

*Services at St Margaret's Underriver  
December 2008 - January 2009*



<b>Sunday</b>	<b>7 Dec</b>	11:15	Family Service	
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>14 Dec</b>	08:00	Holy Communion (said)	<b>BCP</b>
		11:15	Morning Prayer (with hymns)	<b>BCP</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>21 Dec</b>	16:00	Christmas Carol Service	
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>24 Dec</b>	16:00	Blessing the Crib	
		23:30	First Communion of Christmas	<b>CW</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>25 Dec</b>	08:00	Holy Communion	<b>BCP</b>
		11:15	Festival Family Service with Communion	
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>28 Dec</b>	10:30	United Service for both our Parishes at St Lawrence's	
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>4 Jan</b>	11:15	Family Service	
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>11 Jan</b>	08:00	Holy Communion (said)	<b>BCP</b>
		11:15	Morning Prayer (with hymns)	<b>BCP</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>18 Jan</b>	10:30	Sunday Club meet in the Village Hall	
		11:15	Short Family Service for all God's Children	
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>25 Jan</b>	11:15	Parish Communion (with hymns)	<b>CW</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>1 Feb</b>	11:15	Family Service, with Christingles	

*For details of joint services, bible study, prayer times, etc., please see Page 2*

**Thank You .....**

... to Lauren Wood, aged 6 and a member of St Lawrence's Sunday School who designed the picture used on the parish Christmas card distributed in both our parishes. (Next year it'll be St Margaret's turn to provide.)



*St Lawrence, Seal Chart Parish Magazine  
December 2008 - January 2009*



*Happy Birthday, Jesus!  
And Many Happy Returns!*

*Priest in Charge*  
**The Reverend Dr Michael Cooke**  
St Lawrence Vicarage  
Stone Street  
Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 0LQ  
01732 761766

*Reader*  
**Mrs Gretel Wakeham**  
The White House  
Bitchet Green  
Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 0NA  
01732 761534

*Church Warden*  
**Hilary Denby-Jones**  
Broomsleigh Park  
Seal Chart  
Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 0ES  
01732 763883

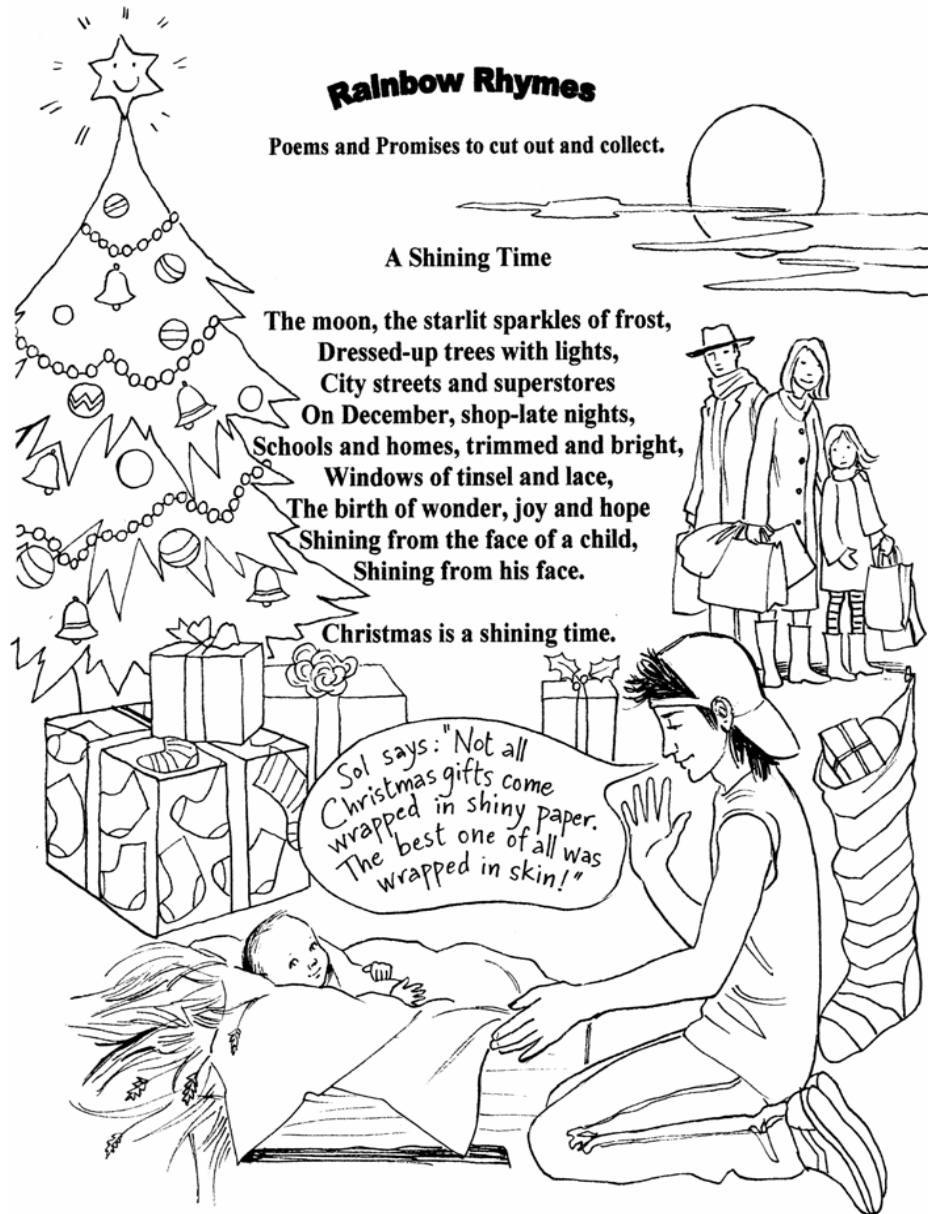
Copy for the next issue should be sent to the editor (or e-mail to [brian@bsutton0.wanadoo.co.uk](mailto:brian@bsutton0.wanadoo.co.uk)).  
**to arrive by 08:00 on Wednesday 14 January 2009**

The next issue, of the Parish Magazine will be in Church on **Sunday 25 January 2009**

Edited and Typeset by Brian Sutton, 50 The Crescent, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 3QY (01732 450873)  
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**Rainbow Rhymes**

Poems and Promises to cut out and collect.

**A Shining Time**

The moon, the starlit sparkles of frost,  
Dressed-up trees with lights,  
City streets and superstores  
On December, shop-late nights,  
Schools and homes, trimmed and bright,  
Windows of tinsel and lace,  
The birth of wonder, joy and hope  
Shining from the face of a child,  
Shining from his face.

Christmas is a shining time.

Sol says: "Not all Christmas gifts come wrapped in shiny paper. The best one of all was wrapped in skin!"

*A child has been born- for us! The gift of a son – for us!*  
Isaiah 9:6a(The Message)

Poem by Daphne Kitching, Picture by Elaine Hill, Coloured by .....

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>4 Jan</b>	<b>The Epiphany of our Lord</b>	
	08:00	Holy Communion (said)	<b>BCP</b>
		Ephesians 3: 1-12	Matthew 2: 1-12
	09:45	All Age Family Service (children in church)	
		Matthew 2: 1-12	
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>6 Jan</b>	<b>Prayer Time for Both Parishes</b> (Open to all - lasts about 60 mins)	
	10:00	At The Vicarage	
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>11 Jan</b>	<b>First Sunday of Epiphany—The Baptism of Christ</b>	
	09:45	Family Communion (with hymns)	<b>CW</b>
		Acts 19: 1-7	Mark 1: 4-11
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>17 Jan</b>	<b>Taizé Service</b>	
	19:00	A quiet reflective service for all Sevenoaks Churches using songs and chants from the Taizé Community in France	
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>18 Jan</b>	<b>Second Sunday of Epiphany</b>	
	08:00	Holy Communion (said)	<b>CW</b>
		Revelation 5:1-10	John 1: 43-51
	09:45	All Age Family Service (with Sunday School)	
		1 Samuel 3: 1-10	John 1:43-51
	18:30	United Service for Week of Prayer for Christian Unity at St Luke's, Eardley Road, Sevenoaks	
<b>Friday</b>	<b>23 Jan</b>	<b>Prayer Time for Both Parishes</b> (Open to all - lasts about 60 mins)	
	10:00	At Garden Cottage, Bitchet Green	
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>25 Jan</b>	<b>Third Sunday of Epiphany</b>	
	09:45	Morning Prayer (with hymns)	<b>BCP</b>
		Genesis 14: 17-20	John 2: 1-11
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>31 Jan</b>	<b>Children's Fun Afternoon with Roly Bain</b>	
	14:00	In the Village Hall	
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>1 Feb</b>	<b>Fourth Sunday of Epiphany Candlemas Sunday</b>	
	08:00	Holy Communion (said)	<b>BCP</b>
		Revelation 12: 1-5a	Mark 1: 21-28
	09:45	All Age Family Service (children in church)	
		Luke 2: 22-40	
	<b>t b a</b>	<b>Prayer Time for Both Parishes</b> (Open to all - lasts about 60 mins)	

1; CW = Common Worship - a service using contemporary (21st C) language and form



### *The Vicar's Page*

“A dog is not just for Christmas,” runs the advert. Nor indeed, I suggest, are many of the other things we do in this coming season. For how many of us do the novelties of chiming cuff links, the latest DVD, endless carols in every public place, even turkey with all the trimmings soon wear off? Come the 2<sup>nd</sup> January, reality checks in – with fricassée repeated yet again, credit cards bills coming home to be settled, not to mention the recession.

We know in our hearts that there has to be more to proper life than the frenzy of December. And yet – vicar included – we are all so easily caught up in the whirl. Don't get me wrong: there is so much that is good about Christmas: church services, holidays, parties, presents, even (for most of us) family get-togethers: and life would be infinitely the poorer without them. Human beings are made to celebrate – but the problem for society is that with so much (and some of it junk) being crammed into this one month of the year, indigestion is too easily the result. No wonder that the Christmas season is in reality dreaded by so many – as organisations like Samaritans tell us.

We know it shouldn't be like this! And the antidote begins with recalling what happened that first Christmas night, when society was equally adrift. Those in the inn, stable, or (probably) out on the streets, were there because of a harsh world. Then a barbarous foreign regime was requiring universal registration so that taxes could be the more easily raised. In 2008/9, it is also small people suffering, whether from civil war (Africa), occupation (Middle East), or widespread greed and selfishness (western society, including but certainly not limited to some of its financial sectors).

But then, as now, God himself started a new way: instead of short-term self-indulgence, life-long and life-demanding service was shown to be the only way to meet the Maker's plans for humanity. The heart of the matter becomes focussed in a vulnerable baby born to a single human parent, outside the family home, and destined soon to be a refugee. Indeed the Christ-child would grow to learn a lifetime on earth of having nowhere permanent to lay his head. No DVD, no turkey, yet possessing everything that matters.

But Mary, the shepherds, angels and heaven all rejoiced – and we are privileged to join in the cosmic celebration too. And to take part in the way of life which Jesus came – and comes - to bring. It's quite an amazingly generous offer, thought - and Presence – which will sustain us not only in December, but every day of our life.

*Elspeth joins me in wishing us all every blessing over this coming Christmas season, .*

Michael

### *Services in December and January*

In addition to our main Christmas services, please note

- (a) Our monthly **Sunday School in December is on 14<sup>th</sup>** (not the third Sunday in the month) - Yes, the *second* Sunday in the month, because on the third it's our Carol Service.
- (b) The post-Christmas, united service of readings and carols for both our parishes will be held at St Lawrence's on Sunday 28 December at 10:30am. We greatly welcome your suggestions for what we should be singing – but suggestions must be with the vicar by Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> December, at the latest, please.
- (c) On **Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> January** our 9:45am Family Communion will include the ministry of personal prayer, of healing and of wholeness. This opportunity is much appreciated by those who come; there is also the opportunity to leave prayer requests on slips of paper, and later in the day Gretel and Michael will quietly pray through the requests.

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### *Lent House Groups*

Lent – it sounds a long way away – but the theme for the 2009 inter-church Lent Study Groups could hardly be more apt: “These three .... Faith, Hope and Love” (based on 1 Corinthians 13). Last year over 100 people across Sevenoaks took part, enabling groups to be held on most days of the week, and at various times. Flyers will be available in church by Christmas as sign-up needs to be by the end of January to give the organisers time to sort what groups can meet when, and then to let participants know. Meantime, write in our diaries for March “Lent Group!”

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### **For Parents / Grandparents !**

### **Roly Bain (Christian Clown): 31 January 2009**

A reminder that in faith we've booked Roly, who is one of the country's foremost Christian clowns, to lead our Children's Fun Afternoon on Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2009. As well as using his clowning skills to tell wonderful stories, he will also be giving some workshops to help the children learn some tricks themselves. But we do need to ensure a good turnout. Parents/Grandparents – PLEASE let us have your booking form soon – if you've mislaid your copy, further copies can be obtained from the vicarage, or downloaded from our church website [www.sealstlawrence.org.uk](http://www.sealstlawrence.org.uk) - and of course mark the date in your diary.

Roly will also be assisting at our worship at 9:45am on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> February – it will be a memorable and honouring occasion.

***A Birthday Celebration***

You are cordially invited to a birthday celebration...

Guest of Honour: Jesus Christ

Date: Bt tradition December 25th, but he's always around, so the date is flexible.

Time: Whenever you're ready. Please don't be late, though, or you'll miss out on all the fun!

Dress Code: Come as you are, because Jesus will give you fresh, new garments of his righteousness and purity to wear.

Place: In your heart.... he'll meet you there. You'll hear him knock.

~~~~~

***Parish Magazine 2008***

It is that time of the year when we remember with thanks all those who have helped us in one way or another during the past twelve months. I should like to take this opportunity to say a very sincere thank you to all who have supported the production and distribution of the magazine this year. Particular thanks are due to Julian Gilchrist for his very speedy service in printing the magazine, to Felicity Corbally and Gretel Wakeham for collating and stapling, to Rosemary Attenborough who has organised distribution, and to all those who distribute the finished job to our subscribers.

During the year contributors have between them have provided no less than 198 items. Michael's contributions represent just over one third of the total and almost a further third have been gleaned from The Parish Pump, a website available to magazine editors: the remainder have been sent in by 29 of our readers. My grateful thanks to all of them.

Copy and publication dates are included in each issue: if you would like a complete list, please give me a ring.

Please may I have copy by no later than 08:00 on the dates shown, remembering, of course, that delivery times seem to be getting longer. If you can e-mail your copy to me, this is the best way. Needless to say, I will welcome any and all the contributions you send.

*Ed*

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***Parking***

In some large towns in America, the authorities no longer issue parking tickets. If you can find a space anywhere, the police issue you a medal.

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***From our Churchwarden***

We would like to thank all those who have so generously contributed to the St Lawrence Gift Day appeal. Despite the sharp rise in the cost of living and the newspapers being filled with economic calamity, you kept St Lawrence Church in your thoughts and together we have raised a total of £9,785. The church can continue into 2009 on a sure footing, confident that we can meet our commitments and continue to serve our community. THANK YOU ALL. *Hilary*

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***Week of Prayer for Christian Unity***

As in previous years, St Lawrence's is privileged to host a **Taizé**-style of service on a Saturday evening - this year on **17th January** at 7 pm. If you haven't been to this kind of reflective service, we invite you to try! It's a time of quiet reflection using a simple form of song, repeated several times so that anyone can within a moment be gently singing too.



The major united choral service for all churches in the Sevenoaks area is at 6:30 pm on Sunday 18th January - this year at St Luke's Church, Eardley Road. The speaker will be Bruce Kent, Chairman of Pax Christi. (Some of us may remember him as Mgr Bruce Kent, from CND days.) There will be a united choir drawn from all the churches - and anyone else who'd like to sing - so singers look out for details in the church weekly pewsheets.

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***Collections at St Lawrence's services***

Thank you to all who contributed to the special collection on **Remembrance Sunday** for the Royal British Legion. The total collected was £228.26 - but with Gift Aid recoverable (£57.54), and an additional contribution direct from PCC funds £360 will be sent to the Royal British Legion.

Please note also that the collection (but not any 'orange' church envelopes) at our **Carol service** will be given to Christian Aid, and at the **Crib service** to Demelza House, the children's hospice in Sittingbourne (see 'Christingles', above). The collection on Christmas Day is for our church.

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***"Techie" Issues***

For those of us who use older versions of MS Office, there are patches available to enable access to the more recent Office 2007 formats, and Michael has included a new link at the bottom left hand corner of our web site.

# CHURCH CHRISTMAS CLEAN

on

**Wednesday, 3rd December, between 9 am and 11 am**

**PLEASE DO COME! We would LOVE to have extra helpers for this, at least because we'll then have more time for the coffee break!**

*Carol McL*

## **Roll of Honour**

I am anxious to compile some historical notes about those brave men whose names appear on the Roll of Honour in the church.

If there is anyone who is able to provide any information, number, rank, name, regiment, etc, etc, it would be much appreciated if you could send it to me at Camden House, School Lane, Seal, TN15 0BE.

*Tony Webb*

Richard Adams	James Drury	Myles Matthews
Ernest Bailey	Edward Feldon	William Miles
James Bartholemew	Bertie Graylan	Charles Mitchell
Austin Butcher	Ernest Hobbs	Arthur Oben
Edwin Collens	Herbert Hodder	Stephen Phyll
Frederick Cox	Alfred Hope	William Rhind
Humphrey Dickenson	Stephen Keeler	John des Voeux
Samuel Drawbridge	Christopher Macleod	Frederick Wickham

They shall grow not old as we that are left grow old,  
Age shall not weary them nor the years condemn,  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning  
WE WILL REMEMBER THEM.

~~~~~

## **Magazine Subscriptions remain as £6 (or £9 if posted)**

To help Rosemary Attenborough, who keeps track of subscriptions, could we please ask that we all pay our annual subscriptions soon – either to the person who distributes, or directly to Rosemary (her address is Coldhanger, Seal Chart, Sevenoaks, TN15 0EJ). In this Christmas/New Year season of good will to all, please let us all resolve to do the Christian thing and save us all having to chase for subscriptions!

*Michael Cooke*

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## **From the Registers at St Lawrence's**

- 19 October Baptism of Ryan Harry James Miller, son of Sean and Kimberly. We rejoice in the new start for Ryan – and at his choice of two great hymns for us to sing (“I, the Lord of sea and sky”, and “Lord, the light of your love is shining”)
- 26 October Confirmation and First Communion of Gareth Ben John Atkinson, Helen Barbara Atkinson, Hannah Grace Hordle, Thomas (Tom) David Hordle, Claire Elizabeth Livsey, Ryan Harry James Miller, and John Richard Wolfie Manser Rayner – all at St Mary’s Church, Riverhead, with the Rt Revd Michael Nazir-Ali, Bishop of Rochester presiding. We pray for continued discernment of the gifts of God’s Spirit particular and relevant to each life.
- 2 November Baptism of Bella Elizabeth Morris, infant daughter of Nick and Jane. We celebrate the new start for Bella, and pray for continued growth in blessing on all the family.

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## **Prayer Points for this Month**

- Those who are alone or have no family with whom to share Christmas and who find the Christmas and New Year period the most lonely time of the year.
- Those who provide shelter and friendship.
- Those affected by the downturn in the economy or the ongoing unfolding of previously assumed perpetual growth: those fearful for jobs, houses or impact on savings, and above all those who were already at the margins of society.
- The common witness of Christians and church organisations as we work together in our wider community.

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## **Christingles on Christmas Eve (5:30 pm service)**

As in previous years we expect this candlelit service to be amongst the most popular of the Christmas season. The main event is the Blessing of the Crib, but as in past years we shall also be following the Moravian custom of children building a Christingle and lighting its candle. But this year, as last year, we are not offering any collecting tube – but we still ask everyone to please still continue to mark Advent by laying aside a daily gift and bring the resulting money to the service – the collection will be for Demelza House Hospice for Children.

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## ***Communion at Home, a Lift to Church, or Confession***

Four seasonal reminders:

- (a) During Advent, there is an opportunity to share in Communion as a small group in the comfort of a home. We look at the readings for the previous Sunday, and we'll spend longer than is usually possible in church praying for world and local situations. The service lasts no more than 60 minutes and could be an oasis of peace in a busy week! Time/Date/venue: **2 pm on Tues 2nd December** at Westover, Mill Lane (home of Jennifer and Neil Fair), and **2 pm on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> December** at the White House, Bitchet Green (Gretel and JohnY Wakeham's home).
- (b) If you, or someone you know, is unable to get to church over the Christmas period and would like to receive Communion at home, I will be delighted to bring Communion to you. Please just ask!
- (c) If you'd like to get to church, but can't, **please** do ask. We can surely find someone who would very happily give you a lift.
- (d) If you or anyone has a concern or guilt which is troubling you, do know that your vicar is here to listen in confidence – and, if it is your wish, to offer after confession God's Absolution. *Michael Cooke*

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### ***Yes, You can make tiome to read!***

On a scale of 1 - 10 how stressed are you in the run up to Christmas?

- 1 - 2 relatively calm - there are still three weeks to go
- 3 - 4 slightly concerned that you should be doing more to prepare
- 5 - 6 you make mental lists in the middle of the night
- 7 - 8 palpatations that you have forgotten the mental lists by morning
- 9 - 10 reslove next year that you'll go alone to a desert island

There are some super books at the back of the church to borrow in the run up to Christmas; guaranteed to reduce the stress levels, as they put the sanity back into Christmas preparations. Read all about it! *Gretel*

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***Make [www.sealstlawrence.org.uk](http://www.sealstlawrence.org.uk) one of your favourite websites***

## ***Christian Aid - Present Aid***

Once again, Christian Aid is giving the opportunity to give Christmas gifts that will not only bring pleasure to the friends you send them to, but also make a lasting difference to the lives of people in the developing world.



### ***How does Present Aid work?***

Each of the gifts in the 'Present Aid' catalogue represents an area of Christian Aid's work, such as providing livestock, training and education projects, emergency preparedness or healthcare. When you 'buy' a gift, the contribution you make supports the area of work that is symbolised by the gift. So, for instance, if you buy a beehive or some ducks, your money will fund agriculture and livestock projects, while a gift of a basketball or school shoes will fund education and training projects. You receive a card describing how your gift will be used and you send the card to the friend or family member for whom you have chosen the present.

Present Aid catalogues are available from the display stand in St Lawrence Church. For the first time this year, a selection of the more popular Present Aid gifts can be bought directly from me, thus avoiding the uncertainties of mail order. I have in stock basketballs, disaster kits, watering cans, computer training, school shoes, can of worms, beehive, ducks, mosquito nets and pigs, and shall have gift cards available after Sunday church services, or please phone me and I can arrange to get cards to you. *Elspeth 761766*

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## ***Christian Aid - Forthcoming Events***

### ***Christmas Carol Singing in Central Sevenoaks***



This year, everyone is invited to join a group from Sevenoaks and District Christian Aid Committee singing carols on **Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> December from 10 am to 12 noon**. We shall meet in Bligh's Court and words of carols will be provided. Please bring music for harmonies if you would like to. As we are singing during the day, we hope that families may like to join us. You are welcome to stay all morning or just for a couple of carols. All money collected will go to Christian Aid.

### ***Quizaid – New Date for Fun Quiz Night***

Once the excitement of Christmas is over, January can seem rather flat, so here is an event to brighten up a winter's evening. Why not get together with some friends and make up a table of 6 to come to the Christian Aid Quiz evening. This is the rescheduled event which had to be postponed in the autumn and the details are:



- What?** Fun Quiz Night for all the family
- Where?** Christ Church URC Hall, Littlecourt Road, Sevenoaks
- When?** **Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2009** 7:00 pm for a 7:15 pm prompt start  
Tables of 6 – why not make up your own table, or we can team you up with others
- Cost?** £10 to include a Fish and Chip Supper. Please bring your own drinks
- Tickets?** Please contact me. We hope to make up several tables.

*Elspeth 761766*

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### ***1 Corinthians 13 - The Christmas Version***

If I decorate my house perfectly with plaid bows, strands of twinkling lights and shiny balls, but do not show love to my family, I'm just another decorator.

If I slave away in the kitchen, baking dozens of Christmas puddings, preparing gourmet meals and arranging a beautifully adorned table at mealtime, but do not show love to my family, I'm just another cook.

If I work at the soup kitchen, carol in the nursing home, and give all that I have to charity, but do not show love to my family, it profits me nothing.

If I trim the spruce with shimmering angels and crocheted snowflakes, attend a myriad of holiday parties and sing in the choir's cantata, but do not focus on Christ, I have missed the point.

Love stops the cooking to hug the child.

Love sets aside decorating to kiss the husband.

Love is kind, though harried and tired.

Love doesn't envy another's home that has coordinated Christmas china and table linens.

Love doesn't yell at the children to get out of the way, but is thankful they are there to be in the way.

Love doesn't give only to those who are able to give in return, but rejoices in giving to those who can't.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never fails.

Computer games will break, cashmere jumpers will wear out, golf clubs will get lost.

But giving the gift of love will endure..

Happy Christmas!

*Anon*

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### ***News from our School***

As always, St Lawrence School is a hive of activity. We are, of course, starting the long run up to Christmas and preparations are already under way. As in previous years, we will be putting on a concert which will be a Nativity with a difference! We will also have our annual Carol Service which will be a traditional blend of readings and carols. The orchestra have already started practicing some of the old favourites! As well as performing in our Carol Service, the orchestra will be playing at the switching on of the Christmas lights in Sevenoaks – this is on Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> November, do come and support us if you can.

As a school we have started another building project: we are converting our ICT suite into a library. ICT teaching has become much more integrated into the everyday curriculum with several computers in every classroom. Consequently, the ICT suite has become almost redundant. This has given us the opportunity to embark on this new project to upgrade our library. It is a timely reminder that, although ICT is becoming increasingly important, books are, and always will be, an important part of education.

Sport continues to be a focus of our school and we are grateful to Mrs Medhurst, whose enthusiasm keeps it at the forefront of our curriculum. Our netball team are competing in a local league and putting on a sterling show considering they are playing against schools much larger than us. We also entered two lacrosse teams into a local tournament. The children practiced hard and arrived well prepared. After about one and a half hours of playing group matches it was announced that St Lawrence A team were to play Walthamstow Hall Junior School A team in the final! It was a closely fought match but in the end St Lawrence won by two goals. I was left feeling very proud of the way the children performed but also reminded that lacrosse is a great game!

Last week local singer/song writers Emma and Nick Pears spent a day in the school working with the children and taking them through the process of recording a song. The CD entitled *Take the Time* will be on sale soon and I am led to believe that it will be quite impressive – whether or not it will become this year's Christmas number one remains to be seen!

*Alison*

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### ***Harvest Words***

At the Family Services at Harvest Festival, we asked worshippers how many harvest-related words they could form using not more than once the letters of the word HARVEST. Congratulations to our winners, Carol and Clive McLintock who supplied 69 words.

*Michael*

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