

SEASON'S GREETINGS TO ALL OUR READERS & ADVERTISERS

VILLAGE DIARY

December

- 2 FOOTPATHS WALK – meet at village hall car park for 2pm sharp
- 4 PARISH COUNCIL MEETING - 7.30pm - Village Hall followed by Planning sub-committee
- 5 POLICE SURGERY – Village Hall Car Park – 2-3pm
- 6 7 & 8 DICKENSIAN EVENING AT CHRISTMAS – Wateringbury Players Church - 7.30pm
- 10 CAROL SINGING in village for Demelza Children's Hospice
- 17 SCHOOL CAROL SERVICE - Church – 6pm
- 19 HISTORY SOCIETY Members' Social Evening – Hall – 7.30pm
- 20 9 LESSONS AND CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT – Church – 8pm
- 24 CRIB SERVICE – Church - 5pm
MIDNIGHT MASS – Church – 11.30pm
- 25 FAMILY EUCHARIST – Church – 10.30am

January

- 1 FOOTPATHS WALK - meet at Wateringbury Hotel at 2pm sharp for New Year's Day stroll around the village paths
- 8 PARISH COUNCIL MEETING - 7.30pm - Village Hall followed by Planning Sub-committee
- 16 HISTORY SOCIETY talk on Dode Church – Hall – 7.40pm
- 23 COFFEE BREAK – Church - 10.30-12.30
- 25 & 26 CINDERELLA – Players Pantomime – Hall

EXPEDITION NORTH DOWNS WAY
'MEN FOR ALL SEASONS'
THE EXPEDITION SHACKLETON NEVER DID
Saturday 15 December 7.30pm, Wateringbury Church

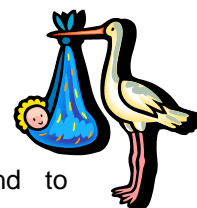
You are invited to a presentation by Frederick English of Wateringbury and Oliver Mumford of Mark Cross, E Sussex, on their North Downs Way Expedition 2012. The boys, 15 and 14 years old, both year 10 pupils at Bennett Memorial School, Tunbridge Wells, undertook their expedition off their own bat for adventure, experience and charity. Please come and support the boys – share their adventures, see their photos and view their kit. Entry is free and refreshments provided. Raffle and auction – proceeds to Friends of Wateringbury Church, Frant Church and Bennett Memorial School. Doors open 7.00pm and presentation starts at 7.30pm. Everyone is welcome.

VILLAGE PEOPLE *(please let us have your news and tributes for the next issue by 17 January 2013)*

Congratulations

To **Paula and Howie Mainwaring-Smart** on the arrival of **Addyson Iris** born at Pembury Hospital weighing 9lbs on 1 November; and to first time grandparents **Paul and Maggie Smart**.

And to



Kirsty and Mark Goldthorp on the birth of **Poppy Freya** who was born at Stoke Mandeville Hospital on 15 November and weighed 7lb 14oz. A granddaughter for **Mike and Maggie Hoiles**.



Happy Birthday to church organist **Hilary Fisher** who celebrates a milestone birthday on 12 January.

George Berry July 1937 – October 2012 George was born in Greenwich into a family with strong connections to the working life of the River Thames. Both he and his brother became licensed watermen. George spent his whole working life moving a variety of cargoes on the Thames; and the crew of his boat all attended his funeral service. In 1994 he and his wife Patricia came to live in Wateringbury, a place he remembered from childhood fishing trips. They both enjoyed village life. Patricia wishes to thank her village friends for their comfort and support.

PLAYERS ANNUAL PANTOMIME - CINDERELLA

After the success of the Wateringbury Players last panto, it's time once again to dust off those wigs and pull on those tights!! The 2013 panto, Cinderella is now in rehearsals and due to make its debut on Friday 25 January

followed by matinee and evening performances on Saturday 26 January in Wateringbury Village Hall. The cast is made up almost entirely of local villagers so make sure you come along and cheer them on. Tickets are priced £8 for the Friday show and £10 for the Saturday evening. For the Saturday matinee child tickets are £5 and adults £8. Please note there are no concessions for the evening performances. Tickets will be on sale from Monday 17 December from both the Post Office and Handy Stores - so look out for those posters, demand is sure to be high – oh yes it is !!!!!!!"

**Maidstone Mencap's Christmas Concert with
The Detling Singers on Saturday 8 December**

Cobtree Hall, Mote Park (School Lane, Willington St entrance) Maidstone
Doors open 7.00 for 7.30pm start Tickets: £5.00 (members and children £3.00) from 07842 149995

NOVEMBER PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

Community First Responders Harry Mallows, who lives in the village, gave the council information about the programme which is supported by South East Coast Ambulance Service. The scheme aims to set up local groups of at least 6 local volunteers who are contacted by the 999 service to attend local casualties to render assistance until the 999 ambulance with paramedics arrives to take over. Harry explained that medical assistance in the first 10 minutes of an incident are critical for the successful survival of any casualty. (Even 10 minutes is often too late). At present the emergency ambulance service reaches 75% of calls within 8 minutes, but this is dependent upon traffic conditions and location; rural area casualties are more at risk of time delays. Harry belongs to the Matfield group and there is another at Coxheath. He hopes to set up a Wateringbury group in the next 18 months. Each local group has to raise funds to purchase medical equipment. The cost per kit, including uniform, is about £1,400, the majority being £850 for a defibrillator. SECamb provides two kits free of charge to any group starting out. It also maintains the equipment and provides training and support for the groups. The Parish Council expressed its support for the plan and asked Harry to keep it informed of progress.

Crime Report There were four crimes in October:

theft of a mini cooper motor vehicle stolen from Tonbridge Road. The vehicle was for sale and a male described as White European, 30 years old with a beard, who was posing as a prospective buyer drove it away whilst testing it. Burglary – a property in Bow Road was entered by smashing a window and a small amount of money was taken. Theft of artificial plants in pots which were stolen from the doorstep of a property in Warden Mill Close. Criminal damage to a car – a vehicle parked on Tonbridge Road had two side windows smashed.

Planning Applications The council had no objections to a two storey extension at Appleyard House, Tonbridge Road. Concerns were expressed by the council about the proposed new garage, store and carport at Gransden, 242 Tonbridge Road. As the property lies within a Conservation Area the council consider the development would be out of character with the building and the surrounding area.

Fly Tipping A large amount of garden waste had been dumped in the cemetery car park. The council had to bear the cost of having a contractor remove the waste

The Village Warden reported that litter and dog fouling were causing problems. He felt the majority of dog owners were considerate and picked up after their pets. He suggested that another campaign in conjunction with T & M dog warden might be worthwhile.

Playing Fields A written request to the Council had been received for £1,600 to be included in the budget for 2013 to cover the costs of phase 3 of the maintenance of the playing fields. Councillors agreed to this request. Mike Witts reported to the meeting that the phase 2 works had been postponed until autumn 2013 as the land was too wet for the contractor to carry out the levelling work. The meadow flower seeds had been purchased and would be sown in 2 or 3 areas on the fields. He proposed a Workforce Day for April 2013 to renovate seats, the pavilion and generally to tidy the fields in preparation for the planned 2 June celebrations.

Malling Action Partnership Vice chairman Richard Tripp reported on a meeting he and chairman Michael Cayzer had recently attended. The group is a consortium of local parish councils which are adjacent to Kings Hill. The main topic of discussion was the proposed changes to Phase 3 of the development which was originally to be commercial properties. However the developers consider that there is no longer any demand for such properties. It was therefore proposed to build a further 850-1000 homes. Phases 1 and 2 contained permission for 2,750 homes and to date 2,325 have been built. At present about 100 new homes are built every year and it was stated that this would continue. Councillor Tripp stated that it had been confirmed that the original planning permission was conditional upon none of our local roads being used for access to Kings Hill. All surrounding local parish councils were concerned about the traffic problems created when vehicles left Kings Hill and that the proposal to

build a further 1,000 homes would further exacerbate the severe traffic congestion already experienced in the surrounding villages. Planners agreed that a third primary school would be needed.

Local residents at the meeting expressed concerns about the pressure on local secondary school places created by young people from Kings Hill. Councillor Tripp was asked if phase 3 contained provision for a cemetery for the burial of Kings Hill residents. He replied that none was planned although Kings Hill Parish Council recognised the need for such provision.

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Tuesdays 4 December and 8 January at 7.30pm in the village hall.

COMPAID NEEDS YOU!

We are a local disability charity based in Paddock Wood looking for volunteers to support our work. Volunteer as a Computer Assistant and you will be helping our clients to discover the recreational, creative, social and educational activities that computers offer, and to simply have fun!

Join us as a Volunteer Driver and you will become part of our dedicated team collecting people from home to go to hospital and clinic appointments, to day centres, on shopping trips and to social events. All volunteer drivers receive specialist training free of charge. To find out more contact Judith Williams, Volunteering Manager 01892 538345 judith.williams@compaid.org.uk www.compaid.org.uk

Help us to make a difference to the lives of disabled people.

TESTON & WATERINGBURY NURSERY GROUP (charity 1044257)

www.testonandwateringburynursery.co.uk

Admissions and all enquiries: Amanda Vidler 07805 796353

Have you heard our exciting news? No? Then let me enlighten you: we have extended our hours – yay!! We are now open from 9am – 2.30pm Monday to Friday – oh yes we are!! Please speak to Amanda for further details...she's waiting...!

With Christmas fast approaching the children have been practising their wrapping skills (at the request of parents) and their cooking skills (at the request of parents) making biscuits and sweets (at the request of the children!). They've also brought in their favourite CDs to dance to and again, practise their 'rapping' skills (apologies!!). We've made candles whilst celebrating Diwali and discussed other light-sources (yes, *sources*, not *sauces* – that's more of an after Christmas topic) and outside we've made mud and leaf pies, and completed our outdoor obstacle race, though not at the same time. We're all very excited about our annual Christmas Concert and will bring details of that next time but before that we have our fabulous Shopping Evening on Monday 3 December. We'll have more stalls than you could possibly imagine and if you can't find what you want, then it clearly isn't necessary. There'll be Mulled Wine and Mince Pies for those oh-so-necessary 'comfort breaks' and enough Christmas music to put Cliff Richard to shame. See our facebook page for more details or contact Amanda for tickets – they're selling fast.

Our latest 100 Club winner is Guy Starkey from County Durham – enjoy!
Merry Christmas from all at the Nursery Group – we'll see you in the New Year.

STATUTORY NOTICE

Wateringbury Church of England Primary School

Change of Category (Status)

Notice is given in accordance with section 19(3) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that The School Governing Body intends to make a prescribed alteration to Wateringbury Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, 147 Bow Road, Wateringbury, Maidstone, Kent, ME18 5EA from 01 April 2013.

The proposal is for a Change of Category (status) from a voluntary controlled (VC) Church of England school to a voluntary aided (VA) Church of England school.

There will be a 6 week period of consultation finishing 17 December 2012. Kent LEA will determine whether the proposed change is approved or whether adjudication is need. Once approved a change of category on

April 1st 2013 would follow.

The Governing Body will implement the proposal.

This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be obtained from: Wateringbury School, 147 Bow Road, Wateringbury, Maidstone, Kent, ME18 5EA, 01622 812199, by email from office@wateringbury.kent.sch.uk, or from the letters page of the school website <http://www.wateringbury.kent.sch.uk/letters.php>

Within six weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by sending them to David Adams, Area Education Officer (Mid Kent), Kroner House, Eurogate Business Park, Ashford, TN24 8XU.

Signed: Wateringbury School Governing Body

Publication Date: 5th November 2012

Explanatory Notes

This proposal is supported by the Anglican Diocese of Rochester

CRICKET CLUB

Last season was a fantastic year for us. We won most of our games with Harry Skilton and Tom Robinson showing the oldies how to play the game. They are the faces to watch with the new season approaching. Steve Smith was voted in as new captain at the AGM.

We are currently playing indoor cricket and have entered 2 teams. Nets (this is practise, which we all need) will start in January and then the new season will begin roughly in May. If you would like to be part of your village team then please call me on 07773 681677. You don't have to have played major cricket, we play friendlies and are a family club. Have a fantastic Christmas and New Year and we look forward to meeting you soon.

FRIENDS OF WATERINGBURY PRIMARY SCHOOL (Registered charity 1038836)

At the time of going to press, we were making our final preparations for our Christmas Fayre on Saturday 24 November. Thank you to everyone who has been involved in this event including our Committee, Class Reps, teachers and support staff, local businesses, families and the wider community. Special thanks to all the local businesses and organisations who have so generously supported us with donations, sponsorship and Draw prizes, including Hair Traditional, The Wateringbury pub, Parkwood Logs of Teston, Where Memories Meet, Brookside Garden Centre, The North Pole Pub, the Wateringbury Players and Wateringbury Working Men's Club. Thanks also to The Lions at Paddock Wood for all their assistance this year with transporting Father Christmas to our fayre.

The children will be busy in December preparing for their Christmas productions and the Christmas Carol Service at Wateringbury Church on 17 December at 6pm. The term will finish on 21 December and Term 3 will begin on 7 January 2013.

We are always on the look-out for local businesses and individuals who would like to get more involved with their local community by sponsoring school events, stalls or other initiatives in return for some great local publicity. If you would like to discuss this further please call Chairman Gail Isted on 01622 813716 or e-mail chairman@fowps.org.uk

Thank you for all your support in 2012 and we look forward to a fun-packed 2013. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all!

WATERINGBURY BABY AND TODDLER GROUP

You better not shout, you better not cry.... Yes, Santa Clause is coming to town! Well, village actually but let's not split hairs! And by the time you read this (if you're not an early bird) he may have already been.... but we don't care, at the moment we're just very excited about the toddler group Christmas party on Friday 14 December, with the promise of an appearance by Santa himself! Over the last few weeks we've written our letters to him, made lots of decorations to brighten up the hall for his visit and been very, very good boys and girls. We will be entertained by

Monster Music and there will be party food for everyone while we await his arrival. It's sure to bring a smile to every face, young and old. It's our last session of the year so we're going out with a Yo Ho Ho!

And while we're on the subject, Wateringbury Baby and Toddler Group would like to wish everyone a very happy Christmas and a healthy and peaceful New Year. We will see you all again on Wednesday 9 January 2013 when our group returns for more fun, laughter, playing, singing and crafts. How do we fit it all into just 2 hours each session?!! Come and see for yourself.

Our sessions are held during term time on Wednesday and Friday mornings from 10am to 12 noon at Wateringbury Village Hall. There is a small charge of £2 for the first child and £1 each for subsequent children over 12 months old which includes snacks for the children and hot drinks for the carers. For further details please contact Linda on 01732 522437.

WATERINGBURY FOOTPATH GROUP

We would like to thank everyone for supporting the group during 2012, and wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. A possible resolution could be to join our walks in 2013

For the walk on **Sunday 2 December**, please meet at the Wateringbury Village Hall at 2pm sharp, for a local walk along Canon Lane, the old Teston Road area and up towards Kings Hill.

Kevin who has been leading our walks recently has arranged a timetable of walks for 2013, the first on **Tuesday 1 January**, to meet at The Wateringbury Hotel at 2pm sharp for a New Year's Day stroll around the village paths to bring in 2013. After the walk, for those interested, a visit could be paid to the Hotel for a drink and chat. **Sunday 3 February** – Local walk starting at 2 pm, more details in February Rostrum. For more information please call Syd on 812338.

HISTORY SOCIETY

The December meeting is our Social Evening which will commence at 7.30 pm with carols sung by the choir from our local church, then a short talk will be given by the Mayor of Maidstone Councillor Rodd Nelson-Gracie on his mayoral year so far, which will be followed by a quiz. Our speaker in January 2013 is Douglas Chapman, who is coming along to tell us about 'Dode Church' which is situated close to Paddlesworth and Snodland, and has experienced many trials and tribulations down through the centuries.

Our speaker in October was Keith Ford who came to tell us about 'The Battle of Trafalgar'. Dressed in period costume he played the part of Will Tomkins, a sailor serving on board the "Victory". He used replica weapons, musical instruments and visual aids to assist him. "Will" told us that the Royal Navy had to contain or destroy the navies of France and Spain, in order to prevent an invasion of Britain, and for three years they had been constantly at sea blockading both fleets in port. He gave an account of what life was like on board during this time, when as well as performing normal seafaring duties they were constantly having gun drills and morale was high, whereas the enforced idleness of the enemy had the opposite effect on them. The French fleet at Toulouse managed to escape, and hotly pursued by the British, managed to join the blockaded Spanish fleet at Cadiz. The combined fleet then tried to escape from Cadiz, but the British fleet caught up with them at Cape Trafalgar. "Will" gave a graphic account of the battle that followed, and claimed that while on deck in the thick of it, he had shot the man that shot Nelson, although he told us that later the credit was incorrectly given to John Pollard. Keith's talk was extremely well received and was informative and entertaining. It also gave a real insight into what it would have been like to have taken part in this famous British victory. For more information visit the history society site on <https://sites.google.com/site/wateringburylocalhhistory/>,

ZUMBA

Come and try Zumba for free! The latin inspired, easy to follow, calorie burning dance fitness party. Classes held every Monday 8pm at Wateringbury Primary School and Tuesday 7pm at Wateringbury Village Hall. Last class before Christmas 18 December returning 7 January 2013. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all. To register for your free trial class or information on my other classes please contact Tanya on 07531 839159.

FLOWER CLUB

November's meeting took place in Wateringbury Church as our hall was seconded by the local police commissioner elections, but the Vicar was kind enough to let us use the Church, and it was a lovely setting for our Christmas

demonstration by Linda Harman, entitled Christmas at Home. Linda treated us to an evening of designs able to be used round the home and gifts for guests in a selection of traditional Christmas colours, each design a gem. We enjoyed tea, mince pies and Christmas cookies at the break, there was also time to browse for Christmas sundries to make designs at home, then we had a chance to buy cards and paper, our raffle for Linda's flowers raised a terrific £113 for the club.

December at the Flower Club is always the Christmas dinner; this year we have a catered dinner in the village hall, three courses and mince pies and crackers. January sees our committee put on a display entitled six by six, meaning six committee members do a different design each, we have done this in the past and have enjoyed it. Our club has done well this year with winning the club entry at the County show, second place at the Kent area show, and to top it all at the Kent Area AGM our photography rep Susan won the trophy for most points over the last year, very well done. Let's hope 2013 will be as successful. Jean Schofield, Chairman,

WATERINGBURY PLAYERS A DICKENSIAN EVENING AT CHRISTMAS

We are delighted to be able to celebrate the bi-centenary of the birth of Charles Dickens with a special production for this festive season. Why not come along to St John the Baptist Church to join us for A DICKENSIAN EVENING AT CHRISTMAS. Based on Dickens' life and stories, the script has been written by members of The Players, Celia Pocock, Anne Rex, Barry Fisher and Jonathan Overell with emphasis on Dickens' Kentish connections, as well as a reading from an adaptation of A Christmas Carol with costumed characters. Festive refreshments will be served.

The performances will take place at the Church on **Thursday 6, Friday 7 and Saturday 8 December** starting at 7:30pm (doors open at 7:00pm). Tickets are on sale at The Post Office and The Handy Stores priced £7 (with concessions of £5 for seniors and children under 16 on Thursday evening). Do come and help us celebrate! CP wateringburyplayers@hotmail.com

CROSSROADS SIGNPOST

I wonder if you have noticed that the Fingerpost by the traffic lights in the centre of Watlingbury, has recently been repaired? An alert resident originally reported that the finial at the top of the metal post was missing in October 2010. A search of the area failed to reveal any sign of the circular metal fitting, and it was therefore assumed to have been stolen possibly by a collector of such things, though a watch on e-Bay was unsuccessful.

The sign is the property of the Kent County Council Highways Department, and when it was suggested that they should replace the missing Roundel, they proposed doing so in cast aluminium (rather than in cast iron as it was originally), but were not able to meet the cost of so doing. As it was understood that the sign had been Listed, the Watlingbury Local History Society objected to the use of aluminium. When it was discovered that the sign was not in fact Listed, the Society proposed that this being the site of the Watlingbury Cross in mediaeval times, the Fingerpost should indeed be Listed, but this proposal was rejected by The Minister. It was also reported that this missing Roundel had itself been a replacement for the original cast-iron one (dating from before 1922), and had been made in cast aluminium, the History Society's objection to the use of this material was withdrawn.

The only problem remaining now was that of funding the replacement, and this was overcome when County Councillor Richard Long generously agreed to meet the £350 cost involved from his Member's Highways Allowance. The new Roundel was commissioned from the British Legion and has now been securely affixed, and looks entirely authentic. Thanks are due to all concerned including Cllr. Long, and particularly to the Members of the Watlingbury Parish Council and their Clerk for their perseverance in obtaining this satisfactory outcome. Ted Bates W.L.H.S

ADVERTISING IN ROSTRUM IN 2013

We are now booking advertising space in the magazine for the coming year. If you would like to advertise your business and reach 900 local homes ten times a year please e-mail www.rostrum2@hotmail.com or phone 01622 812023

DEFINITION - Bank – an institution where you can borrow money if you can present sufficient evidence to show you don't need it. *Harry Hershfield* (quoted in 1944 book *Nectar in a Nutshell*)

WATERINGBURY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE THE WI - INSPIRING WOMEN

There's been a lot happening this month. Our Games Evening was a great success. We had guests from several local WIs including one member who brought a treasured Shove H'apenny board which had been handed down in her family. Traditional games are definitely alive and well in our digital age!

We've also had a talk on 'Fashion in Paintings', a walk, lunch and games and social afternoon at the Wateringbury Hotel. Our Christmas party (members only) promises to be a highlight and will include a 'Royal Memorabilia' display to round off a spectacular Jubilee year. Members, please don't forget to bring your items for the display. We are a friendly group who meet in Wateringbury village hall at 2.30pm on the second Thursday of the month. Why not come along as a visitor to see if you'd like to join us? Our next club meeting is on Thursday 10 January at 2.30pm. We will be hearing about 'Alfred Reader and Teston Cricket Ball Factory'. As usual there will be time for tea and a chat. If you'd like to know more please call Elizabeth on 01622 812018 elizabethastrid@aol.com

WEATHER 2012

My review of the weather is a little early this year so I can only look at the first 10 months. The first five months were dryer than usual with the water companies crying over their reservoirs which meant a prolonged hosepipe ban.

June and July made up for it though with record rainfall of 150mm (5.9") and 95mm (3.70"). Since then it has still been a bit up and down; however unless we get a deluge in either late November or December the annual figure is likely to be about average or just above. As for temperatures January was notable for being warmer than usual as was March while the rest of the year was just a fraction above average. I have heard forecasts of an icy cold winter to come. My only comment is that it is too early to say and as the prophets of doom usually make this prediction at this time of year we will just have to wait and see. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all. WWW

CHRISTMAS AT PILSDON COMMUNITY

Rev Pam Rink invites you to go along to the Pilsdon Barn Chapel, Water Lane, West Malling on Sunday 2 December at 6pm for an Advent Carol Service and/or on Christmas Eve at 11.30pm for Midnight Mass.

THOUGHTS FROM THE VICARAGE

2 The Grange, East Malling ME19 6AH

e-mail jamesbrown.brown21@gmail.com - Benefice office ☎ 01732 843282

CHURCH THIS CHRISTMAS?

Some 12 million people in the UK are thinking of going to church on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day according to a recent survey. Even if many of those who are considering stepping over the threshold eventually decide not to, Christmas is far and away the busiest time of the year for churches up and down the country. Are you one of those thinking of coming to church this Christmas? For many in the congregations, Christmas is an important time to reflect on spiritual matters and church-going is a key part of this. But many others of you may well be walking into a building that looks strange, for a service that is not familiar. So what will happen and what should you watch out for?

Here are my top ten simple tips and pieces of information for those of you unfamiliar with attending church:

1. The service is easy to follow with a simple service book and possibly one other, a hymn book.
2. Sit, stand and kneel as others do. But It's OK to sit when they kneel
3. The climax of the Christmas service is Holy Communion during which you'll be invited to receive the bread and wine, so long as you count yourself Christian and this is your practice. Or come to be blessed by the priest or simply remain in your seat.
4. At the sharing of the peace (a form of greeting), go with the flow. Our congregations will all shake hands!
5. Don't worry if you can't sing or don't know the hymn, we have marvelous choirs who lead the congregation.
6. Don't stress if you're late. Sneak in at the back! However, someone will always be there to help you find a seat and give you a service book.
7. Midnight Mass doesn't necessarily start at midnight. It might begin as early as 9pm. (Check church websites for full details).
8. Please don't be anxious about attending our churches, you will be made very welcome and there will always be someone on hand to help you should you be confused in any way.
9. The sermon will not be too long, 15 minutes is generally thought to be the maximum length.
10. We will always respect the fact that you may wish for a bit of anonymity.

But I haven't really told you why I believe you should come to church in the first place. Christmas is a particularly important feast for the church and for us all, a time for carols, candlelit services, nativity plays, Christingle and many other traditional events. I encourage you to remember that at Christmas we celebrate that moment when God came to earth and became like you and me. He did this so that we might be forgiven for all the things we have done wrong and to enable us to live in peace and harmony, in a place called heaven, when we die. It is as simple as that and if this is all true, as I passionately believe it to be, then what a wonderful opportunity we have at Christmas to give God the thanks he deserves by celebrating in church.

Whatever you may be looking for at Christmas, churchgoing can be daunting: we live in an age of choice, and religion is no exception. But, whatever church you go to, bear in mind Christmas is a season of goodwill. You will be welcome, even if you feel something of a stranger. So I invite you all to that

celebration this Christmas, especially if this would be your first visit. Come along and follow those "top ten simple tips". Have a Happy and Holy Christmas.
Rev Jim Brown

CAROL SINGING IN AID OF DEMELZA HOUSE CHILDREN'S HOSPICE

On **Monday 10 December** we will be treating(!) the good people of Watringbury to a selection of festive Christmas carols. We will be meeting at the junction of Bow Road and Phoenix Drive at 7pm and finishing about 8:30pm. Please come along and join us, as it really is a great way to get into the Christmas spirit and raise money for a wonderful charity. Remember to bring your torch. For more info 📞 Lisa Glasscote 812661.

BLESSING BAGS

Could a Blessing Bag be helpful this Christmas? We operate a food bag scheme for anyone in need - whether this be through financial hardship or a temporary situation such as illness or injury which makes it difficult to get shopping. If this could be helpful to you or a neighbour, please contact Rev Jim Brown at the benefice office (01732 843282) or Lisa Glasscote (01622 812661) and request a blessing bag, no reason need be given, just an address and we can leave a bag on the doorstep. If you would like to donate food to this scheme any groceries can be left in the marked box on the back pew at St John the Baptist Church, Watringbury or at Lisa's - 16 Waterside Mews, Watringbury.

PEW CUSHIONS

Thanks to an anonymous benefactor and the proceeds of the Carpet of Flowers events for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee the church pews are now more comfortable. . The central aisle pews have been fitted with padded pew runners. The previous carpet style runners have been relocated to all other pews. The opportunity was taken to replace the communion rail kneelers and the choir stall runners in matching cushions as these had come to the end of their useful lives.

HELP THE HOMELESS THIS CHRISTMAS

Maidstone Christian Care Centre for the Homeless, a very deserving charity, is not only in need of tins and non-perishable goods but is also in need of any warm clothing, socks, gloves and hats, wet-weather gear, fleeces and sleeping bags. Anything to help homeless people survive the winter weather. A box for donations will be available in the Church porch until 16 December when they will be delivered to the Centre in time for Christmas. Thank you for your help and support.

WATCH CLUB, a youth group for school years 6 to 13, will be having their Christmas party on Sunday 9 December, 4.30-6.30pm at St John the Baptist Church. Please come along and join us for some festive fun. The new year meetings are 13 and 27 January in the church 5-7pm. For more details contact Lisa on 01622 812661.

REMEMBRANCE DAY 11 NOVEMBER 2012

The provisional amount of £2,200 has been raised from the village house to house collections for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal this November. Organiser Larry Collins thanks everyone for their generosity for this much needed charity.

The Annual Parish Act of Remembrance Service was attended by all the village uniformed organisations and the congregation numbered over 300. The collection of £508.14 (excluding gift aid of approximately £50) is included in the village total. Callum Graham played the Last Post and the Reveille at the War Memorial in the Churchyard to mark the 2 minute silence. Watringbury remembered its fallen in appropriate reverence and style.

TOY SERVICE

Thank you to all who contributed gifts to make Christmas a little happier for women and children who will be in the care of local Women's Refuges this Christmas-time. Thanks too to children at the school who also collected nearly new toys to bring a little joy into troubled lives.

CHRISTMAS CRAFT BAZAAR

Wow, what a great time was had at the church craft bazaar. There were so many talented local craftspeople at the event and such a great choice of unique items for Christmas Gifts. The Raffle had a profusion of prizes, the refreshments were delicious, the paper designer hats fantastic and the Cake Raffle was another stunning success for Vera Tate. The provisional amount raised for church funds is £1,200. Organiser Jan Pursey thanks everyone for their generous support.

COFFEE BREAK

We will be taking a breather in December but return to our usual spot of the fourth Wednesday morning (10.30-12.30) of each month on **Wednesday 23 January** when the Church will be open for tea, coffee and fellowship. Local transport available - please phone 01622 814673 to arrange a lift. In the meantime we wish everyone the Blessings of the Christmastide and look forward to seeing you in the New Year. Pauline, Gillian and Co.

FROM THE REGISTERS

Funerals George Berry on 6 November and John Mills on 14 November

BENEFICE CHURCH SERVICES

Visit our website for full details www.wateringburychurch.org.uk

First Sunday in month 8am Holy Communion – Teston 9.45am Family Service – East Malling 9.45am Family Service – Teston 10am Christingle in December Matins in January– Wateringbury	Second Sunday in month 8am Holy Communion – East Malling 9.45am Eucharist – East Malling 10am Holy Communion - Wateringbury 6.30pm Evening Prayer - Teston
Third Sunday in month 8am Holy Communion – Wateringbury 9.45am Eucharist – East Malling 10 am Family Service Children’s Nativity in December– Wateringbury 6.30pm Eucharist - Teston	Fourth Sunday in month 8am Holy Communion – East Malling 9.45am Eucharist – East Malling 10am Holy Communion – Wateringbury 6.30pm Evening Praise - Teston
Sunday 30 December – Benefice Service – 10am in East Malling Church	
Every Monday – 2-3pm – Scout & Guide HQ, Glebe Meadow – Toddler Praise	
Tuesdays (not 1 st in month) – 7.30pm in Wateringbury Church – Holy Communion	
Every Thursday - 9am in East Malling Church – Holy Communion	
For Baptisms, Weddings and other arrangements with the vicar please attend the Parish Office at the Vicarage on Wednesdays between 6.30-7.15pm	

Special Services in December

2 December at 10am – **Christingle Service**
 9 December at 7pm - **Advent Taize Service led by Bob and Becky**
 16 December at 10am – **Children’s Nativity in Family Service**
 17 December at 2pm – **Toddlers’ Nativity in Church – All Welcome**
 17 December at 6pm - **School Carol Service in Church**
 20 December 8pm – **9 Lessons and Carols by Candlelight**
 Christmas Eve - **5pm Crib Service - 11.30pm Midnight Mass**
 Christmas Day – **10.30am Family Eucharist**

Special Services in January

6 January at 7pm **Taize Service led by Bob and Becky Bowie**

Quiet Hours 8-9pm Wednesdays 12 December and 8 January

Services of Healing and Wholeness.

4 December – Praise Service at 8pm in East Malling Church
 8 January – Meditation Service at 8pm in Teston Church