

# ST ANDREW'S ST BARTHOLOMEW'S

## Vicars Blog

Happy New Year church! I received a chortle from the staff on Tuesday when I mentioned that 'New Year' is just a social construct so it doesn't really exist! It is, nevertheless, a psychological helpful 'reset' – good riddance to the horrible bits of last year, thank you for the good bits, and here's hoping for more good bits in 2024. I only learned this week that it wasn't until 1752 that we actually celebrated New Year at this time of year! Until then it was March 25<sup>th</sup>, trying to sync up with the Spring equinox. That is why our tax year persists at that time -although it shifted to 6<sup>th</sup> April apparently because otherwise the government would have lost 11 tax days when the move from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar took place!

We were so thrilled to share our second Christmas with everyone at Churchdown. Driving down to my wife's farm in Salisbury on Christmas afternoon, I was filled with thankfulness at so many gospel opportunities throughout the month of December. December always presents a wonderful juxtaposition between the darkness of the year, with the light and hope that is offered in Jesus. Thank you to everyone who helped to make all of our events possible and, let's keep praying for those seeds of the gospel to find good soil in people's lives (Mat 13).

Can I encourage us all to get behind our 24/7 prayer event starting this Sunday? It would be heartening if you could consider signing up for an hour, most days of the week. Why not substitute your usual 'quiet time' slot and use that to listen, pray, and spend time in God's presence as you seek Him for our church and for our community in 2024. I will be opening up the Chapel at 6am Mon-Fri next week and we hope to have it open until 10pm most days. If it doesn't suit to pray in the Chapel, just pray wherever is convenient for you.

Can I also encourage us to invite someone to Alpha starting next Thursday? If we all just invited one person, it could make a life-changing impact on dozens of people's lives as they encounter Jesus. Remember, don't write off asking your friend/neighbour/work colleague because of how you think they might respond. Just leave their response in God's hands, pray before you ask them and don't worry at all if they say no. I know someone who was asked 7 times over a period of years before he said yes and it changed his life forever! Here's to a great 2024 – in the Lord's strength and not ours.

## **Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> January**

*Healthy Habits*

**9am** Communion service at St A's

**10.30am** All-age service with  
Communion at St A's

**7pm** Space to Live In worship night  
at St A's

## **Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> January**

*Church of Tomorrow – Matthew 16*

**9am** Communion service at St A's

**10.30am** Informal Worship with  
Children's and Youth Groups

**3:30pm** Evensong St B's

## **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> Jan**

7pm STA Youth

## **Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> Jan**

1:30pm Bereavement Café

## **Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> Jan**

11:30am BLT (Babies, Lunch and  
Toddlers)

## **Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> Jan**

10am Thursday Knitters

10am Holy Communion at St A's

7:30pm Zoom Prayer Meeting

7:15pm Alpha

## **Friday 12<sup>th</sup> Jan**

9:30am Friday Minis Return

12noon CAMEO

Please visit [www.stastb.church/calendar](http://www.stastb.church/calendar)  
for the most up to date information.

## **Pastoral Care**

As part of our Christian community, we provide mutual support for one another. Much of this happens informally with friends within the church and through the connect groups. However, sometimes people will have need for more personal support and encouragement either as a 'one-off chat' or on a more ongoing basis. We have a pastoral care team who can provide this type of care. Please contact Nigel Roe (Team Leader) on 07780 994827 or Rosi White on 07426357967.

## **Churches Together**

This winter, we invite you to embrace the cosy ambience of our Winter Warmers Initiative. Join us at St. John's Church every Thursday from 12:30 pm to 2 pm until March 21, 2024. Delight in a variety of soups, freshly baked bread, delectable cakes, and steaming hot drinks! Take this opportunity to connect with others, fostering friendships over heart-warming meals. We look forward to sharing the warmth with you!

## Notices

### **24-7 Week of Prayer Sunday 7th January 1pm - Sunday 14th January 1pm:**

We are really excited to be starting our 24-7 week of prayer this Sunday. Here's how you can get involved:

- **Join us for 'Space to Live In'** - This Sunday (7pm-9pm - tea and coffee from 6.30pm) we will be kicking off the week with an extended time of worship and prayer. Come expectant as we have an informal time together.
- **Find time to pray in the week** - We want to invite everyone to spend some time during the week in prayer. You can do that individually or in groups (e.g. families or Connect Groups) and either in the prayer room at St Andrews or in another place that works for you. Select a time during the week and sign-up [here](#)
- **Tell us what you receive** - During the week we want to listen to what God has for us individually and corporately. Pick up one of the 24/7 prayer postcards and use the space on the back to write down/draw what you are sensing. Drop it back to us in the postbox in the foyer.

For more information please check out: <http://www.stastb.church/247-prayer>

**Alpha 2024:** Alpha is for anyone who's curious. The fun, free and friendly sessions are designed to encourage conversation and explore the basics of the Christian faith in an open and informal environment. No question is out of bounds, and you are free to discuss as much or as little as you wish. We'll be meeting Thursday evenings at St Andrew's Church at 7:15pm. An evening meal with refreshments will be provided. Once registered, we'll send you the details you need to know. We will be running 9 sessions over 10 weeks. Visit [www.stastb.church/alpha](http://www.stastb.church/alpha) for more info and to sign up!

**Women's Breakfast:** The next women's breakfast is taking place on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> Jan. Shelia Johnson will be speaking - to sign up, visit <https://stastb.churchsuite.com/events/hlzpqsqf>

**Discipleship Questionnaire:** In January we'll be launching our 'Healthy Habits' discipleship series, and will be preaching through them in all our all-age services plus other services. As part of that, we have a discipleship questionnaire we would love you to fill out before the end of Jan - the link for the questionnaire is <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FN2RR5S>

**John Positive,** a faithful member of our church for many years, died peacefully on 30<sup>th</sup> December. His Funeral is provisionally planned for Fri 26<sup>th</sup> Jan, 11am at St Andrews. Please hold his family in your prayers.

## Eco Tip

WASTE: Were the Christmas gifts not quite what you wanted? Don't throw away to landfill but pass on to someone else, re-purpose or donate to charity.

## Events

Our website calendar is a good place to find out what's happening throughout the year. Visit <https://www.stastb.church/calendar>

### 2024

10<sup>th</sup> Jan – BLT Returns

11<sup>th</sup> Jan – Alpha Starts 7:15pm

20<sup>th</sup> Jan – Women's Breakfast

27<sup>th</sup> Jan – Men's Breakfast

St Andrew's Church Centre, Station Road, Churchdown, Gloucester  
GL3 2JT

[www.stastb.church](http://www.stastb.church) 01452 712154

Office hours: Monday to Friday, 9.30am - 12.30pm

Closed Tuesday 9.30am - 11.30am

### Contact information

Admin: [admin@stastb.church](mailto:admin@stastb.church)

Children's and Families: Kate Smith, [children@stastb.church](mailto:children@stastb.church)

Churchwarden: Andrew Smith, [andrew.smith@stastb.church](mailto:andrew.smith@stastb.church)

Churchwarden: Celia Anderson, [celia.anderson@stastb.church](mailto:celia.anderson@stastb.church)

Communications Coordinator: Adam Greenland, [comms@stastb.church](mailto:comms@stastb.church)

Operations Manager: Matt Waterfield, [matt@stastb.church](mailto:matt@stastb.church)

Pastoral/Bereavement Support: Nigel Roe, 07780 994827 or Rosi White,  
07426357967

Treasurer: [treasurer@stastb.church](mailto:treasurer@stastb.church)

Vicar: John Monaghan, [vicar@stastb.church](mailto:vicar@stastb.church), 07936601497

Worship: Rhi Reeves, [rhiannon.reeves@stastb.church](mailto:rhiannon.reeves@stastb.church)

Youth: Jamie Flores, [jamie@stastb.church](mailto:jamie@stastb.church)

*Forward any notices to Adam.*



Follow us!

For all the latest information and useful links, scan the QR code.