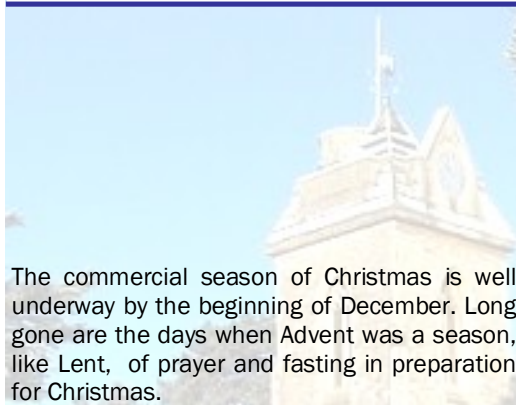




**St Jude's
United Church**

**December 2009 –
January 2010
Issue 2**

Below the surface



The commercial season of Christmas is well underway by the beginning of December. Long gone are the days when Advent was a season, like Lent, of prayer and fasting in preparation for Christmas.

Given the uncertain times in which we are celebrating Christmas this year, with many people fearful about their future and livelihood, it would be nice to think that some of the old values of prudence and self-sacrifice would resurface, but I doubt it. More likely Christmas will be for many people - sadly - an opportunity to escape from the stresses of the rest of the year into excess. What a pity we cannot see in the people with whom we will sit down round

the Christmas table the greatest gift of all, and come to understand them better by looking in their eyes, listening to the tone of their voice, watching the movement of their hands – most of all when we find their company difficult.

And after the party, in January, comes the penance. Our supermarkets have recently taken to stocking hot cross buns in January, instead of in the week before Easter. Well, there is a strange logic in this. People go on diets and detox courses in the new year which would have done the saints and ascetics of former times proud. The aim is different. Now it is to reclaim the body beautiful, not the spirit beautiful.

Perhaps if we could shake off the overkill of Christmas and the neurosis of January, and look below the surface, we could see in others the image of God, however deeply buried it may be under human failings, and be reminded of His Son, lying in a manger. Maybe we could even learn to love ourselves a bit more, whatever we look like.

Fr Mark.

Celebrating 150 Years

On 28th October St Jude's Church and friends proudly marked its 150th Anniversary with a special service. Among the 100+ visitors were Royal Holloway Chamber Choir, The Mayor of Runnymede and councillors, The Bishop of Guildford, representatives from the local police, a previous vicar - Rev'd Dick Woods, as well as Englefield Green residents and church members; a good time was had by all! A commemorative Evensong was also held on



1st Nov in which the Holloway Chapel Choir sung a piece commissioned especially for the 150th Anniversary (visit www.stjudeschurch.info for details and to hear the piece).

News from St Jude's School

St. Jude's C of E Junior School has had a very busy half term, including a residential visit by Year 5 to Hindhead, where they had fun with activities such as climbing, orienteering and flying down a zip wire.

The school's partnership with Royal Holloway University continues to be fruitful, with the latest project being to help to survey the pond on the university site; the pond is becoming choked with trees and the pupils will be identifying the plants that live there, planning what to save and what to remove in order to let the pond refill with water and animals. This community resource will be used extensively in

the school's science teaching in future. RHUL held a working party on Saturday, 7th November to clear the (presently dry) pond according to year 5's plans. Tea, doughnuts and waders were provided and parents and friends of the school were on hand to pitch in.

The half term finished on 23rd October with a Harvest Service in the church, led by Reverend Andrew Taylor. The children made a collection of edible gifts which will be distributed by the Salvation Army over the coming months.

Vicki Chiverton

December Diary

Sat 5th	4pm Christmas Concert: Freedom Brass Ensemble
Sun 6th	8am: Holy Communion (said) 9.30am: Family Communion (sung) 4pm Christingle Service
Sun 13th	8am: Holy Communion (said) 9.30am: Family Communion (sung) 6.30pm Sung Evensong
Sun 20th	8am: Holy Communion (said) 9.30am: Family Communion (sung) 4pm Carol Service
Thu 24th	4pm Crib Service 11.30pm Midnight Mass
Fri 25th	8am: Holy Communion (said) 9.30am: Family Communion (sung)
Sat 26th	10am: Holy Communion (said)
Sun 27th	8am: Holy Communion (said) 9.30am: Family Communion (sung)

January Diary

Sat 2nd	4pm Semper Cantate Choir Concert (extracts from The Creation)
Sun 3rd	8am: Holy Communion (said) 9.30am: Family Communion (sung)
Sun 10th	8am: Holy Communion (said) 9.30am: Family Communion (sung) 6.30pm: Sung Evensong
Sun 17th	8am: Holy Communion (said) 9.30am: Family Communion (sung)
Sun 24th	8am: Holy Communion (said) 9.30am: Family Communion (sung)
Sun 31st	8am: Holy Communion (said) 9.30am: Family Communion (sung)

(all events take place at St Jude's Church)

The Church is open every Saturday 2-4pm apart from Boxing Day

Junior Church

Junior Church invites all 3-11 year olds, every Sunday morning during the 09:30 service, for fun, friendship and learning. Our



weekly activities follow different bible stories and topics, and every month we make a new poster for the notice board on the corner of St Jude's Road and Englehurst - why not take a look and see what we've been doing?

To find out more please email claudia.tubb@stjudeschurch.info.

Flower Festival

A flower festival was held in St Jude's church as part of St Jude's 150th celebrations and ran from Friday 2nd October to Sunday 4th October, including the Harvest Festival service.

The festival followed the theme of Psalm 150. Most of the arrangements took inspiration from the musical instruments mentioned in the psalm. There were displays from groups and individuals including the Women's Institute; the Guides and Brownies, who were also celebrating the 100th anniversary of the founding of the

Guiding movement; and Tangerine and Green.

Visitors to the flower festival enjoyed the church decorated with beautiful floral displays and stewards were on hand to provide further information about not only the arrangements but also St Jude's as a whole. Many people gave freely of their time and talents to make the weekend a memorable occasion as the church was filled with the colours, scents and textures of flowers to the glory of God.

Vanessa Ewbank

The Village Centre

We are delighted with the progress at The Village Centre (Methodist building in Victoria street). The rear part of the property's new development is beginning to take shape. You may have heard that it is hoped that we will be able to have a post office on the premises. This is still not definite but progress is being made.

We still need about 50K so please keep

your donations coming in - large or small. The site is being developed as a resource for the whole village with a coffee shop and meeting place as well rooms for hire. Donations should be made out to "Englefield Green Methodist Church" and sent to 17 Beauforts, Englefield Green. TW20 ODW.

Linda Ashford

Cubs' visit to St Jude's

On Wednesday the 7th of October 24 Cubs and 3 Leaders from 1st Englefield Green Scout Group, met with Father Mark in St Jude's Church



as part of their "My Faith" badge.

The evening started with the investiture of two of the boys into the Cub Pack - a first for us, as we have never invested anyone in church before! Mark then spent a little time explaining about the people who work in the church, and some of the special objects which are used during services.

The Cubs were very attentive and encouragingly knowledgeable on lots

of things - except maybe the Cub who thought St Percy was one of the apostles! (He meant to say St Peter!!).

They then had great fun enthusiastically "brass" rubbing - anything from the floor tiles to plaques on the walls was well and truly rubbed. The evening finished quietly with some thoughtful prayers written and read out by the Cubs themselves.

Sandra Hider



WI arrangement for the Flower Festival