

## Advent wreath making

Create a wreath as a centrepiece for your table, find out about the symbolism of its various components and some prayers for your family. All are welcome (singles, families), but **pre-registration by Monday 20<sup>th</sup> November** is essential to enable us to purchase sufficient supplies, and spaces are limited by the size of our hall! Cost: £10.

## First Sunday family Mass with special children's liturgy and Advent activity

Our children meet as usual during the 9.15 Mass for their children's liturgy; they participate in a special way on the first Sunday of every month. All children are welcome to join in – just come along to the 9.15 Mass.

## Parish lunch

Our elderly parishioners are invited to a parish lunch provided by our StEPS (Parish Support) team. There will be a Christmas dinner with all the trimmings! If you'd like to come along, please sign up at the back of church or contact the parish office.

## Parish Penitential service

This is an opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation at a special Advent service. All are welcome.

## Alpha taster session

Session one of Alpha will be held in the hall on Wednesday 13th December at 8pm. Come and join us for a mince pie and an introduction to the course. Alpha is a chance to explore life and the Christian faith in a friendly, open and informal environment. It is a great opportunity to look at our core beliefs in the context of life today, with thought-provoking content. The course will continue Monday evenings from January. Free to attend, food at every session and time to meet others in our community. Email [steccalpa@outlook.com](mailto:steccalpa@outlook.com) to sign up or more information.

## Celebration of carols and readings

Please come along to sing carols, listen to some readings about the Christmas story, and meet as a parish community afterwards for refreshments and mince pies. All are welcome.

... and of course our **Christmas Masses**, as detailed in the calendar. We look forward to welcoming you at St Erconwald's this Advent and Christmas season.

# St Erconwald's Parish



## Walton-on-Thames



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## Advent and Christmas 2023

St Erconwald's

Catholic Church

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Date	Time	What	Where
Thursday 30 November	7.30-8.45pm	<b>Invited session 1</b>	Parish hall
<b>First week of Advent: Hope</b>			
Saturday 2 December	10.30am-12.00pm	<b>Advent wreath making</b>	Parish hall
Sunday 3 December	9.15am	<b>Family Mass with special children's liturgy and Advent activity</b>	Church
Thursday 7 December	7.30pm-8.45pm	<b>Invited session 2</b>	Parish hall
<b>Second Sunday of Advent: Love</b>			
Sunday 10 December	12.15pm	<b>Parish lunch</b>	Parish hall
Wednesday 13 December	7.00-7.45pm	<b>Parish Penitential service</b>	Church
Wednesday 13 December	8.00-9.30pm	<b>Alpha taster session with mince pies &amp; refreshments</b>	Parish hall
Thursday 14 December	7.30-8.45pm	<b>Invited session 3</b>	Parish hall
<b>Third Sunday of Advent: Joy</b>			
Sunday 17 December	3.00pm	<b>Celebration of carols and readings; refreshments</b>	Church
Thursday 21 December	7.30-8.45pm	<b>Invited session 4</b>	Parish hall
<b>Fourth Sunday of Advent: Peace</b>			
<b>Christmas eve</b> Sunday 24 December	10.00am	<b>Regular Sunday Mass</b>	Church
Sunday 24 December	3.00pm	<b>Christmas Eve family Mass</b>	Church
	5.30-6.00pm	<b>Carols followed by Vigil Mass at 6.00pm</b>	Church
	10.00pm	<b>Early Midnight Mass</b>	Church
<b>Christmas day</b> Monday 25 December	9.15am	<b>Christmas Day Mass</b>	Church
	11.15am	<b>Christmas Day Mass</b>	Church

## Dear sisters and brothers in Christ

In the quiet anticipation of Christmas, a time of profound spiritual reflection and preparation unfolds within the Christian calendar. For many, it is a time marked by the lighting of candles, the joy of cherished traditions, and the vibrant chords of carols that herald the birth of a child in Bethlehem. This sacred season is known as Advent, a word that holds the promise of something extraordinary yet to come. But what is Advent, and why is it so significant to millions of Christians worldwide?

The Advent season is a four-week period before Christmas that celebrates the anticipation and coming of Jesus Christ, the Messiah. The origin of 'advent' is from the Latin word *adventus*, which translates as 'coming' or 'arrival'. Not only does the Christian meaning include preparing for and celebrating the coming of Jesus Christ, and his birth at Christmas; it also includes celebrating the new life when someone accepts Jesus Christ as their Saviour, and lastly, the anticipation of Jesus returning.

As a community of believers, we start this journey over four weeks when we prepare our hearts and souls for our faith's greatest solemnity, namely the birth of Our Lord and Saviour. Therefore, I would like to invite all of you to participate in our parish social and spiritual activities to build an all-inclusive and welcoming community of St Erconwald's. May God bless us and send the Holy Spirit to dwell in our hearts for this journey.

With all the blessings  
Fr Ruslan and the Parish Team

## Further information on activities and events

### Invited

God is so good that he sent his only son to live among us, to suffer, die and rise again. This Advent, why not find out more about Jesus and the profound impact he can have on your life? Born and raised Catholic or never been to Church? We are all invited to a four-week course provided by our diocese. There will be four in-person sessions with videos followed by discussion and refreshments. All are welcome.

Do sign up in the back of our church or via the parish office numbers, but please also feel free to turn up. If you can't make all the sessions, do come along to those you can. As an alternative, our diocese is hosting online sessions for those who can't make our parish sessions. To join an online diocesan-led group, please visit

<https://abdiocese.churchsuite.com/events/fmu1lcx0>