

Dear all,

15 December was one of those extraordinary days for our church: so busy with services and events, but such a joy in so many ways.

9:15 Holy Communion: with one of our French-speaking members of the congregation saying again how much he loves the peace the services bring him '*Je me sens bien ici*'.

10:30 Nine Lessons and Carols where our praise was lifted by a full church and the excellent International Singers (loved the new "*My Lord has come*"). One highlight was to see an answer to prayer in church with his parents! "J" is out of hospital and on medication with a follow-up visit in 6 months 😊 Prayers ongoing for his parents as they recover too from all the worry. Several very good conversations on the way out of church with people who were very moved by the peace and joy they felt as well as my message.

Christmas Market, well done for all the hard work that went into making it a success yet again this year. There is always such a lovely buzz in the room with people enjoying themselves and buying presents, cake and mulled wine with their mince pies. The money raised for our church funds is very welcome, but the community effort and outreach is even more important. I had several very good conversations with people who are not regular members of the congregation, all positive and complimentary.

6:30 Evening Service with Carols by Candlelight. Here again another great time of praise through Carols with the amazing music team, led very ably by Liz. Paul's message on our faith/life balance was well received by those present, judging by the conversations afterwards. Suzanne organised refreshments afterwards in the hall and everyone was well fed and fuelled by mulled wine and spicy apple. Lots of people who are not regular members but who very much appreciated the service stayed to chat afterwards. Thank you everyone!

We had to say **goodbye** to a number of students, three of whom had lifted our worship team with their singing, guitar and violin over the past semester. We prayed that they all will take what they have learned here to be a blessing in their ongoing journeys.

We also had to say goodbye to Andrew who formally stepped down as Churchwarden yesterday as he handed over his keys. Every blessing Andrew, as you start your new job in Paris, and thank you for everything you have done for us.

To complete the day on a personal note, we had a new grandchild born yesterday evening, Zachary, to Christopher and Suzon, a brother for Charlie!

That was indeed a day when we give thanks and praise to our God, whose coming among us in human form we look forward to celebrating on Christmas morning.

Thank you and God bless,

Debbie