10:30am	All-age Family Communion

Collect

God for whom we watch and wait,
you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way of your Son:
give us courage to speak the truth,
to hunger for justice,
and to suffer for the cause of right,
with Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prayer this week

Syrian Christians are asking us to pray for peace, for wisdom and for the new leadership of the country to be committed to reconciliation for all Syrians,” says a spokesperson for Open Doors. “Christians are also asking us to pray that they will be lights of hope and peace in the midst of a chaotic time in Syria’s history.”

Syrians have endured so much over the last decade: civil war, earthquakes and economic distress. This latest uncertainty is difficult, but we know God can still be at work and bring peace as only He can.

Please join us in praying alongside our Syrian brothers and sisters! We know that God responds to our prayers and that nothing is impossible for Him.

Let us pray for the world, for the church, and let us thank God for his goodness. For peace in Gaza and Lebanon. For peace in Ukraine. For humility, wisdom and understanding in our world’s leaders. Let us encourage one another to go deeper into God’s word, to pray and to persevere.

World Watch List: Christians in **Brunei** (*world’s 44th highest area of religious persecution*)

Those with on-going needs: Pat W, Janine (Gill Es’ sister), Valerie W, Barbara T

Our families in need: Valerie T, Helen J, Veronica C, Val and Ron H, Mark H, Elizabeth S, Maeve K, Gill E, Bryan H, Ryan W and others we know.

Our wider family and friends in need: Andrew C’s brother Tony; Pam N’s brother Stephen R and others we know and love.

Those in mourning: friends and family of David W’s step mum Valerie Waller and the Cairns family; friends and family of Myrtle Paterson; friends and family of Christine Thomas; friends and family of Francis Fernando; friends and family of Audrey Pitkin; friends and family of Tim McEwen (Andrew C’s brother-in-law); and all those we know mourning loved ones at this time.

Giving Thanks: We give thanks for the many answers to prayer this week. The next prayer list is **orange**. Please do take one home to pray over.