



**Cobham & Luddesdowne**  
*News*     *Christmas 2023*

## **PARISH of COBHAM & LUDDESDOWNE with DODE**

**Priest-in-Charge** – The Rev'd Canon Alyson Davie

For Funeral enquiries please contact Alyson Phone no. 01474-812068  
email:- [alyson@stjohnsmeopham.co.uk](mailto:alyson@stjohnsmeopham.co.uk)

(Rest Day: Friday)

**Associate Priest** – The Rev'd Pam Davies

For Wedding, Baptism and all other enquiries please contact Pam  
The Vicarage, Battle Street, Cobham, Kent. DA12 3DB

Phone no 01474-394515 email:- [rev.pamdavies@sky.com](mailto:rev.pamdavies@sky.com) (NB new number)

(Current work days are Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday)

**Pastoral assistant**

Janet Weaver, 36 Highview, Vigo Village, DA13 0RR (01732) 823936

**Church Office** Phone no. 01474 813495

### **Church Officers of St. Mary Magdalene, Cobham**

**Lay Chair**

Hilary Savage

**Churchwarden**

Hilary Savage (01634) 723027

**PCC Secretary**

Ron Chamberlain (01474) 814250

**Treasurer**

Jeffrey Julie-Rusz 07946 249021

**Deanery Synod**

Hilary Savage

### **Church Officers St Peter and St. Paul, Luddesdowne**

**Lay Chair**

Colin Campbell

**Treasurer**

Janet Weaver (01732) 823936

### **Parochial Church Council Members**

**Cobham**

Peter Balanck

Ron Chamberlain

Ann Clarke

David Palmer

**Luddesdowne**

Jill Beety

Colin Campbell

Sue Campbell

Janet Weaver

SUBMISSIONS Cobham and Luddesdowne News is a community magazine produced by and for the residents of Cobham, Sole Street and Luddesdowne.

**Please send material for inclusion by the 15th of the month preceding publication to [editorialcln@gmail.com](mailto:editorialcln@gmail.com)**

**Cover photograph Adrian Whiteing (Frosty outside Cobham Church)**

**Printed by Wested Logistics Limited 01474 361615**  
**sales@westedpress.com**



**December 2023**

Hello – and welcome to all newcomers to the Parishes. I hope you enjoy this complementary edition of Cobham and Luddesdowne News. Each year the Parish Council funds two editions, for every home, at Christmas and Easter. If you'd like to subscribe for a regular monthly copy then please contact me at [editorialcln@gmail.com](mailto:editorialcln@gmail.com)

As usual the magazine is full of info about local events and updates on local projects. The members of both our WI groups have been busy providing refreshments at the many local events, helping with fundraising and producing various works of art and produce, sometimes both at once! We are lucky to have so many clubs and associations in our parishes; including the Monday Club, the North Kent Embroiderers, Cobham Gardeners, the Bell Ringers and Choirs—details of which can be found on the pages of this magazine. We also have some fantastic volunteers in the villages who help to keep them blooming and tidy– thank you.

As we come to the end of another year I'd like to thank everyone involved in helping with the magazine each month. The wonderful contributors and advertisers, Camilla for proofreading, Adrian for his beautiful front covers, Kalle the distributor and the deliverers . Thanks also to Janet for all she does behind the scenes and for organising the printing with Wested.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Peaceful 2024 to all. Tina

### **Used Postage Stamps**

Please drop off your used postage stamps into the boxes placed in the churches of Cobham and Luddesdowne. They are being collected for the R.N.I.B and we need to fill the boxes!  
If possible the stamps need a border of about 1cm all round. Thank you.

A letter from the Revd. Canon Alyson Davie

How do you cope with the unforeseen?

There is an old saying that goes 'If you want to make God laugh, tell him your plans.' This saying comes to mind if you read the accounts of the birth of Jesus in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. In these accounts we find that the plans that Jesus' parents, Mary and Joseph had for their lives were constantly disrupted as unexpected things happened to them.

At the start of these accounts, we have Mary and Joseph engaged to be married and planning their new life together in Nazareth. However, Mary then gets visited by an angel, who informs her that she is going to become pregnant with the Son of God before being married to Joseph. This then occurs. As a result, Joseph is faced with the challenge of accepting (a) that Mary's story is true and (b) that the baby Mary is carrying is going to be God's Son and not his.

After a further visit from an angel (this time in a dream) Joseph accepts the situation and he and Mary await the new arrival. They then must unexpectedly make the journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem to comply with a Roman census and when they get to Bethlehem there's no guest accommodation available, so Mary has to give birth in the place where the animals are kept and lay Jesus in an animal feeding trough.

Mary, Joseph, and Jesus then start their family life together in Bethlehem, but some two years later they have to flee as refugees to Egypt because Herod, the Jewish king at the time, wants to kill Jesus who he sees as a threat to his rule. Eventually when Herod died, they return to Nazareth.

What is important to note, however, is that the accounts are crystal clear that although what took place did not happen according to Mary and Joseph's plans, they did happen exactly as God had planned and had announced in advance through the Old Testament prophets. God is in charge and what happens fulfils his good purposes for Mary and Joseph, for the salvation of humanity, and for the renewal of the whole of creation.

This is good news for us today because it reminds us that what happens to us is also a result of God's good plans for us and for the whole world.

Over the past few years, the plans of all of us have been disrupted because of the impact of Covid 19. Last year we saw the unforeseen invasion of Ukraine, which has led to the continuing fighting in that country, millions of Ukrainians having to unexpectedly leave their homes. Then all this means a huge jump in the cost of energy and an acute cost of living crisis in this country. This year we saw the attack by Hamas on southern Israel and the subsequent response by the Israel Defence Force, with a resultant rise in ethnic tensions around the world and the continuing threat that the conflict will spread. None of this was what we were looking for or what we had planned, but just as happened to the Holy Family in the Christmas story, it was not unexpected by God. Cont'd on page 5

He has always known it would happen and he will make it work out for our good if (like Joseph and Mary) we accept that he knows what he is doing and seek his help and guidance for our lives. In Luke, Mary says to God 'let it be to me according to your word.' This Christmas we need to learn to imitate her example. C S Lewis once wrote that with God 'there are no accidents.' The message for us this Christmas and for the year to come is simple.

Whatever happens, God knows what he is doing and it is upon that truth that we can trust our lives.

With all good wishes for Christmas and the coming year.

Alyson

### **ST MARY'S CHURCH ROOM, SOLE STREET**

I thought I would take this opportunity to update the community of what is happening to St Mary's Room, Tin Tabernacle in Sole Street.

For over 10 years the Local Fundraising Group (LFG) have worked determinedly in raising funds to restore the building. The Chair, Su Rowe and the committee have been faithfully and tirelessly, working year in and year out. To Su and the committee, the Parochial Church Council (PCC), the clergy, and the Diocese would like to say a BIG THANK YOU for all you have done. We would not be in the position of starting work on the building if it wasn't for this group.

Back in early summer we received great news of a £150 thousand grant from The Lower Thames Crossing. This grant has now provided the opportunity to start work but there is still a lot to be done. As the building belongs to the Diocese, who gives the local church full responsibility, any alterations or work undertaken must be with the permission of the PCC. The PCC decided to set up a special Task Group comprising of 3 members from each of the following groups – The PCC, Parish Council, and the Local Fundraising group.

The sole purpose of this Task group is to focus on the work to be done and for the PCC to consider and agree on recommendations from this group. This releases the Fundraising group to concentrate and focus on fundraising which is integral for the building to be completed. A job they have done so well.

By the time you read this a new architect and Project Manger will have been appointed. With God's Blessing we will be starting work hopefully by mid Spring or sooner. May I say a big thank you to all who have and are still supporting this work. We could not have done this without you. Blessings

The Revd Pam Davies, Associate minister and Chairperson of the Task Group.

# ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH

WROTHAM ROAD, MEOPHAM DA13 0AA

## CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

Free entry,  
donations to St  
John's church  
funds welcomed.  
Come and see!



**Sunday 3rd to Sunday 10th December**  
Christmas trees will be on display for one week  
from 9am – 4 pm Monday to Saturday and  
after Sunday Morning Services, 12 noon – 4pm

On Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December from 4pm we  
will auction the trees. Advance bids may  
be left in church. Free local delivery, if  
required. Please contact Ruth Blake for  
more information, telephone 01474  
812097 or 07855 352478



MPC 1023

### **Luddesdown & District Rights of Way Group.**

We are a small friendly group that usually walks from The Cock Inn, Henley Street, Luddesdown, Gravesend DA13 0XB, at 11am on Wednesdays. We walk at a gentle pace for some 90 minutes in beautiful countryside. Occasionally we lead weekend walks.

With four Socials a year in Luddesdown Village Hall and a twice yearly Newsletter, we would be delighted if you joined us for a walk or two. Becoming a member costs £7 per person a year.

Please contact Walks Co-ordinator Janet Ferguson, preferably by email [janetferguson@hotmail.fr](mailto:janetferguson@hotmail.fr) . Or Chairman Gerry Minister on 01474 813 376.

## Sole Street WI

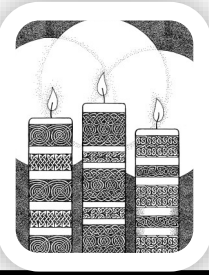
Sole Street WI members have been much engaged in preparing produce and craft for our recent Christmas Extravaganza. Our December meeting is a relaxed and low key lunch in the St Mary Church Room to celebrate Christmas together with guests from neighbouring institutes. It is always huge fun! However the order of the day is the members' vote on the Federation's Resolutions Shortlist for 2023:

**Dental Health Matters** as there is a chronic shortage of NHS dentists and people are suffering health issues as a result, we call on the Government to increase investment in training & retaining dentists and review current inadequate NHS contracts to ensure everyone can access an NHS dentist.

**Impacts of Poor Housing Conditions** which can have a deleterious effect on health, safety & quality of life can disproportionately affect most vulnerable groups. We call on the Government to boost housing standards & regulations, increase funding for housing regulations, supply of affordable secure housing and strengthen collaboration with local authorities, housing associations & other relevant stakeholders to develop strategies that address local housing.

**Say 'No' to Gambling Advertising:** Harm caused by excessive gambling is a global problem. Some countries are already addressing this by banning advertising. NFWI calls on members, the Government, regulators, NHS, educationalists and gambling charities to work together towards achieving complete ban on gambling advertising. This will reduce gambling harm, save NHS money, protect family relationships, decrease number of suicides around 400 p.a.

**Improving Outcomes for Women in Criminal Justice System** is urgent need to radically reform decision making in respect of women in criminal justice system, in particular pregnant women and women with children. We urge cross government collaboration to deliver on 2018 female offender strategy by setting goals, robust governance & performance measures to reduce number of women who committed non-violent offences from being imprisoned.



For information on all our activities please contact Yvonne  
01474 813455

Molly Isaacs

# **Complete** *Family* **Law**

**Complete Family Law Ltd is a modern and innovative law firm based in north Kent. We can offer appointments at our offices, via remote methods including Zoom or telephone, with home visits also available.**

**With our friendly team of expert Solicitors and Legal Executives, Complete Family Law can assist with:**

- **Divorce**
- **Wills and Probate**
- **Financial Applications**
- **Children Issues and Applications**
- **Disputes between unmarried couples**
- **Family Law Act Applications (Injunctions)**
- **Disputes within the wider family**
- **Lasting Powers of Attorney**

**0330 223 2016 (Brasted & Cobham)  
0330 223 2018 (Otford)**

**[info@completefamilylawltd.co.uk](mailto:info@completefamilylawltd.co.uk)  
[www.completefamilylawltd.co.uk](http://www.completefamilylawltd.co.uk)**





## **THE TUESDAY POP-IN**

**Meetings are held at the Leather Bottle on the second Tuesday of the month from 10.30 till 12 noon; all are welcome to join us for a relaxed chat and coffee.**

**Next pop-in Tuesday 9th January**

**CONTACT: MARY PALMER - 01474 816788**



*Booking for the Pop-In Christmas lunch closed on 26 November.*



The first Church Room Coffee Morning of 2024 will be on 11th January and will be supporting The Alzheimer's Society in memory of Mike Diddams.

### **Diary of events in St Mary's Church Room Sole Street**

DAY	Event	Date	Contact
Monday	<b>Monday Club for the retired</b>	Every week 2–4 pm	Brian Williams 814049
Tuesday	U3A Choir <b>Singing Group</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> in the month 9.45-11.45. am	Sheryl Diddams 813476
Tuesday	<b>WI</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> in the month 7.30–10.00 pm	Yvonne Martin 813455
Wednesday	<b>Midweek Worship</b>	Every week 9.00–10.45am	Ron Chamberlain 814250
Thursday	<b>LFG Coffee Morning</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> in the month 10.30 - 12.00	Su Rowe 814560
Friday	<b>U3A Sign Language</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> in the month 2.00-3.30pm	Roy Lingham 815908



# Oakwood Garden Care

Your reliable gardening service

Does your garden need some TLC? Would you like to sit back and enjoy your garden without having to do all the hard work?

Your garden is precisely that, “yours” .

We listen to our customers and tailor each project to their individual needs and requirements. We are a small, family run business who pride ourselves on offering a high quality garden service - whether you need us for a one-off job, or would like to book us for a regular maintenance program? The choice is yours.

Competitive rates with prices starting from as little as £20 per hour.

All work undertaken including:

And much more - no job is considered too small

For a free quote, please call 07709 328 979

We are available week days, weekends and even Bank Holidays

Email: [oakwoodgardencare@gmail.com](mailto:oakwoodgardencare@gmail.com) [www.oakwoodgardencare.co.uk](http://www.oakwoodgardencare.co.uk)

## Prestige Property Maintenance

*Old fashioned standards of customer service and a high quality craftsman finish to all work undertaken*

- Repairs and renovations, internal and external
- Painting, decorating and tiling
- Shelving and cupboards made to measure
- Furniture and fitted kitchen repairs and restorations
- Gardening, fencing, paths and patios

No job too small – References available on request



Contact Kevin by telephone or email to arrange a visit to discuss your requirements

Telephone: 07765 405641 Email: [prestigemaintenance@outlook.com](mailto:prestigemaintenance@outlook.com)

### **THE MEADOW ROOM COBHAM**

#### **AVAILABLE FOR HIRE**

Hire rates start at £36.50 for a session

Contact us or visit the website for full details

Discount for parish residents

For bookings, call  
01474 815319

Or email

[bookings@meadowroom.org.uk](mailto:bookings@meadowroom.org.uk)

[www.meadowroom.org.uk](http://www.meadowroom.org.uk)

Registered Charity No 228007

For Hire

### **St Mary's Church Room Sole Street**

£6 per hour

Use of small Kitchen

Bookings and Enquiries

**01474 814560**

# Lewis Solomon

## Funeral Service



**The oldest independently owned and family run funeral directors in Gravesend and surrounding towns**

Especially for the first time, any time of the day or night you can talk to us  
We will attend to everything, we can provide for all of your requirements  
We have a private chapel of rest and can provide a fleet of Hearses and Limousines to compliment a dignified occasion

**19 DARNLEY ROAD, GRAVESEND, KENT, DA11 0RZ**

*24 hour personal service  
parking available on site  
bespoke funeral plans*

**01474 352261**

Email: [office@lewissolomon.co.uk](mailto:office@lewissolomon.co.uk)  
**[www.lewissolomon.co.uk](http://www.lewissolomon.co.uk)**



**GULLANDS**

SOLICITORS

Agricultural and Farming Law

Farm Sales and Purchases

Conveyancing

Divorce and Family

Employment Law

Wills, Estates and Tax Planning

Accident Claims

Medical Negligence

Criminal Law

Road Traffic Offences

Commercial Property

Construction Law

Landlord and Tenant

Dispute Resolution

Company and Commercial Law

Health & Safety Prosecutions

Business Defence

Licensing

Notarial Services

[info@gullands.com](mailto:info@gullands.com) [www.gullands.com](http://www.gullands.com)



Whitehall Place | 47 The Terrace | Gravesend | Kent | DA12 2DL | 01474 887688

16 Mill Street | Maidstone | Kent | ME15 6XT | 01622 689700

# North Kent Embroiderers

Hello Everyone,

In October we thoroughly enjoyed a talk by Dr Susan Kay-Williams CEO of the Royal School of Needlework <https://royal-needlework.org.uk/> Her talk was about the development of blackwork which is a form of embroidery usually worked in black thread on a white background, but Susan also gave us a lot of background information about the RSN. She told us how their studio was honoured to have been



commissioned to produce nine pieces of embroidery for the coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla. These were the King's Robe of State, the Queen's Robe of Estate, the Anointing Screen, the Stole Royal and Girdle, the Chairs of Estate and the Throne Chairs. The RSN teaches all its students to work in the same way so that in times of pressure one embroiderer can take over from another and stitch in exactly the same way. The back of work is always finished neatly!

The history of Blackwork goes back to medieval times when both men and women did embroidery. Catherine of Aragon embroidered King Henry VIII's under linens but men would have worked on his over garments. In Elizabethan times, black and white were 'power colours' and blackwork on clothing was extremely popular as a result.

By the 1950's the RSN linked blackwork with goldwork to produce stunning images and more recently, blackwork has become less about pattern and more about using the technique to produce light and shade on pictorial pieces.


We have also been working hard to make stars for a charity Christmas tree project. As you can see from the picture, we have been working to a colour scheme of red, silver and gold in the hope that we can create a beautiful festive display.

Our latest postcard challenge was called 'Fruit and Vegetables'. We had a good display of these which were eagerly swapped among our members who had taken part.



If you would like to join our group or would just like to find out a bit more about us then please pay us a visit - look at our website <https://northkentembroiderers.co.uk/> or email [info@northkentembroiderers.co.uk](mailto:info@northkentembroiderers.co.uk)

or contact our Chairman, Eileen on 01474 324734 Happy stitching, Karen

  @kmjacupuncture



# ACUPUNCTURE

ELECTRO-ACUPUNCTURE

CUPPING

GUA SHA

[www.kmjacupuncture.com](http://www.kmjacupuncture.com)

[kate@kmjacupuncture.com](mailto:kate@kmjacupuncture.com)

01474 612 057

Station Approach, Wrotham Road,  
Meopham, DA13 0HP

A modern approach to health using  
ancient wisdom and healing



British  
Acupuncture  
Council Member

professional  
standards  
authority  
accredited register

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sciatica  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General fatigue          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Muscle aches & pains    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Allergies | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Menopausal symptoms      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anxiety & Depression    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Insomnia  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Musculoskeletal problems | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fertility & IVF support |



## Professional Domestic Cleaning Services

Are you a busy mum?

Working long hours?

Just need extra help?

Give us a call for reliable

DBS checked staff and

fully insured service!

07545 455742

[sophie@capablecleaners.co.uk](mailto:sophie@capablecleaners.co.uk)

[www.capablecleaners.co.uk](http://www.capablecleaners.co.uk)

## Sunday Afternoon Club at the St John's Centre October to December 2023

8 October:  
Jesus at the  
Wedding Party



12 November (at 4pm):  
Jesus and the  
Fishermen



10 December:  
Angel Stories



3.00pm on Sunday Afternoons:  
Songs and Stories, Prayers and  
Games, Activities and Food! For  
Children aged 0-10 and their  
adults. For further information  
contact Jill on 01474 813632 or  
Jan on 01732 823753



**The Parishes of Meopham with Nurstead and Cobham with  
Luddesdowne & Dode**

**Teaching programme for Autumn Winter 2023/2024**

During the autumn and winter of 2023/2024, we shall be exploring Paul's letter to the Romans, with the help of the Bible Society's Romans Course. This will be made up of ten sessions, each of which will consist of a video presentation of a section of Romans by the New Testament scholar Andrew Ollerton. It will run at the St John's Centre on Tuesday afternoons from 2.00-3.15pm, and by Zoom on Tuesday evenings from 7.45-9.00pm.

**Course programme**

**December**

- 5 Hope – Romans 8
- 19 Mystery – Romans 9-11
- Christmas and New Year break

**January**

- 30 Devotion – Romans 12

**February**

- 6 Community – Romans 13-14
  - 20 Mission – Romans 15-16
- If you have queries or would like further details, please contact Martin Davie at

The poster is for a Christmas concert by the Higham Choral Group. It features a decorative border with a leafy wreath at the top and a lantern with a candle at the bottom right. The text is centered and uses a mix of bold and italicized fonts. The concert is on Saturday 16th December at 6.30pm at St John's Church, Hermitage Road, Higham. The ticket price is £8.00, payable at the door, and includes light refreshments. Contact information is provided at the bottom.

*Higham Choral Group*  
**Christmas Concert**  
*lots of lovely Christmas music  
and carols for all*

**Saturday 16th December  
6.30pm  
St John's Church,  
Hermitage Road, Higham**  
**£8.00 - pay at the door**  
*includes light refreshments*

for further information phone 01634 718285  
or email [kateiw@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:kateiw@tiscali.co.uk)

[www.highamchoral.org.uk](http://www.highamchoral.org.uk)

## **BELL RINGING by Peter Hartley**

If only I was as knowledgeable as author Ronald Blythe (1922 – 2023) who also wrote an entertaining and informed weekly Wormingford diaries article in the Church Times. I often wonder what I might write just once a month. An old Country Life magazine gave me a thought with an article on the great Saxon church tower at Earls Barton in Northamptonshire. Built in AD 970 Christopher Winn in his book “I Never Knew That About England’s Country Churches” (published in 2014) describes it as “the loveliest tower in England”.

So old and superb is the Earls Barton church tower that it also features in the “Shell Guide to English Parish Churches” (1993) and “England’s Thousand Best Churches “ by Simon Jenkins (1999) which I never travel without. But Simon Jenkins never mentions bells and having been loaned “Towers and Bells of Britain” by Ernest Morris (1955) I now know that they have a ring of 8 bells. Knowing little of Northamptonshire how exciting it would be to get there and have a ring.

Mr. Morris’s book includes chapters on West Towers, Twin Towers, Spires, Round Towers, Leaning Towers and Detached Towers. What a variety of towers for ringers to climb and each housing its own particular ring of bells which Mr. Morris describes. Rings of bells are very varied being of different weights and of various numbers of bells, usually 6 or 8, some of 10 and grand rings of 12 bells. Some go easily and some are tricky to ring and hard work. The lengths of the bell ropes vary too depending on the location of the bells and the ringers in the tower. All these variables are part of the challenge of ringing.

In Cobham we are fortunate with a good ring of 6 bells hung on a firm metal frame. There is a reasonable length of rope and we stand evenly spaced in a circle up in the ringing room so by eye and ear we can co-ordinate our striking (sounding of the individual bells in the ever changing pattern of sound).

As my thoughts meander in Cobham College our roof is being renewed and today, after plenty of rain, the sun is shining on the roofers. I must get out too before Storm Ciarán arrives and then in due time another Christmas.

Happy Christmas from the Cobham bell ringers.





## **Cobham's Register**

### **Baptism**

Henry Michael KNIGHT was baptised on the 29th October 2023.  
We welcome Henry into the Church family.

## **Luddesdowne's Register**

### **Funeral**

**Christine Avis KING (known as Chris)** was born on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1944 and died on the 21<sup>st</sup> September 2023 aged 79 years old. Chris' funeral took place on the 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023 in Luddesdowne church followed by burial in the churchyard, where she was buried in the grave with her husband David Percival KING. The service was conducted by our Priest-in-Charge The Rev'd Canon Alyson DAVIE. Our sympathy and prayers go to Christine's daughter Andrée, son Andrew, family members and friends.

## **ADVENT WINDOWS**

As we approach the festive season and the celebration of Christmas Cobham will be showing each day of advent by number and a pictorial interpretation of a Christmas carol in the front window of the houses . Between 6.00pm and 8.00pm the window display will be revealed on their day of choice lit behind or around the interior display, so by 24<sup>th</sup> December all the 24 windows will be on view between those two hours. When you read this and haven't yet been asked to take part and would like to then please contact Rosemary Dymond on 01474814143 and suggest your choice of carol and advent day .

## **MEOPHAM LIBRARY WRITING GROUP**

**Meopham Library Writing Group** meets again on **Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023** at **10am** until about midday. Each month a different writing theme is chosen for a short story, poem or an article containing less than 1000 words. There is also a writing challenge, when a six or seven words need to be included in a couple of short sentences.

If you are interested in writing, you are invited to join us and both beginners and experienced writers are equally welcome. Writing stories or poems is a very enjoyable activity and special family memories can also be recorded for future generations.

For more information, please ring **01474 813379** or just turn up at Meopham Library. Meetings in the New Year 2024 will be on 4<sup>th</sup> January, 1<sup>st</sup> February and 7<sup>th</sup> March.

**Welcome to Cobham, Luddesdowne  
and Sole Street Churches.**

**Services during December**



***(\*Please note changes/new, dates & times to previous years)***

**Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December**

**10:30am Holy Communion, Luddesdowne**

**Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December**

**10:30am Holy Communion (BCP), Cobham Church**

**\*4pm Carols by Candlelight, Luddesdowne**

**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December**

**10:30am Holy Communion, Luddesdowne**

**\*4pm Christingle Service, Cobham**

**Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December Christmas Eve**

**10:30am Crib Service, Cobham**

**\*11:00pm Midnight Holy Communion, Cobham**

**Monday 25<sup>th</sup> December Christmas Day**

**10:30am Family Christmas Communion, Luddesdowne**

**Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> December**

**\*10:30am Joint Holy Communion, St John's Meopham**

**Midweek services in Sole Street Church Room**

**9:30am 6<sup>th</sup> December - Holy Communion,**

**13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Informal Morning Prayer**

**St John's Meopham with St Mildred's Nurstead Church**  
**Services during December 2023**

We will be holding a **Christmas Tree Festival** from Sunday 3 Dec - Sunday 10 Dec. The trees will be on display in St John's Church on Sundays from 12 noon - 4pm and Monday – Saturday, 9am-4pm except where there is a service/event in Church.



**Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December Advent Sunday**

9.45am Morning Worship for Advent Sunday at St John's  
11.30am Holy Communion at St Mildred's

**Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December** 10am Holy Communion in St John's Centre

**Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December**

9.45am Parish Communion at St John's  
11.30am Mattins at St Mildred's  
4pm Sunday Afternoon Club at St John's (for all ages)

**Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December** 10am Holy Communion in St John's Centre

**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December**

10.30am Family Worship & Carols at St Mildred's  
4pm Christmas Carols by Candlelight at St John's

**Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> December** 10am Holy Communion in St John's Centre

**Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December Christmas Eve**

4pm Crib Service at St John's  
11.00pm Joint Christmas Communion at St John's

**Monday 25<sup>th</sup> December Christmas Day.**

9.45am Joint Christmas Worship at St John's

**Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> December NO** 10am Holy Communion

**Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> December**

10.30am Joint Holy Communion at St John's.  
Please note this service is the only service today for Meopham with Nurstead & Cobham with Luddesdowne & Dode.

## **BRITAIN in BLOOM—Rosemary Dymond**

Cobham village took part once again in this competition which judges small and large villages, towns and Boroughs across the south and southeast of England as far as Wiltshire. The village looked really attractive throughout the Spring and Summer based on the theme of Raspberry Ripple together with the most amazing growth of the wild flower banks and their display of cornflowers, daisies and poppies to name just 3 of the 12 varieties of wild-flowers that were growing there, in fact the judge made a special comment on their attraction to insects and it gained us extra points. Last year we gained 79 points out of 100 and this year 80 but that still gave us a silver gilt award, in fact we needed 85 or higher to achieve gold. Last year our points gained us first place and a trophy but this year we were beaten into second place by Coldred village near Shepherdswell in the Dover area which only has 173 residents which is about a third of our population. So next year there needs to be more community involvement to brighten up areas in our community areas and more along the Street, though it has to be said that the College received a glowing report about their display and allotments and the community value of their produce. So clean the tools over winter and let's set to for next year's Front of House and Britain in Bloom competitions.

# CHIROPODIST

HOME VISITING SERVICE

FOOT CARE AND ADVICE

IN THE COMFORT OF YOUR OWN HOME

HCPC registered chiropodist/podiatrist with over 20  
years' experience

Anna Mapp MSSCh MBChA

01474 812494 or 07977 465452



# HEDGE & FENCING SPECIALIST

ESTABLISHED FOR 20 YEARS

- ALL HEDGES AND SHRUBS TRIMMED, REDUCED AND REMOVED
- STUMP GRINDING SERVICE
- ALL STYLES OF FENCING SUPPLIED AND INSTALLED
- SLEEPERS AND DECKING SUPPLIED AND INSTALLED
- ALL STYLES OF GATES SUPPLIED AND INSTALLED

CALL MATTHEW ON:

**07796 416607**

OR 01732 822467 EMAIL: [mhlgardencare@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:mhlgardencare@yahoo.co.uk)

**FULL PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE,  
FREE ESTIMATES & REGISTERED  
WASTE CARRIER**



# TREE STUMP REMOVAL SERVICES

- FULLY INSURED
- REGISTERED WASTE CARRIER
- FREE ESTIMATES

CALL MATTHEW ON:

**07796 416607**

OR 01732 822467

OR EMAIL:

[mhlgardencare@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:mhlgardencare@yahoo.co.uk)



# A new level of home care

## GP led bespoke care

We get the basics right with the Right People, the Right Care at the Right Time.

Our staff are trained to the highest standard to enable them to provide a wide range of tasks within the home, to ensure you feel safe, comfortable and content.

We are dedicated to helping each individual maintain an active and independent lifestyle by focusing on current abilities, interest and needs.

### Some of our services include;

- Assistance with personal care
- Meal preparation
- Shopping
- Trips to friends and relatives
- Administration or assistance with medication
- Overnight care
- Companionship
- Leisure activities
- Housework
- Live-in 24hr care
- Holistic Services
- Complimentary GP Lifestyle Assessment.
- Social Prescribing

Carers  
required



## Get in touch

### Gravesham & Dartford

50 The Grove, Gravesend, DA12 1DP

T: 01474 240909

T: 01322 537733

E: [hello@vitalityhomehealth.co.uk](mailto:hello@vitalityhomehealth.co.uk)

"Vitality Home Health Limited is in no way affiliated with VitalityLife Limited or VitalityHealth Limited"

# Vitality

home health

 Vitality Home Health  @Vitality\_Care



[www.vitalityhomehealth.co.uk](http://www.vitalityhomehealth.co.uk)

## **RIDE AND STRIDE 2023**

Thank you to everyone who sponsored me for the annual riding or striding event that is the major fund raising church activity of the year supported by the FRIENDS of KENT CHURCHES charity .Your generosity raised almost £3000 of which £980 was raised for Luddesdowne church, £960 from St. Mary's Church Room and £1068 from St. Mary Magdalene church in Cobham. Each of the churches will receive 50% of the sponsorship back and the Friends of Kent Churches keeps 50% to fund grants that from which our churches can then apply.

The 9<sup>th</sup> of September was certainly a hot but beautiful summer day and many folk locally made up teams of walkers to visit as many churches as possible before midday and with 10 churches open in Gravesend alone it was easier just to stay local in the heat of the day. Gravesham area certainly increased their church visitors that day.

As you know I prefer to cycle and I was constantly cooled as I pedalled along so to me it was just a wonderful ride in glorious warm sunshine. I managed to visit 56 churches in my 100 mile cycle across West Kent but not as many as a cyclist in East Kent who visited 80 churches! But while I am talking of numbers you may be interested to know that 2024 marks the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the FRIENDS of KENT CHURCHES so look out for your invitation to a very special service in a very special place next Autumn. Please mark next year's R&S in your diaries for 14<sup>th</sup> September.  
Rosemary Dymond

IT Solutions Kent Ltd

IT Support –

CCTV - Networking

0333 050 2446

[support@itsk.co.uk](mailto:support@itsk.co.uk)

## ***COBHAM TREE SURGERY***

All aspects of work undertaken

Tall & Dangerous Trees

Hedge trimming

£5 million Public liability insurance

Most waste organically recycled

Call for a free quotation:

07789261474

[Stuart@cobhamtreesurgery.co.uk](mailto:Stuart@cobhamtreesurgery.co.uk)

WWW.COBFHAMTREESURGERY.CO.UK  
KCC TRADING STANDARDS APPROVED

## **1<sup>st</sup> SOUTH STREET BOYS BRIGADE and GIRLS ASSOCIATION COMPANY**

Boys and girls aged 5-18 years are invited to join us for fun, craft, cooking, activities and games at 6pm until 7.30pm every Friday evening during term time at **South Street Baptist Church, Wrotham Road, DA13 0QJ** (next to Hope Hill Scout Camp).

The weekly subscription is £2 and the end of term is on 15<sup>th</sup> December.

Please visit: [www.BOYS-BRIGADE.ORG.UK](http://www.BOYS-BRIGADE.ORG.UK) or

[www.southstreetbaptist.org.uk](http://www.southstreetbaptist.org.uk) for more information. In the summer, there are outdoor activities and games, including camping at the Boys Brigade Honey Hill Camp in Maidstone and visits to the Boys Brigade Water Activities Centre in Tonbridge. For more information, please visit:

[www.thewac.org.uk](http://www.thewac.org.uk)

**SONG TIME** meets every **Monday morning** during term time, from 9.45am until 11am for families with babies and children under five at South Street Baptist Church. There are lots of toys, as well as art and craft activities, musical instruments and singing. Family admission is £1 and the end of term is on 11<sup>th</sup> December.

**Sunday services** at South Street Baptist Church begin at 10.45am and finish at about midday. The **Carols by Candlelight Service** will be on **Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December** at 4pm. For more information please ring 01474 815039

## **LUDESDOWN SOCIETY EVENTS**

at Luddesdown Village Hall, Luddesdown Road, Kent, DA13 0XE

**Christmas Party** - Sunday 10th December 2023, 2pm onwards

£2 per child. £5 per adult.

Party games, buffet & music.

Plus a visit from Santa

RSVP by 1st December



**New Year's Day Walk** – meet at 11am in hall carpark

Free Event. Mulled wine on arrival. Dogs welcome.

On return walkers are invited to stay for lunch (a donation towards food costs would be appreciated).

Follow us on Facebook & Instagram for all the latest events.





## December

### Winter frost

As we approach the shortest day of the year in December you will need to work hard to keep warm outside, such as digging and tree pruning. Check your winter protection and if you have a greenhouse make sure the heater is working. Hopefully there are not too many jobs left to do this year so you will have time for some fireside garden planning.

### Top 10 jobs this month

- 1 Check your winter protection structures are still securely in place
- 2 Check that greenhouse heaters are working
- 3 Insulate outdoor taps and prevent ponds from freezing
- 4 Prune open-grown apples and pears (but not those trained against walls)
- 5 Prune acers, birches and vines before Christmas to avoid bleeding
- 6 Harvest leeks, parsnips, winter cabbage, sprouts and remaining root crops
- 7 Deciduous trees and shrubs can still be planted and transplanted
- 8 Take hardwood cuttings
- 9 Keep mice away from stored produce
- 10 Reduce watering of houseplants

**On Wednesday 6th December at 7:00 pm for 7:30 pm** the Society will combine it's AGM, Annual Prize Giving, with a Christmas Get-Together, a celebration of the achievements of our worthy cup & trophy winners. If you are interested in joining why not come along and take the opportunity of finding out what the Society offers over a glass of wine and some festive nibbles!

At the AGM our 2024 schedule will be available giving full details of our shows and talks for 2024, plus details of a society coach trip to RHS Wisley.

**Looking for ideas for the Christmas Stocking?** Why not give 2024 membership of Cobham Gardeners - a year of fun for a very reasonable £10! For a membership application form email [cobhamgs@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:cobhamgs@hotmail.co.uk) For more information on Cobham Gardeners' Society email [cobhamgs@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:cobhamgs@hotmail.co.uk) or phone 01474-363315

# Consilio

## Partnership

Garden Design - gardens tailored to your needs

Landscaping - full landscaping service

Garden Maintenance - regular visits to one off tidy-ups

Consilio offer a comprehensive range of garden services through our team of fully qualified & experienced professionals.

Landscaping Services include:  
driveways-patios-fencing-decking-  
water features-planting-turfing-etc.

Please contact us with your enquiry or ask a member of staff

01474 247 077

07311 381858

[enq@consiliopartnership.com](mailto:enq@consiliopartnership.com)

[www.consiliopartnership.com](http://www.consiliopartnership.com)



**LOCAL FUNDING GROUP**  
**CHRISTMAS DOOR WREATH WORKSHOP**

You are invited to attend a Christmas Door Wreath Workshop  
at the Meadow Room, Cobham on  
Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> December from 10.00 am – 2.30 pm.

This will be a fund-raising event in aid of St. Mary's Church Room.

Tickets are £30. 00 and include all necessary materials –

Mechanics: 12" Naylor Base ring, fixing and wires

Foliages: Skimmia, Fir, Variegated Holly, Cupressus, Ivy, Christmas Box

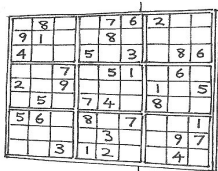
Decorations: Cones, dried orange slices, cinnamon sticks, berries and  
baubles.

Please bring a small kitchen knife, floristry or kitchen scissors, and a towel  
or cloth to work on. Include your favorite item such as ribbons, faux  
flowers, mistletoe, birds, bells or stars to add a personal touch to your  
work.

Tea, Coffee and cakes will be served but please bring your picnic lunch.

We can only offer 24 places and so please reserve your seat. Enjoy!

(This is a cash only event) Contact Sue Arnott (07783 285105) or  
Su Rowe (07557 990944)



R<sup>o</sup>N



*Sara preferred to let people work  
out the hymns for themselves*

## **LUDESDOWN VILLAGE HALL**

The hire charges are as follows:  
from £40 per session (please visit  
our website for full details)

**Concessions for parishioners  
and members of  
LUDESDOWN SOCIETY**

For bookings and enquiries please  
contact:

Colin Dickens 01474 814155 or

email [lvhbooking@gmail.com](mailto:lvhbooking@gmail.com)

## Absolute DIY Services

All aspects of DIY covered, from hanging a blind to a complete room makeover, painting / decorating, flooring, flat pack assembly, no job too small, and all at competitive prices.



Darren Lawrence  
Sole Street,  
07841 51 8255 / 01474 812853

## JOHN GREEN DECOR LTD

PROFESSIONAL PAINTERS  
& DECORATORS

INTERIOR, EXTERIOR  
& INSURANCE WORK  
ALL ASPECTS OF PAINTING  
AND DECORATING  
INCLUDING WALLPAPER  
HANGING, PAINT  
EFFECTS AND SPRAYING



Phone: **01474 871273**  
email: [sales@johngreendecor.co.uk](mailto:sales@johngreendecor.co.uk)  
website: [www.johngreendecor.co.uk](http://www.johngreendecor.co.uk)

## Stephen P Gay Memorials Inc. Horlocks



SPECIALISTS IN MONUMENTAL  
MASONRY  
**120 Old Road West  
Gravesend  
Kent, DA11 0LR  
Tel: 01474 321003**

## MEDWAY METALS LTD

Buyers of all scrap  
metal & car batteries

QUICK PAYMENT

**01634 297423**

UNIT 6 SHAMEL PARK, MEDWAY CENTRE EST.  
COMMISSIONERS ROAD, STROOD  
ME2 4HQ

## COBHAM AND LUDESDOWN WI

Following our August break, at our September 6th meeting we were treated to a fascinating talk by one of our members, Sue Cameron, with



the intriguing title 'The Magic of the Pyjama Fairies'. Standing behind her ironing board and with a number of colourful garments behind her, Sue proceeded to tell us all about the charity for which she volunteers. 'The Pyjama Fairies' was set up by two young mothers in 2015 and is the only UK charity making pyjamas and surgical gowns specially designed for babies and children up to the age of 16, who are having surgery or associated medical tests in hospital. There are strict rules about the pyjamas, which can contain no metal and which have to be made using colourful and age-appropriate fabrics. The fabric designs tend to be gender-specific and are one hundred per cent cotton. There are lots of health and safety considerations and the donors remain completely anonymous. There are 300 'fairies' making about 4,000 garments a year and supplying 150 hospitals.

Our October 4th meeting was preceded by a Ploughman's Lunch – always popular with our members, followed by our annual craft 'make', which this year introduced members to the craft of 'quilling', which comprises curling up or shaping narrow strips of coloured paper and sticking them onto card to create a picture. The November meeting was our Annual Autumn Show, where all of our talented members get the chance to display their art and craft skills and hope to win an award, or even a first, second or third place or a 'highly commended' for their work over the past year. We were delighted by the number of entries in the craft classes – over double the number entered in last year's show. Our judge, Mrs Jenny Way, had the difficult task of assessing the entries and had nothing but praise for the quality and skills on display. The Dorothy Kemp Trophy for highest overall points went to Kaye Wren. In second place was Kerry Smith and the 'Judge's Choice' award went to Anne Tobutt. Although there were fewer art entries this year, the quality was still very high, and our member's voted Sue Cameron's Canadian landscape painting as their favourite. Sue received the Irene Brierly Trophy. Jenny Brooker received the award for members' favourite painted greetings card and Liz Hulf also won with her amusing 'Celebration' photograph.

Cont'd on page 32

## **All Seasons garden Maintenance**

Local and reliable service

Grass and Hedge cutting, Border Maintenance, Pruning

Pressure washing,

Full public liability insurance

References available from existing customers

Contact John - Home: 01322 423063 (Based in Gravesend)

Mobile: 07951 429175 Email: boaz26@live.co.uk

**APEX PEST CONTROL**

Mole catching, Wasp nests, Rodents

24/7 service



## **AtTENTively Yours...**

Here to provide you with a fully personalised service

Catering for garden parties, corporate and sporting events

High specification - best quality equipment used

Site survey and no obligation quotation

**Freephone 0800 389 8298**

**Office 01474 815150 Mobile 07766 681151**



# Robin Hunter

Tree Surgery  
Garden Design  
Fencing & Gates

Tel: 07775 971380

Email: robinhunt1@hotmail.co.uk

- Professional, Affordable, Service
- Foils & Colour Specialists
- Cut & Blow Dry Specialists
- Wedding hair available on request
- Hair extension by appointment (Tuesday only)
- Late Evenings (Monday & Thursday's)

**£5 OFF PERMS & COLOURING**  
WITH THIS ADVERT



**RAILWAY CUTTINGS**  
HAIR STYLISTS

Station Approach, Meopham, Kent - Telephone: 01474 813378

Cont'd from page 29

Our 'Knit and Natter' group, led by Jill Beety, together with other local knitters have been knitting (and crocheting) their socks off to create the wonderful Remembrance Day decorations on display in November in Cobham village and they were delighted that the BBC South East News came along to interview them, photograph the displays and show them on their 6.30 local news on 9th November.

We are all looking forward now to our 'Festive Tea' on 6th December when we welcome children from Cobham Primary School, who will be coming along to entertain us with some festive songs.

Our programme next year will begin on January 3rd with a talk by local historian, Christoph Bull, entitled 'The Griffin, the Horse and the Harp' and on February 7th we welcome Sharon Lynn, who will be telling us all about 'The Gifts of Dogs'. *Jenny Brooker (Secretary)*

### The Robin on my Christmas Card

The Robin on my Christmas Card

Upon a postbox, red –

He fixed me with a gaze quite hard

And this is what he said:

“O, viewer of this Christmas card

I bet that you don't know

Why I upon this card am here

To bring a yuletide glow?”

I said to him, “O birdie, do

Reveal your secret deep

I see you all the yearlong through

And hear your joyful cheep!

So why, O Robin, tell me why

When you're around all year

On lawn, or branch, or in the sky

Why now this Christmas cheer?”

He said to me that long ago

The postmen you would see

Their jackets vivid red would glow –

“In fact, they looked like me!

“From then till now my bright red  
breast

And cheery trilling tweet

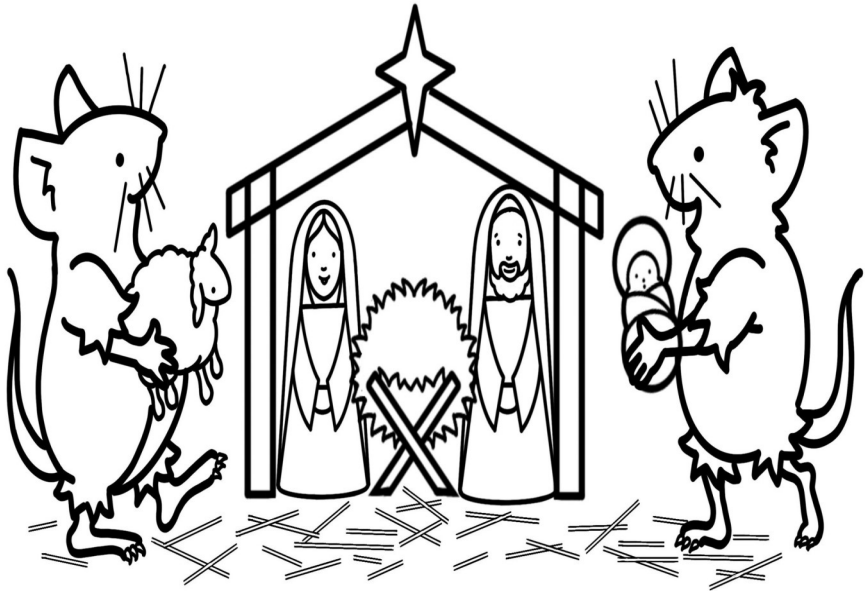
Has come upon the Christmas fest

To bring a Christmas treat!”



*By Nigel Beeton*





On Christmas morning I hope to see  
treats and presents around the tree  
Love and laughter within my home  
and if I'm lucky a chewy bone  
I hope your Christmas wishes come true  
as I send my love and licks to you.

Merry Christmas – Paddy



Enjoy colouring the Festive  
pictures!

# Need a Plumber?

Your local plumber is

## Graham Hickson

Reliable, prompt and reasonable prices

20% discount on labour with this magazine

## Graham Hickson

**07968 551 562** [g.hickson@btinternet.com](mailto:g.hickson@btinternet.com)

VAT Sole Free Trader

**Wills & Trusts  
Powers of Attorney**

**Based in Cobham  
covering all Kent**



### *British Will Writers*



**Totally Confidential  
Friendly and Professional  
Free Consultation**

**07942 999 919**

<https://www.britishwillwriters.com>

#### ADVERTISING RATES IN THE MAGAZINE

Page Size	1 Year	6 months	1 month	Dimensions (mm)
¼ page	£60	£36	£13	W:65 H:90
½ page	£105	£56	£18	W:135 H:90
Full page	£195	£100	£34	W:135 H:185

Contact **Janet Weaver** on **01732 823936**  
[cobandlud.office@btinternet.com](mailto:cobandlud.office@btinternet.com)

M	O	H	R	L	A	A	M	A	S	S	T
R	T	N	E	L	I	S	T	I	L	L	E
Y	E	M	G	L	I	A	N	R	D	N	E
J	L	B	I	N	G	M	M	T	T	O	M
I	O	A	L	D	U	T	L	S	G	I	E
T	V	S	I	T	N	S	E	U	E	S	L
O	E	I	E	T	S	I	N	A	G	R	O
Y	D	N	H	P	R	R	G	A	E	E	D
O	A	G	I	P	H	H	I	H	C	V	Y
U	I	L	O	R	A	C	T	F	T	H	E
N	D	E	D	O	T	A	D	R	I	H	T
G	C	A	G	A	F	R	A	E	H	A	U

### The story of 'Silent Night'

This much-loved carol comes from Austria, where it was first sung as *Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht* on Christmas Eve, 1818. It was written by Father Joseph Mohr, a young priest at St Nicholas parish church, in the village of Oberndorf bei Salzburg. As Christmas 1818 approached, he asked the local schoolmaster, Franz Xaver Gruber, to compose a melody for his carol. Gruber was organist in the nearby village of Arnsdorf, and so was happy to oblige. On Christmas Eve they presented the carol to the church during the midnight mass. The carol went on to become loved world-wide; and the version sung by Bing Crosby is the third best-selling single of all time.

Silent Night Loved Carol Austria First Sung Stille Nacht Heilige

Christmas Eve Father Joseph Mohr Young Priest Organist Midnight

Mass Melody Single Bing Version Third

# COBHAM CHOIR CHRISTMAS CONCERT

TOM BETTLEY DIRECTOR | LAURA WEST SOPRANO

TUESDAY 19TH DECEMBER 7PM

COBHAM CHURCH

"A really enjoyable, professional, performance in such an atmospheric venue."

"Absolutely the best concert I've been to."



Tickets £10 (under 18s £3) including interval refreshments.

From Cobham Community Stores, on 07926 677188

or at [www.ticketsource.co.uk/cobham-choir](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/cobham-choir)