



St Mary's Church

LYDIARD TREGOZE

Volunteer Newsletter Christmas 2022

Following a very busy Autumn and Remembrance period, Christmas with additional services and events is now upon us and St Mary's has once again not just coped but risen to the challenge of welcoming visitors and worshippers in increasing numbers. The church is very welcoming with nativity and Christmas star decorations from many contributors. Thanks to those who decorated and those who contributed.

The Field of Remembrance services saw the involvement of school children singing 'Make me a channel of your peace', many people laying wreaths, visiting to pay respects, taking part in prayers, the reading of names and tolling church bells. A spectacular and much appreciated effort from everyone involved.

Visitor numbers were just over 300 for October and November, a continued recovery post-Covid. The visit of Bishop Viv at the end of October showed appreciation for the whole conservation project and marked an exciting new beginning in the life of the church post-project.



The prayer tree has also been in constant use with a series of shaped cards, hearts, butterflies, poppies over summer and autumn and now 'Christmas Angels' help people express thoughts and feelings and offer prayer in difficult times.





School visits looking at Tudor history in November and in December for carol services have allowed around 250+ children to share in the beauty and 'specialness' of the church. The introduction of a monthly video story for younger children has allowed us to link the historical aspects and artifacts of the church with explanation of why they are there and linked to bible stories. <https://www.stmaryslydiardtregoze.org.uk/for-children-and-families/>

If you have children or grandchildren who would like to lend their voice to sing or read a few lines of the story or draw some of the characters please put them in touch. We want as many young contributors as possible and hope to encourage visiting children to take part as they come into the church over the holiday period and beyond. This will build on the 'Autumn Leaves' display which many contributed to for Harvest. Thanks to Ian for documenting it so well on the website too.

We are currently only open on Sunday afternoons 2-4pm throughout January-March but have planned three additional opening days during the Christmas holidays 27th Dec, 30th Dec and 2nd January- **PLEASE let me know if you can help on 30th Dec 11-1pm or 1-3pm or 2nd January 1-3pm.** We will also probably have one or two additional openings during February half term.

Our Christmas Carols and High tea event was very well attended and enjoyed by our volunteers (18 in total) with much delicious food and chatter (we were the last two tables to leave).

There have also been a couple of group tours from Lydiard House and it is hoped to build on these in 2023. A lot of interested people come to enjoy finding out more about the church, it's history, amazing artifacts and recent conservation.

I am currently starting the **January/February rota** - please let me know if there are any Sundays you want to do or any you are unavailable for.

**Best wishes to all, thank you for all you do for St Mary's.
Happy Christmas**

*Ann Hutchinson
Volunteer and Education Coordinator*