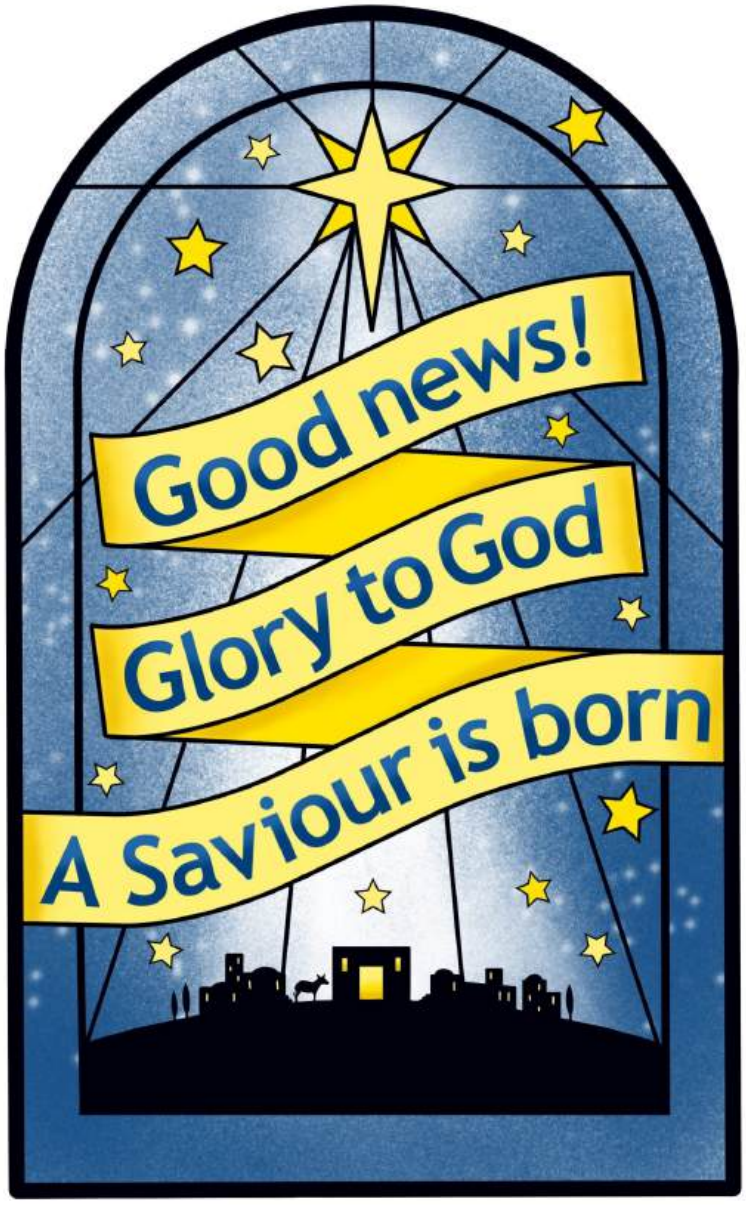
THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND BIRMINGHAM



St Andrew's Church
Handsworth, Birmingham



THE MESSENGER

Parish Magazine — 70P

DECEMBER 2025



From the Editor

Hi Everyone,

Welcome to the December edition of the magazine. This month's articles include Saint of the Month St Nicholas, Garden Spirituality, Beatitudes, Elaine and Val's famous relative, and an article about the poinsettia plant.

If you would like to write something for our magazine, articles are always welcome. Please email parishmagazine949@gmail.com or have a chat with me if you need assistance.

Eileen Lawrence

Wishing everyone

a Happy Christmas

&

a Peaceful New Year 2026!



Please note that the magazine is also online on St Andrew's website and is accessible to the general public.

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Christmas message from the Vicar

Prince of Peace!

The recent Bishop's Study, held at the Cathedral, centred on the thought-provoking theme: 'For King not Emperor'. Dr. Harvy Kwiyani from Malawi explored this subject within the context of Matthew's gospel, contrasting empire with kingdom—specifically God's Kingdom. The most compelling aspect of his talk was the observation that empires and emperors tend to be violent and maintain control through force, as Romans did in Palestine during Jesus time. In contrast, Jesus teaches that God's Kingdom calls for humility, meekness, and vulnerability.

Advent's four weeks invite us to wait in hope for peace, anticipating peace in a world that is often beset by violence, division and hunger. These harsh realities can leave us feeling discouraged and frustrated. Yet, in amidst such challenges, the prophet Isaiah offers encouragement, urging us not to lose hope and to continue walking in the light.

"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined." (9.2)

We people of hope expect good things will happen. As the scripture says,

"Behold, I make all things new."

The Christmas celebrates the story of God's love entering the world through Jesus born in Bethlehem in poverty. Offering hope, peace, and joy to everyone. God comes in humility, choosing to live among us, limiting himself to our human context. Jesus the Star of David his light breaks into darkness and dispelling the darkness from our lives.

As we celebrate Christmas. Let us not forget those around us who face drone attacks day and night and never find peace. Remembering many who are dying of hunger in the Middle East and across the world. On this special occasion, think of your friends and neighbours who may be lonely. At Christmas, let us become the good news for others—by sharing our gifts: a warm meal, a phone call, a visit, or inviting someone to share Christmas dinner with us. Choose whatever suits you. Let your kindness bring hope to someone in need and help them taste the true joy of Christmas.

Wishing you the blessings of love, joy, and peace this Christmas,

and a prosperous New Year 2026!

Father Paskal
(Vicar)

JOIN IN WITH OUR CHURCH SERVICES AT ST ANDREW'S

Our Sunday Services are as follows:-

Sunday - 9.30 am: service with Holy Communion

These Services include

Every second Sunday 9.30 am: Family Mass



Third Sunday 9.30 AM: Healing Service



Every Thursday Holy Communion Service

10.00 am at Good Shepherd Chapel



Christmas & New Years Services 2026

St Andrew's Church, B21 9RE



Carol Service
Sunday 21st December, 4.00 pm
(In Good Shepherd Hall)



Midnight Mass
Wednesday 24th December 11.30pm
(In Good Shepherd Hall)



Christmas Day Service
Thursday 25th December, 10.00 am
(In Good Shepherd Hall)

Midnight Service
saying Goodbye to 2025 and welcoming 2026
Wednesday 31st December, 11.30 pm
(In Good Shepherd Hall)



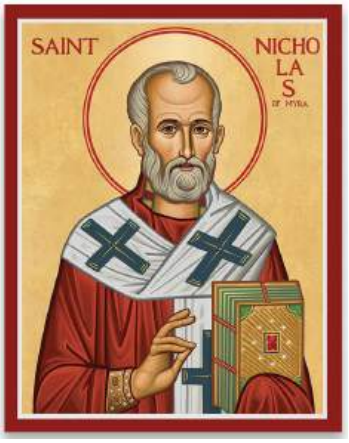
Thanksgiving Service 2026
Thursday 1st January 20206, 11.00 am
with bring & share lunch
(In Good Shepherd Hall)







Saint Nicholas of Myra



St Nicholas' Day is December 6th. In the Netherlands, children have their presents on the evening of December 5th – the eve of St Nicholas' Day, while December 25th is a day of feasting and family gathering and celebration rather than gift-giving. St Nicholas' Day is known in the Netherlands as Sinterklaas – this seems to be the name of the day and the man. We say Santa Claus which means St Nicholas – which we use as a name for Father Christmas.

St Nicholas was archbishop of Myra, now called Demre on the Mediterranean coast of Turkey, in the third century AD. He is famous for the great number of miracles attributed to him, earning him the name "wonder-worker". He is said to have been present at the Council of Nicaea of 325AD whose 1700th anniversary we are celebrating this year. This Council produced the Nicaean creed, the longer creed we sometimes use in worship. Nicholas is said to have had a hand in wording this creed, which was designed to combat the heresy of claiming that Jesus was only human and not divine.

Nicholas is the patron saint of travellers, children, students and lost causes as well as many other things. He was famous for his care of the poor and disadvantaged, and loved to give secret gifts (Secret Santa?). The story goes that he gave enough money to a poor family for them to be able to give dowries to their three daughters. He threw the money into their house through an open window. The gold landed in a shoe – hence the custom of putting out shoes on his feast day in the hope of finding small gift like coins, sweets or fruit in the shoes. Other miracles he is credited with included calming a storm at sea, and saving three innocent soldiers who had been wrongly condemned to death.

In late medieval times some parishes in England celebrated St Nicholas' Day by electing a boy bishop – just for a day one of the choirboys held the function and honour of a bishop, dressed in full episcopal regalia and leading the services. This practice was banned in the Reformation.

A prayer for children in remembrance of St. Nicholas:

Loving God, thank you for St. Nicholas
who shows us a good way to live.
He fed the hungry, freed the imprisoned,
cared for those in need
and told people about Jesus.
Make us brave, loving and strong,
so that, like St. Nicholas,
we may love and serve you
as we help those in need,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Alison Thorne

Welcome Home Reverend Val Powell!

A few years ago, when I returned to Birmingham, people in church were talking about a lovely woman called Val who wrote poetry and had poetry books published. There was always great excitement and warmth when people talked about Val. Val and Stuart – the dynamic duo training to be Lay Readers. In 2018 Val became a Licensed Lay Reader with Stuart. Val wrote an article for the Parish Magazine in which she wrote '…*it is the most amazing humbling experience being in the presence of our Lord. I look forward to my next journey and wherever he leads me...'* Val became a regular contributor to the parish magazine with her amazing poetry capturing events and emotions. And so began my journey getting to know Val Powell.

In 2021 Val talked about the music that helped her through the Pandemic. Val wrote, '*The Gospel Artist Tasha Cobbs sings my all-time favourite gospel song that supported me so much especially when I felt lost in where or what God had in store for me. The lyrics "oh how he walks with me and oh how he talks with me" gave me constant reassurance, hope and comfort that my journey was not over in fact it has only just begun!* Val was on her journey having been selected for Ordination Training to become a Priest. Val introduced me to the music of Tasha Cobbs and I played her CD 'Heart, Passion, Pursuit' nearly everyday while driving. Her songs were like a spiritual awakening. I was therefore excited in 2025 to attend a concert to see Tasha Cobbs, with Val. It was a very spiritually uplifting evening.

In July 2024 – Val was ordained Deacon at Birmingham Cathedral. It was a proud moment for St Andrew's. Val is so humble about her journey. She spreads warmth wherever she goes and is truly loved and respected by her St Andrew's family. Val was ordained Priest in 2025. At her first Eucharist Service in Smethwick Old Church, we proudly witnessed Val's growth, her confidence and service to God.

In November 2025, we had our St Andrew's Day Service and welcomed Val back home. Yes, the church was very cold….. but Val's St Andrew's family came (with blankets, gloves and winter coats) to witness Val celebrating the Eucharist and preaching a sermon in the church where she started her journey. I couldn't help but reflect on Val's journey from getting to know her in 2018 and to see her now as a confident priest, a child of God. In true Val style she asked the organist to play another verse of We Are Marching In the Light of God and danced her way down the aisle at the end of the service.

May God bless you Val on your continued journey.

Eileen Lawrence

Lackland Augustas Lennon

Lackland Augustas Lennon was the first member of our family who was ordained in the Anglican Church. It came as a surprise to me and the younger members of our family who attended the ordination of our own Reverend Val, my sister Valerie Powell. Lackland, later to become Archdeacon Lennon, was the brother of our great grand mother Leonora Lennon. He was born in 1886 in the rural community of Mocho, Clarendon, Jamaica.

Initially he studied pharmacy at Kingston Public Hospital, he then later took courses in Christian Ministry. In 1914 he was sent by the Anglican Church to Nigeria as a Missionary. He worked in the Missionary training college there. In 1920 when he returned to Jamaica he was ordained. He returned to Nigeria for 37 years where he was deeply involved in building mission infrastructure, schools, churches and over 300 mission stations.

He rose in ecclesiastical rank and was made a Canon of Lagos Cathedral in 1929 and later Archdeacon of Ondo in 1944. He became involved in agriculture, healthcare and politics. He received honours from the British Crown, an MBE in 1943 and an OBE in 1947.

In 1951 he returned home to Jamaica and became Chair of the Jamaica Church Ministry Society. He continued to minister in his home parish in Mocho, Clarendon. He served on many school boards.

He died in 1957 and was buried at his home church St Paul's Church Mocho. He bequeathed ten acres of land for a High School to be established. The school was established in 1969 and currently has over 1000 students enrolled. The school stands as a living legacy to Archdeacon which embodies his values. Rev Val and I have many cousins in Jamaica who attend and have been educated at Lennon High School.

My family and I are equally proud of the work of Rev Val and the Late Archdeacon Lennon.

Elaine Powell



Garden Spirituality: Fletcher Banner visits Saint Andrew's Church

The lines of verse in this article are from the hymn written by Robert Willis (1947-2024) which was sung at The Choral Evensong for Candlemas held in his Memory to the tune 'Laus Deo' which was composed by Richard Redhead (1820-1901).

Praise the Lord for holy places

landmarks on our pilgrim way,

kept for every generation ,

signs of Christ for each new day.

It was from the holy place of Canterbury Cathedral, from the Deanery Garden and House, that from the beginning of the Covid lockdown daily prayers were said for over two years by the late Dean of the Cathedral, the Very Reverend Dr Robert Willis. These prayers and reflections were filmed, and broadcast to the world by his right hand man and beloved partner, Fletcher Banner.

It was in the holy place of Salisbury Cathedral on Candlemas Day 2025 that the late Dean Emeritus of Canterbury's many friends and colleagues paid tribute to a truly holy person and possibly 'the last of the Great Deans' (Charles Moore of the Telegraph). The very beautiful and moving Memorial Service was attended by many members of the world wide 'Garden Congregation' which had formed virtually around the Canterbury broadcasts. As a member of the G.C. I felt very privileged to have been able to attend physically and to meet Fletcher and to offer him condolences on his great loss.

It was in our holy place of Saint Andrew's Church in Handsworth that we received the very welcome news that Fletcher felt able to accept Fr Paskal's invitation to visit us this year and to give a presentation on 'Garden Spirituality', despite the toll Dean Robert's sudden death in America on the 22nd October 2024 is taking on him.

Praise the Lord for sacred spaces

where the power of God is found,

and the secret voice of thunder

tells us this is holy ground.

Thanks to the much anticipated visit by Fletcher, on a lovely summer's Saturday, 16th August 2025, Saint Andrew's Church in Handsworth became a little centre of Pilgrimage for members of the local community and for Members of the virtual Garden Congregation.

It was a joy to meet face to face with both virtual and longstanding friends of Fletcher who had travelled from far flung places which included London, Rome, Derby, Cheltenham, Welshpool and Claverdon, and to hear their stories.

Fr Paskal and Fletcher seemed like old friends after a meeting of welcome at the Vicarage, as they began proceedings together in our Church.

It was such a special privilege for us that Fletcher had travelled to Birmingham to see us against all the odds. With the church flooded in sunshine, a wonderful gathering of people had been brought together on this very special day in our sacred space.

Stuart and Bryan took up the invitation by Fr Paskal to give their musical performance. Playing the piano, Stuart accompanied Bryan's fine baritone voice, and as Bryan sang so powerfully Stuart's specially arranged version of an Irish Blessing, we could clearly hear that we were on holy ground.

Praise the Lord for grace-filled seasons

dawning on us unaware,

glimpses of a deeper meaning

prompting and enriching prayer

Throughout the afternoon Fr Paskal and Fletcher held a discussion in 'question and answer form' and we heard Fletcher relate his thoughts and experiences on 'Garden Spirituality' in a melodic, engaging way. (As one member of our church said 'I could listen to him for ever!')

His experience during the Pandemic when he filmed and edited and helped plan Dean Robert's Prayers in the Garden, must have been a spiritual experience of a lifetime. The prayers, which were 'new every morning' became richer and richer and the photography more and more beautiful.

To remember this creative partnership, Fletcher showed his excellent film of Dean Robert reflecting in the natural way he had done throughout the pandemic, with a seemingly spiritual bond with the Earth and everything in it.

It was very moving to have Dean Robert present in St Andrew's, albeit virtually, at the same time as Fletcher.

Praise the Lord for lights that guide us

footprints other pathways showed

found unsought in darkest places

new companions on the road.

In the dark days of the pandemic the broadcasts from Canterbury Cathedral were full of encouragement to be practically creative. This led to a resolve by a group of us to overhaul a neglected area of our Church garden. The work began in June 2021 and it was a happy time of working together especially at a time when communication with each other had been so severely restricted indoors.

Thanks greatly to the virtual guiding lights of encouragement and inspiration from Canterbury, we had eventually created a 'Pilgrimage Garden'.

It was such a happy but 'unreal' occasion when on the 16th August 2025 Fletcher kindly officially ***opened*** our Garden and pilgrims poured through its gate from the Church.

We were delighted to accept the generous gift of a Thomas a Becket Rose from Fletcher which he planted himself. It is lovely to think of his footprints and those of all the visiting pilgrims over our garden and to remember the visitors chatting to each other and to Fletcher as new companions on the road.

Praise the Lord for every blessing

stirring up within us all,

each in our unique vocation

fresh obedience to Christ's call.

The day of Fletcher's visit to St Andrew's was a great blessing to us all.

Everyone did indeed seem to shine.

As Fr John Austen wrote to me: 'Fletcher obviously enjoyed the occasion, and I'm sure you will always remember his planting of the rose he gave.'

I will always remember that and his swinging of the floral Botafumeiro, and his gentle kindness and caring manner to all he met.

With thanks to everyone who participated in this special occasion and to Fr Paskal for supporting our Pilgrimage Garden which remembers and owes so much to Dean Robert.

THANK YOU FLETCHER.

Joan Wild







CHRIST JESUS – I follow you and praise your Holy name. Lord, teach me to be humble in all my ways, to put others before myself, and to recognise that true greatness lies in serving others with a loving heart.



THE BEATITUDES

BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT FOR THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

It's when we realise our need in 'GOD', it's the moment we admit and surrender, I can' t do this alone, its humility, the doorway to grace.

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO MOURN FOR THEY SHALL BE COMFORTED.

It's about a heart that feels. When we mourn over sin, loss and the brokenness of this world, GOD draws near. His comfort is not a bandage it's healing that restores the soul. In YOU alone I know I am safe.

BLESSED ARE THE MEEK FOR THEY SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH.

Meekness isn't weakness, its strength under control. Its choosing peace over pride, mercy over might, because the powerful are those who can choose gentleness over anger.

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO HUNGER AND THIRST FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS. FOR THEY SHALL BE SATISFIED.

This is a cry of my soul that wants more than this world can offer. It's not about success, fame or comfort, it's about hunger for what is right, truth for GOD Himself and only He can satisfy that hunger.

BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL, FOR THEY SHALL OBTAIN MERCY.

Mercy is love in motion. Its forgiving those who don't deserve, its just as we have been forgiven, because when we show mercy, we mirror the heart of The Father.

BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART, FOR THEY SHALL SEE GOD.

Purity is not perfection, it's a heart that's not divided, not pretending. When your heart is focused on GOD, you begin to see him not only in Heaven, but in everything around you.

BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS, FOR THEY SHALL BE CALLED THE CHILDREN OF GOD.

Peace doesn't mean silence, it means reconciliation, its standing in the middle of chaos and choosing to bring light instead of fire. Those who make peace, walk like their Father, they carry heaven wherever they go.

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO ARE PERSECUTED FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS SAKE.

For theirs' is the kingdom of heaven. When you stand for truth, the world wont always clap, sometimes it will push back, those who remain faithful in the face of rejection, who hold onto GOD when it costs them everything, they are the ones closest to His heart. These aren't just blessings they are a portrait of what heaven looks like on earth.

The Beatitudes remind us that GODs kingdom belongs not to the powerful but the pure, not to the perfect but to the faithful. COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS!

Shebina Gill



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Church of England celebrates ‘The Joy of Christmas’ in 2025

This year 2025 the C of E’s official Advent and Christmas theme is ‘Joy’ or ‘The Joy of Christmas’.

The aim is helping people remember that the true joy of Christmas is the good news of Jesus’ birth. The initiative also aims to encourage churches to welcome visitors and to share their faith during this Christmas period.

The C of E has provided some resources:

For adults: A booklet, *Twelve Joys of Christmas*, is designed to be given away at carol services and seasonal events. It begins on Christmas Day and runs to the Epiphany, offering the reader a daily theme, short reading, reflection, and prayer.

(*The Joy of Christmas* by Nicholas Papadopulos CHP, .99p each.)

For schools and families: A book, *The Grumpy Owl and the Joy of Christmas*, will draw children into thinking about the Christmas story.

(*The Grumpy Owl and the Joy of Christmas, Jonathan Malt & Christopher Poch, £4.99)*

For digital engagement: social media templates, content ideas using the hashtag #TheJoyOfChristmas, and webinars to help local churches celebrate Christmas online.

Note: The C of E’s ‘Joy of Christmas’ theme is distinct from specific charity appeals by other organisations, such as Christian Aid's ‘Peace on Earth’ or the Season of Creation's ‘Peace with Creation’ themes for 2025.

c/o Parish Pump



Why is the vicar wearing white today?

You may have noticed that the Minister who officiates at Church Services may wear a long, thin scarf which is called a stole. This can be white, purple, red or green.

White is for festive occasions like Christmas and Easter, christenings and weddings. Purple is worn during Advent and Lent, when we bring to mind our sins and seek God's forgiveness, in preparation for the wonderful seasons of Christmas and Easter. Red at Pentecost, symbolises the fire of the Holy Spirit, and on Saints Days it signifies that many of them (and some today) were martyred because they were Christians. Green, marking growth and hope is worn for the rest of the year.

So, white for 'best', purple for penitence, red for the Holy Spirit and the blood of the Martyrs, and green for growth.

You will also spot the same changing colours for items on the Altar-Table at the beginning and end of the Service of Holy Communion. The Burse is a flat, square case holding a linen cloth called the corporal, on which the vessels used in Holy Communion are placed. The Veil covers them until they are used.

The vessels are called Paten and Chalice. The Paten is like a plate on which the bread is placed. A bowl, called a Ciborium, may be used for the same purpose. The Chalice is a cup for the wine. Because the bread and wine represent the Body and Blood of Christ, which He sacrificed for us when He was crucified, we handle them with care.

The minister's ceremonial robes, called vestments, and the vessels all point to something greater. In one of St Paul's letters in the New Testament, he explains in these words that receiving the Sacrament of Holy Communion has past, present and future significance: "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."

c/o Parish Pump

Interesting fact.

There are 24 chapters in St Luke. If you read a chapter a day of St Luke's Gospel, starting on 1st December, you will have read about the birth, life and death of Jesus by Christmas Eve.



ST ANDREW'S HEATING FUND

Thank you for your hard work. We have been fundraising money since 2023 for our much-needed heating system. This is what we have raised so far from our fund-raising events, grants and donations. Thank you!

-



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Fund Raising— £9,481.67

· Grants received - £9,778.00

· Tax recovered - £1,636.18

· Miscellaneous income— £355.00

· Funds Transfer— £5,000

MAKING A CURRENT TOTAL OF **£26,250.85**

So far, we have spent **£14,016.00** on repairs, updating outdated systems, and getting the church ready for a new heating system. Our current balance for St Andrew's Heating system is **£11,841.61**.

Church Wardens

Warm Wishes for Christmas

After moving to Cheshire, Gloria James, (former St. Andrew's Church Warden, who very many of you will remember and with whom you may be in contact), joined a Folk Club, but although she enjoyed all the music, she chose to always recite poetry to the group rather than sing or play an instrument herself. One Christmas she chose the poem 'Flame-Heart' by Claude McKay (1889 –1948), which she had learnt as a school girl in Jamaica, to recite to her new friends in Cheshire.

Claude McKay was born in Jamaica and wrote about social and political concerns from his perspective as a Black man in the United States. It is his love for his homeland and the natural world that shines through in his poetry.

Flame-Heart

So much have I forgotten in ten years,
So much in ten brief years; I have forgot
What time the purple apples come to juice
And what month brings the shy forget-me-not;
Forgotten is the special, startling season
Of some beloved tree's flowering and fruiting,
What time of year the ground doves brown the fields
And fill the noonday with their curious fluting:
I have forgotten much, but still remember
The poinsettia's red, blood-red in warm December.

I still recall the honey-fever grass,
But I cannot bring back to mind just when
We rooted them out of the ping-wing path
To stop the mad bees in the rabbit pen.
I often try to think in what sweet month
The languid painted ladies used to dapple
The yellow bye road mazing from the main,
Sweet with the golden threads of the rose-apple:
I have forgotten, strange, but quite remember
The poinsettia's red, blood-red in warm December.

What weeks, what months, what time o' the mild year
We cheated school to have our fling at tops?
What days our wine-thrilled bodies pulsed with joy
Feasting upon blackberries in the copse?
Oh, some I know! I have embalmed the days,
Even the sacred moments, when we played,
All innocent of passion uncorrupt.
At noon and evening in the flame-heart's shade:
We were so happy, happy,—I remember
Beneath the poinsettia's red in warm December.

The Poinsettia in this poem would refer, (as Gloria reliably informs me), to the Jamaican Poinsettia, *Euphorbia punicea.* The plant grows into a sizable tree, up to about 20 feet high and Gloria confirms that when the whole tree goes brilliant red in December it is indeed a wonderful, unforgettable sight.

The plant is a member of the spurge family. The scientific name *Euphorbia* comes from the name of the Greek physician Euphorbus who used the milky sap from spurge plants medicinally. Probably because of the milky sap exuded from the plant when cut, it is more convenient for church flower arrangers in Jamaica to take small trees of Poinsettia in pots, as Gloria said does indeed happen, to decorate the Church at Christmas time, rather than deal with complications from the sap of cut branches.

Euphorbia pulcherrima is the botanical name of the Poinsettia we see displayed in our shops at the moment as Christmas draws near. This plant is native to Central America, principally to an area of southern Mexico called Taxco de Alarcon. It was Joel Roberts **Poinsett**, the first U.S. Ambassador to Mexico, who in 1828 took cuttings to his home in South Carolina and began cultivating the plants and exporting them to friends and botanical gardens around the world.

The wonderful appearance of the plant is due to the brightly coloured bracts (modified leaves) rather than the actual flowers which are very small, yellow, ball-like structures at the centre of the 'star' of the plant. It is the star-shape, formed by the bracts and leaves of the plant, which makes it so lovely as a plant for Christmas, resembling as it does the Star of Bethlehem which led the Wise Men to Jesus. In Guatemala and Mexico, Poinsettias are called 'La Flor de Nochebuena' – 'Flower of the Holy Night'. There is a legend that a little girl brought a gift to Jesus of all she could ~ a bunch of green leaves, which miraculously turned a beautiful red in Church on Christmas Eve.

Plantswoman Gloria has managed to maintain a shop-bought Poinsettia for three years and is currently witnessing her own Christmas Miracle as the green bracts of her plant are beginning to turn red in time for Christmas. Her late mother kept one for seven years. The knack of success seems to be in finding just the right conditions. Poinsettias require a fairly consistent temperature of around 16-21°C. Gloria's plant is happy near her fridge-freezer which emits a constant supply of gentle heat. These plants require light, but not direct (especially hot) sunshine. Gloria's plant is on an east facing window sill. It seems the Poinsettia will live longer with some sun exposure in the morning and less bright light as the day passes. The compost needs to be kept just moist (not too dry or too wet), by watering only when the surface of the compost feels dry when touched.

The change in colour of the bracts is caused by a process known as photoperiodism which is the response by the plant to the length of day and night. As the nights get longer in the Northern Hemisphere so the process is triggered to produce the colour pigment for the bracts for winter.

As well as looking beautiful, the colourful bracts of the Poinsettias were used by the ancient Aztecs to make dyes. They cultivated the plants which they called Cuetlaxochitl.

Also, like the Ancient Greeks, the Aztecs appreciated the medicinal value of Spurge plants.

With warm wishes for you and your Christmas Poinsettia. May it not need to be discarded this year but give you many years of pleasure in December.

Joan Wild.

ST ANDREW'S

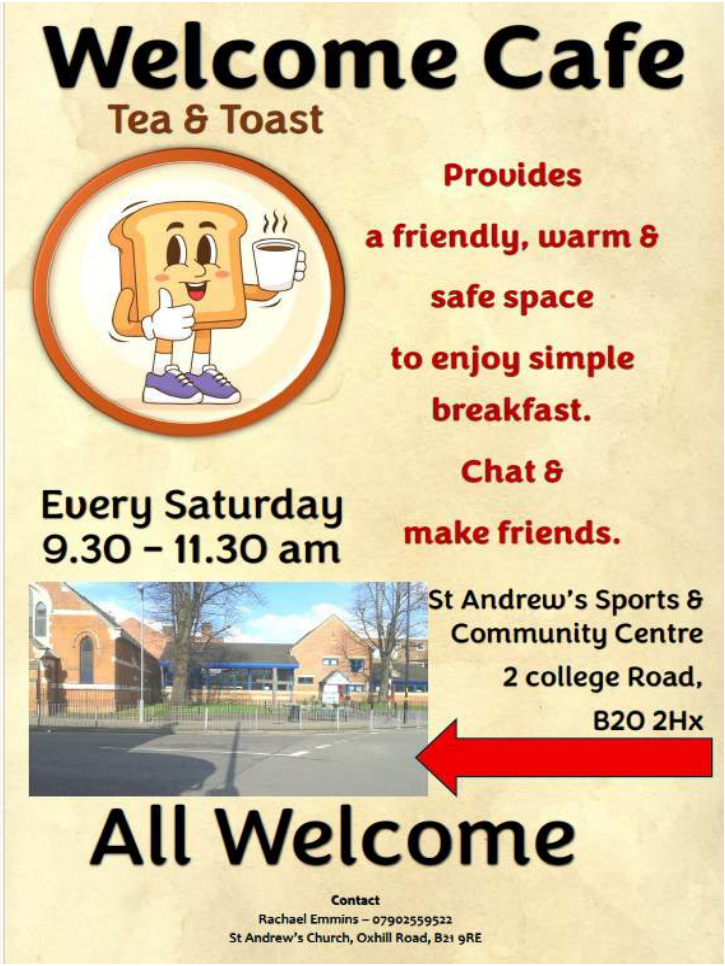


All welcome!

Coffee Morning is 10am till 12pm every Thursday in The Good Shepherd Hall. We offer tea and coffee for 60p a mug and toast 20p a slice. We have biscuits each week and sometimes cakes if people bring them in for their birthday. Carole Sami has a table selling her cards and Val Ryder has her table selling various items. It is a friendly occasion where people enjoy having a chat over a cup of tea / coffee.

All are welcome. You don't have to be a regular church member. St Andrew's Coffee Morning is open to the whole community.

Chris Baker



St Andrew's Sports & Community Centre



St Andrew's Sports & Community Centre is located on the corner of College Road. It is owned and managed by St Andrew's Church and is used for public activities and other church groups. The Centre is probably best known for the outdoor service that takes place on Good Friday every year.

If you wish to hire a room in the Centre for a private function, please contact

John Emmins, Church Hall Administration.

Mobile: 07486 377719 or

Email: enquiriesstandrewsacc@gmail.com

These are the public activities that currently take place at the Centre.

Tuesday 10:00 - 12:00 Home Start Family Support Group

Wednesday Wellbeing group – Tai Chi 10.00 -11.00

Wednesday 17:30 - 20:30 & Saturday 13:30 - 14:30 - Temple Martial Arts

Thursday - Move for life 11:30 - 12:30 Exercise Class

Saturday 09:00 - 13:00 - Little Kickers

Please note that none of these groups/activities are run by the church.

DECEMBER WORDSEARCH



Born	**Virgin**	**Immanuel**	**Bethlehem**	
Ruler	**Israel**	**David**	**King**	**Just**
Right	**Healing**	**Blind**	**Deaf**	
Lame	**Mute**	**Crucified**	**Pierce**	
Hands	**Feet**	**Gloat**	**Rise**	
Dead	**Abandon**	**Decay**	**Realm**	

All Church Services

9.30 am

At Good Shepherd Hall



Behind the Church on Slack Lane

Until further notice


MERRY
CHRISTMAS
AND
HAPPY
NEW YEAR
2026