

News & Views From St Mary's Church Ecclesfield



*Church Magazine for
December 2012 & January 2013*

Price 60p

www.stmarysecclesfield.com

First Words...

- **Christmas** - The Services for Christmas can be found in this magazine. You're warmly invited to attend any, or all, of these. We have Services for children and families, a traditional Service of Lessons and Carols and Christmas Day Communion Services at both 8.30 am and 10.00 am.
- **Advent** - Don't forget to properly prepare for the coming of Jesus. Join us during Advent
- **2013** - Next year we're going to introduce a few new elements into the life of our church. We're introducing a Prayer and Praise evening (first gathering is on Sunday 27th January at 6.30 pm). We're introducing some new Sunday afternoon services for children, young people and families. We're looking to offer something for the men of our parish to complement the excellent work of the Mothers Union and the Ladies Group. We're also looking at a support/social group for the younger people (20s/30s/40s) of our parish. More details next year!

Daniel Hartley



The Collect for Christmas Day

Almighty God,
you have given us your only-begotten Son
to take our nature upon him
and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin:
grant that we, who have been born again
and made your children by adoption and grace,
may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen

Front Cover – St Mary's – Remembrance Day 11/11/2012

Back Cover – Carols Around Christmas Tree Poster

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The Vicars' Letter - Women Bishops

It will not surprise you to know that the recent vote in General Synod not to allow women bishops has led to a great deal of disappointment. This is a disappointment that I, along with many members of the Church here in Ecclesfield, undoubtedly share. I believe that the Church of England should allow women to be ordained as bishops. In fact I hold the belief that this piece of legislation should have been enacted 20 years ago when women were first allowed to be priests. It makes little theological sense to allow women to be priests without allowing them to be bishops. Although I was disappointed at the vote, I was not entirely surprised. Why? Well see below:

Synod

The Church of England is “governed” by the General Synod. The General Synod is made up of the clergy and laity who, in the main, are elected from individual Diocesan Synods. Bishops are not elected and sit in Synod as the “leaders” of the Church. Each Diocesan Synod is made up of clergy and laity who, again in the main, are elected from Deanery Synods. The synods are divided into two or three “houses”. There is the House of Clergy and the House of Laity, joined by the House of Bishops where bishops are members of a synod. Are you keeping up?

On important votes such as women bishops, all three houses need to reach a two thirds majority to pass the legislation. This did not happen at the recent vote – the House of Laity fell just a few votes short.

The reason that I am not entirely surprised about the result of the recent vote comes from a general unease that I have with the current workings of the synodical process. General Synod in particular seems to implicitly encourage division, partisanship and lobbying. The Church of Acts 15 (the Council of Jerusalem) is a Church where consensus is reached and in being reached it is seen as a mark of the Holy Spirit. There is no vote, just listening and the formation of a common mind. It is not until this common mind has been formed that the Church can move forward.

It is extremely difficult for General Synod to reach anything approximating to a common mind. However it is not impossible. This search must always begin with the question as to what it means to be the Church. It can then, and only then, move on to reflect *theologically* on the issue at hand. The Church of England produced a report, the Rochester Report, to enable General Synod to do just this: to reflect theologically on women bishops. However the level of debate that ensued could hardly be described as theological reflection. Theology was

often replaced by the sharing of stories. The two are not the same and without theological reflection the Church of England will never find this elusive “common mind”.

Unity

Many voices are now encouraging the Church of England to deal swiftly with this issue, this “anomaly”. It is tempting to rewrite the rules or to look to Parliament for some sort of solution. To do so would not only be wrong but it would be indication that the Church of England is not fit for purpose. The Church of England does not require legislative tweaking, it requires a root and branch reflection on what it means to be the Church. It requires discipline from clergy and laity alike and the end to the spirit of division. If we bypass this process over women bishops then we will face it time and time again over every contentious issue. It will tear the Church apart.

So, if I may be so bold, a few practical suggestions for the local and national church:

1. An immediate end to public ridiculing of our brother and sister Christians undertaken by some clergy in the media, both printed media and social media. I don't agree with some of the groups and factions within the Church of England but Christ calls his body to be as one.
2. The immediate coming together of the voices of division and the search for a common ecclesiology. Without a common understanding of the church there is no church
3. Episcopal leadership. Let the bishops take their rightful place as leaders of the church. The Church is not a democracy it is a theocracy – it is ruled by God and it is our bishops who exercise this authority on earth. The synodical process allows this authority to be held accountable and so it should, but let us trust our bishops and in, doing so, trust God.

What has happened in these last weeks should be a wake-up call for the Church of England. Let us attend more deeply to the scriptures and the traditions of the Church. Let us seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the will of God. Let us be less concerned about how the world sees us and more concerned about how God sees us. The reality is that if we do not heed this wake-up call then we will sleep walk into deeper and deeper division and we all know what happens to a house divided!

Daniel Hartley



CHRISTMAS LIVE

Sometimes when people tell you a story it doesn't really mean as much as it would if you could see it for yourself. St Francis of Assisi had often preached about that very first Christmas in Bethlehem with the animals round the manger and the baby lying on a bed of straw. But he wanted the story to come alive for his congregation. In the year 1223 he had a brilliant idea and planned a very special surprise for Christmas Eve.

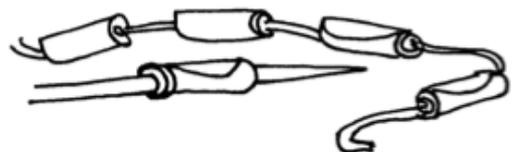
Instead of the sermon in church, Francis led the people to a cave. There, to their amazement, was a manger set out with a doll in it, and all around were real animals who watched while Francis told the old story with a new meaning because people could now see it for themselves. The idea grew each year, soon they used a real baby in the crib (an orphan with no home because someone would then willingly take in the 'Christ-baby'). And still today, churches and homes everywhere put up their cribs and wonder anew at the story of God come down to earth, a child like us.

CHRISTMAS BEADS

A nice present to make for someone you love. Cut strips of paper out of Christmas wrapping paper. Each strip 6" (15 cm) long and 3/4" (2 cm) at the widest part. Cut these strips into long triangle shapes so that the tip of the paper is narrower than the base.

Put widest end of the paper strip onto a knitting needle or pencil and begin to wrap it round itself. When you get close to the end, add a very small dab of glue and press it down. Slide the bead off the knitting needle. Repeat. Let the beads dry. Thread the beads onto string or yarn and then tie to make a necklace. You can also make longer lengths into garlands to decorate the Christmas tree.

Use plain colours or the shiny pages of magazines to make beads for all year round.



What did the snowman and his wife hang over their baby's crib?

A snow mobile.

What is claustrophobia?

Fear of Santa.



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Saints - St Nicholas – Patron saint of children - December 6

Father Christmas seems to be as old as Europe. Once he was Woden, lashing his rein-deer through the darkness of northern midwinter. Then he encountered the Church, and She transformed him into a saint, the much-loved Nicholas, Bishop of Myra (in south-west Turkey) in the fourth century. St Nicholas became the patron saint of children, and was given 6 December as his day.

Since the 6th century St Nicholas has been venerated in both East and West, though virtually nothing is known of his life. Some believe he may have been one of the fathers at the Council of Nicea (325), imprisoned during the Emperor Diocletian's persecution.

According to legend, Nicholas was an extremely generous man. He revived three schoolboys murdered by an innkeeper in a tub of pickles. He rescued three young women from prostitution by giving their poverty-stricken father three bags of gold. (Hence the use of three gold balls as the pawnbroker's signs.)

Over the centuries many, including children, sailors, unmarried girls, pawnbrokers and moneylenders have claimed him as their patron.

Perhaps it was on account of St Nicholas' generosity that in recent centuries children began to write little notes sometime before the 6th December, to tell him about the toys they specially wanted. These notes were then left on the windowsill at night - or else on a ledge in the chimney.

But St Nicholas Day chanced to lie in the magnetic field of a much more potent festival... and after a while his activities were moved towards Christmas. Then in Bavaria the children still left their notes on the window sill, but they addressed them to Liebes Christkind - Krishkinkle as they knew him - and the saint's part in the matter was simply to deliver the letters in heaven.

The most popular result of the cult of St Nicholas has been the institution of Santa Claus. He is based on Nicholas' patronage of children and the custom in the Low Countries of giving presents on his feast. Santa Claus has reached his zenith in America, where the Dutch Protestants of New Amsterdam (New York) united to it Nordic folklore legends of a magician who both punished naughty children and rewarded good ones with presents.

The Bishops' Letter - December 2012

This month Bishop Steven writes:

Come in love. Take your coat off. Sit down.
Make yourself at home.

Those are lovely words to hear when someone opens the door, especially on a cold night. Visiting other people's houses is less common than it used to be. But it's still not that unusual to go to someone's house for a meeting or a meal or a welcome.

And I always enjoy that moment when we are expecting visitors at home when the doorbell rings and we come and open the door and welcome someone in.

Advent is the time of year when we thinking about welcoming Christ into our world and into our lives. We prepare to celebrate Christmas and we remember the way the world looked forward to his birth. We remember the welcome he was given by the angels, the shepherds and the kings.

We look forward as well to the day when Christ will return as King to judge the living and the dead and the way we will welcome him at the end of the ages.

But I hope you will take time this month to think about all the ways in which we welcome the presence of the risen Christ in many different ways in our everyday living.

Acts 16 tells the story of a business woman called Lydia. Paul told her the good news about Jesus in a place called Philippi. Acts tells us that the Lord opened her heart to the words Paul brought. There was a way for Jesus to enter into her life and for Lydia to enter into the life of Jesus.

In Revelation 3, we see the risen Jesus knocking at the door of the Church in a place called Laodicaea. "Listen, I stand at the door and knock", he says. "If anyone hears me knocking let them open the door and I will come in and eat with him and he will eat with me".

It's an invitation to friendship and fellowship: a warm welcome in this winter season.

Come in Lord. Take your coat off. Sit down. Make yourself at home.



+Steven

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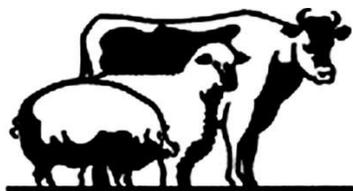
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Will You Remember Them - Persecuted Christians

Thank you for the interest you have shown over the past months in the work concerning specific situations of persecution we have brought you, please continue to remember and pray for these Christians and their countries. This month we have decided to give an overview of how Open Doors as an aid agency started and has developed, these details may be new to some of you.

In 1955 a young Dutch missionary discovered that Christians behind the iron curtain desperately needed the word of God. Brother Andrew distributed a suitcase full of Christian literature to them, marking the beginnings of Open Doors. He became known as 'Gods Smuggler' after the title of his biography, now available in 27 languages. His one man operation quickly grew into a worldwide ministry.

The work of Open Doors broadened to taking Bibles into China, Vietnam and later Africa and the Muslim World, and organising training seminars and practical help for suffering Christians. Open Doors has gone where most Western Christians dare not go and has trained thousands of pastors and church leaders and provided spiritual and legal support for Christian prisoners, also providing economic relief for their families and the families of martyrs.

Open Doors have conducted Bible-based literacy classes and established discipleship training and vocational training in some of the most dangerous countries in the world.

Still travelling extensively, Brother Andrew feels passionately that the rapid spread of Islam could be by far the greatest challenge Open Doors have yet faced. Currently in his 80s, Brother Andrew and his wife, Corrie, live in Holland and have 5 children and 4 grandchildren.

Today Open Doors has many co-workers in over 50 high-risk countries. As persecution increases Open Doors will continue to go where faith costs the most, to equip and encourage Christians who are suffering for their faith.

JD

Editor's note: Brother Andrew - Andrew van der Bijl - Born 11 May 1928 in Sint Pancras, the Netherlands, was the fourth of seven children to a poor, near deaf blacksmith and an invalid mother. His oldest brother, Bastian, was an autistic savant. Known in English-speaking countries as Brother Andrew, he is a Christian missionary famous for his exploits smuggling Bibles to communist countries in the height of the Cold War, a feat that has earned him the nickname "God's smuggler". Brother Andrew studied at the WEC (Worldwide Evangelisation for Christ) Missionary Training College in Glasgow, Scotland.

25th Sheffield (Ecclesfield) Scout Group 1912 – 2012

Hi and welcome to what you could call my annual review of 2012 for the Scout Group and what a year!

Our already busy Scouting calendar as of course been made that much more cramp packed full with 2012 being our Centenary year, and us celebrating 100 years of Scouting in Ecclesfield and how we with have celebrated!

We started the year having to complete the annual census with over 100 youngsters and adults on our books! The start of the year also began to see us wear our new centenary badge, proudly situated on the Group's neckerchief. The design of which was a joint effort by all of the young members at the back end of 2011 and has the silhouette of St. Mary's Church as part of the winning design.

This then our centenary year as seen us celebrate the Queens Jubilee, the Olympics (the Group was paid a recent visit by an Olympic torch at our centenary group sleepover – more later), the entire group having a joint camp at Silverwood camp site which included members from all 3 sections, beavers, cubs and scouts, because you know, our youngest members, the beavers are now allowed to camp under canvas – in a tent – for a night as part of their sleepover experience. Other celebrations included having the Church bells rung on our behalf and a very successful Open Day held at the Scout hut, where Scouters old and new came to look at the group's history also taking the time to chat and renew old friendships!

Our last centenary celebration of the year saw us have one massive group sleepover with over 100 people, beavers, cubs, scouts, parents and guests attending a camp fire on the Friday evening, the camp fire being finished off with a prayer from Daniel. Badges and awards were presented with Parish Councillor David Pepper along with Steve Clayton, the District Commissioner in attendance, before the 100 plus were fed. (Think Loafs and Fishes but Sausage rolls and burgers instead) Guests and parents left to still leave a very large number of beavers, cubs and scouts to – eventually – get their heads down for a few hours sleep.

We still, I feel play an important part within the community, attending the Ecclesfield Gala in the park amongst other events and continuing to have links with the Revitalising Ecclesfield Park & Pavilion Group. This can also be seen

in the village by when the Scouts completed their Community Challenge badge and Planters began to pop up around the Ecclesfield village.

We still continue to grow and develop and look to the future hoping to have disabled access, disabled toilets in the Scout hut along with outside storage for our increasing amount of numbers and equipment and of course for the group to be successful in the future we also need more adult support and leadership in order to deliver scouting to our youngsters.

Many thanks for your help and support.
Yours in Scouting,

Rob Kirk (Group Scout Leader)

25th Sheffield (Ecclesfield) -1912 - 2012

In the November edition of this magazine we published a photograph of the first Ecclesfield Scout Group taken in 1912. One hundred years later it is interesting to compare the Group as it is today. The photo on page 15 was taken in October when we had our last Centenary celebration of the year. A party, a campfire sing song, investitures, presentation of badges and awards, two huge cakes one of which was decorated with our new Centenary neckerchief badge (designed by the children) all this followed by a sleepover at the H.Q. where this photo was taken (there are approx. 50 more children in Ecclesfield Scout Group who were not available for this photo).

Cubs Comments

I joined Beavers when I was six, I enjoyed it but I like Cubs more because we do more camping and I like camping. My favourite camp was Castleton last year when it was all about Aliens. It was meant to be scary but we weren't scared because we knew it was the Leaders pretending. Last week we went on a journey to get our Outdoor Plus badge and we had to catch a bus from Morrison's to Meadowhall then from Meadowhall to the City Centre by train, then a train to Chapeltown then a bus back to Ecclesfield. It rained a lot and we were soaked when we got back to the H.Q. but it was fun. Can't wait to join Scouts.

William K.

First I was a Beaver and I liked making Christmas Decorations. Now I am a Cub I like activities like doing tracking and following signs in the woods in Ecclesfield. My favourite camp was Synergise at Hesley Wood and we went round in threes to do the activities. The best ones were rifle shooting, archery and knocking other Cubs off a balancing beam with a pillow. I think being a Cub is great and I am looking forward to going up into Scouts when I'm old enough.

Ben T.

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Crossword Puzzle - Solution is here.

ACROSS: 1, Lame. 3, Obtained. 8, Omit. 9, Merchant. 11, Burdensome.
14, Crafty. 15, Please. 17, Blacksmith. 20, Splendid. 21, Tier. 22, Singeing.
23, Hand.

DOWN: 1, Look back. 2, Main road. 4, Breast. 5, Accomplish. 6, Near. 7,
Date. 10, Pestilence. 12, Basilica. 13, Tethered. 16, Action. 18, Asa's. 19,
Clan.



25th Sheffield (Ecclesfield) Scouts - 2012

Sheffield Diocesan Synod - A View from within

I write this article not to add my voice to the continuing debate on Women Bishops, but to inform you of the response of Sheffield Diocesan Synod to the General Synod decision. I also want to express my admiration and gratitude for the wisdom and leadership of this Diocese under Bishop Steven and would add that there is hope for the future.

It was with a heavy heart that I attended Diocesan Synod on Saturday 24 November. The Synod was very subdued and reflective and there was a sense of deep disappointment from all present. The meeting opened with prayers for wisdom, unity and guidance.

The overwhelming feeling was that there were no winners and the biggest loser was the Church of England. Bishop Peter reported that a recent meeting with business leaders someone had said to him 'If I wanted spiritual guidance I would not come to the Church of England.'

We were given an overview of the debate by the Dean of Sheffield Cathedral, The Very Reverend Peter Bradley. He expressed his disappointment that Bishop Steven had not been called to speak.

There then followed a series of questions and observations from the Synod. Gone was the vitriol and rhetoric which characterised some of the previous debates. There was a conciliatory air about all that was said. Some of the important issues raised included questions about how well the General Synod reflects the views of the majority, how it was felt there was a lack of trust between the opposing viewpoints, the way the decision was reported in the press and how this could perhaps have been better managed. It was felt that we as a Diocese should arrange that those 'For' and those 'Against' the Measure should get together to find a way forward.

Bishop Steven then made his Presidential Address. He was very keen that this address was not just for the members of Synod but should be communicated to as widely as possible.

In the address he spoke about his deep sadness at the result and added that he felt it had damaged the standing of the Church of England in our nation. He paid tribute and gave thanks for the ministries of women priests within the Diocese and urged people to support and affirm those ministries over the coming days and weeks.

He then unpacked some of the theological issues at stake. It was good to be reminded of the scriptures on which the arguments in favour are based. He spoke about the equality of women and men before God using passages from Genesis, Galatians and Romans.

He followed this by an appeal to those feeling hurt and angry by the decision, to remember the story of Elijah after the great confrontation with the prophets of Baal.

God spoke to him through ‘the still small voice of calm’. He said ‘What many of us need and what the whole Church needs in this moment is time apart, a long journey back to the source of our life and to hear again that living word, that call to us, to re-engage and move forward. My prayer is that many will hold fast and deepen not lessen their commitment to transformation.’

He then commented on those opposed to the measure reiterating that nobody won and nobody wants to be in this place and the road ahead is likely to be a hard one. He talked about those in the Diocese who are conservative, evangelical and those who are Anglo-Catholic; saying ‘You stand high in my affection and esteem as clergy and people. I will do my best to continue to work with you, to support you and to provide pastoral support. I hope that our co-operation and our ways of working together will become closer locally as the debate continues nationally.’ He emphasized ‘However I am not a neutral voice in this debate. I remain as I have always been passionately committed to seeing women ordained as bishops in the Church of England.’

He then said the House of Bishops would be meeting at the beginning of December to scope possible way forward, but stated all sides acknowledge fresh thinking is needed.

He finished his address reflecting on the passage of the Samaritan woman at the well with Jesus, which formed the basis of the Pastoral Address at the recent Roman Catholic Synod of Bishops in Rome which Bishop Steven recently attended:

‘It is the story of a woman. A woman who is like many in our global, secularized society. Her relationships are in chaos. Her religious ideas are confused. She is full of fear and suspicion. Her inner world is in Pope Benedict’s profound image, a wilderness and a desert. In every life there comes a moment when a woman or a man brings the emptiness of their life to the well, looking for water which quenches the deepest thirst, for the heart’s deepest desire. Jesus is stripped of everything in this encounter. He has crossed over to Samaritan country. He has no disciples, no miracles to offer, no food, no bucket to draw water. He asks for help and shares himself and draws this thirsty woman to the living, healing waters. Her life is changed and so is the life of her community. Jesus is a model for his disciples here, to be sure. In moments like this it will do us all good to leave the church politics behind and return to the simple tasks of going to where people are, serving them, sitting and listening and loving and healing. I’m sure that many of you have been doing that this week as I have and finding life and reality there.’

The attitude of the Synod, the address by Bishop Steven gives me inspiration and hope for the future and I give thanks to God for that.

I would urge you to read or better still listen to the presidential address in full on the diocesan website. <http://youtu.be/JLRJfqKIWDQ>

Katharine Lonsborough

Diary for the Month of December 2012

Sunday 2nd

Advent Sunday

10.00 am Parish Communion

12 noon Baptism

6.30 pm Evening Service

Monday 3rd

7.30 pm PCC meet in Church

Wednesday 5th

10.30 am Service at Eva Ratcliffe House

1.00 pm MU in the Gatty Hall/ Christmas Party

Thursday 6th

9.30 am Holy Communion

7.30 pm Ladies' Group in the Gatty Hall/ Coffee Eve.

Saturday 8th

10.00 am Ecclesfield in Bloom / Christmas Fayre and
Coffee Morning

Sunday 9th

Second Sunday of Advent

8.30 am Holy Communion

10.00 am Parish Communion

2.00 pm Christmas Crafts

6.00 pm Carols around the Christmas Tree

Tuesday 11th

7.30 pm Prayer Meeting in Church

Wednesday 12th

10.30 am Service at Eva Ratcliffe House

Thursday 13th

9.30 am Holy Communion

2.00 pm Service at Hartwell House

7.30 pm Ladies' Group in the Gatty Hall / Carols and
Mince Pies

Sunday 16th

Third Sunday of Advent

10.00 am Parish Communion

4.00 pm Christingle

Monday 17th

6.30 pm Carol Singing at the Northern General Hosp.

Thursday 20th

9.30 am Holy Communion

Saturday 22nd

10.00 am Carol Singing at the Co-op

Sunday 23rd

Fourth Sunday of Advent

8.30 am Holy Communion

10.00 am Parish Communion

6.30 pm Evening Service

Monday 24th

Christmas Eve

4.00 pm Crib Service

6.30 pm Service of Lessons & Carols

Tuesday 25th

Christmas Day

8.30 am Holy Communion

10.00 am Parish Communion

Sunday 30th First Sunday of Christmas
 10.00 am Parish Communion
 6.30 pm Evening Service

Diary for the Month of January 2013

Thursday 3rd 9.30 am Holy Communion
 7.30 pm Fabric Committee

Sunday 6th **Epiphany**
 10.00 am Parish Communion
 6.30 pm Evening Service

Monday 7th 7.30 pm PCC
 Thursday 10th 9.30 am Holy Communion
 2.00 pm Service at Hartwell House
 7.30 pm Ladies' Group

Sunday 13th **Epiphany 2 / Baptism of Christ**
 8.30 am Holy Communion
 10.00 am Parish Communion
 6.30 pm Evening Service

Wednesday 16th 10.30 am Service at Eva Ratcliffe House
 12 noon MU Lunch at Staindrop Lodge

Thursday 17th 9.30 am Holy Communion
 7.30 pm Ladies' Group

Sunday 20th **Epiphany 3**
 10.00 am Parish Communion
 6.30 pm Evening Service

Monday 21st 7.30 pm Mission Committee meet in Church

Wednesday 23rd 10.30 am Service at Eva Ratcliffe House
 7.30 pm Fabric Committee Meeting

Thursday 24th 9.30 am Holy Communion
 7.30 pm Ladies' Group

Sunday 27th **Epiphany 4**
 8.30 am Holy Communion
 10.00 am Parish Communion
 6.30 pm Evening Service

Monday 28th 7.30 pm Ignation Prayer in Church

Wednesday 30th 10.30 am Service at Eva Ratcliffe House

Thursday 31st 9.30 am Holy Communion
 7.30 pm Ladies' Group

From the Registers

Baptism

7th October	Lewis James Mellor
7th October	Mia Louise Siddall
7th October	Tilly Violet Stocks
28th October	Luke Fieldsend
28th October	Shorna Marie Turton
28th October	Ruby Tuesday Marie Turton
28th October	Matilda Mae Turton
28th October	Annabelle Louise Turton
4th November	George David Thornhill
4th November	Lottie Angel Fletcher
4th November	Emmie Jane Varley

May they know the love of God in their life and may all things of the Spirit live and grow in them.

Funerals

29th August	Jean Humberston	83
12th September	Audrey Hague	87
17th September	Ann Harthill	64
3rd October	David Paul Emery	46
5th October	Cyril Butterick	91
25th October	Desmond Malone	89
29th October	Margaret Ashmore	91
9th November	Lily Wainwright	87
13th November	Catherine Carr	87

Grant them, O Lord, refreshment, light and peace

Flower Rota

2nd December	Advent 2
9th December	Advent 3
16th December	Advent 4
23rd December	Christmas Flowers (Alice Hinchliffe)
30th December	Vacant



HIGH GREEN MUSICAL THEATRE

PRESENTS

AN AMATEUR PRODUCTION OF:



The E.P.P.i.C Theatre, Well Lane, Ecclesfield

Tuesday 11th to Saturday 15th December

Ticket Prices - £ 8 per Person

Ticket Sales – 0144 240 3839

Curtain opens at 7.00 pm each evening and 2.00 pm for Saturday Afternoon
Matinee

Ecclesfield Priory Players

E.P.P.i.C Theatre

Christmas Coffee Morning

15th December 2012 - 10.00 – 12.00 am

Carols - Mince Pies - Drinks - Come and Join Us.

The Gardening Year December 2012 & January 2013

Grapes – vines have been grown in this country successfully since the time of the Romans. The first are believed to have been planted only 70 years after Julius Caesar's invasion in 55 B.C. Planning the Crop – choose a sheltered position for growing vines on a wall or fence, facing south, south west or south east. A south facing wall or fence is more favourable the extra warmth radiating from the wall or fence makes the grapes sweeter and better flavoured. Vines grow better in a sandy gravelly soil that warms up quickly in the sun but they will succeed in any type of soil if the drainage is good. Drainage is vitally important. On heavy soils dig a trench 2ft. deep, then place a layer of rubble, broken bricks or clinker at the bottom of the trench. The deeper the trench and the greater the amount of rubble the better, because the roots of an established vine go deep and must never be allowed to become waterlogged.

How to Grow Grapes on a Wall or Fence - the simplest method of growing grapes on a wall or fence is to train them on a single cordon or rod. After planting choose the strongest leader to grow on as the rod and cut out the others to one bud. Tie the leader to a cane and secure the cane to the wires. During the following growing season pinch out all laterals growing from the cordon or rod. Repeat this sequence during the second year after planting. This training should produce a well-spurred cordon for providing a limited harvest in the third season. In the first cropping year allow only three or four bunches to a cordon, and take off all the other laterals. Thereafter allow only one bunch per lateral per foot run, which usually means that you will harvest a bunch from each lateral. Take off all laterals that have not got a tiny bunch of grapes on back to the main cordon. Stop all laterals with a tiny bunch of grapes on by pinching out two leaves after the bunch of grapes. As the bunch of grapes swell the lateral will send out sub-laterals, these must be taken off back to the main lateral. When preparing the hole for the vine dig in compost or farmyard manure, plus 4oz of general fertiliser. Once the vine is in full growth and the grapes have set, give a weekly liquid feed of tomato fertiliser or maxicrop. As the berries swell, thin them gradually over seven to ten days. Remove half the berries from the inside of the bunch, leaving more on the shoulders. When the grapes begin to show colour stop applications of liquid feed. Grapes are ready for harvesting when they change colour, when harvesting has finished, cut off all the laterals back to the cordon to just leave a bare rod ready for next years' crop.

And finally I would like to wish every one of our readers and all at St Mary's, a Merry Christmas and a Happy Gardening New Year. *Colin Williams*

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Mothers Union

A talk by - Mary White on Stations of the Nativity

A warm welcome was given to Mary White who came to share some of her thoughts on the Advent, Christmas and Epiphany stories as covered in the 14 Stations of the Nativity'. Due to the limitations of space, readers are encouraged to reacquaint themselves with the various aspects of the 'Christmas Story', where the story of our salvation begins as told by St. Matthew and St Luke.

1. Zechariah – we can be like this devoted man of God, not being able to accept that God does answer prayer even when it seems the time has passed or all seems lost.

2. The Annunciation – as with Mary, God speaks to us in different ways, as such we need to be prepared to listen to Him and accept what He has to say to us no matter how uncomfortable or unlikely.

3. The Visitation – let us like Elizabeth, so filled with joy about God's blessings on our lives praise God in words, songs and actions.

4. Birth of John the Baptist – follow Zechariah's example and do not let our own feelings or traditions prevent us from doing what God requires.

5. Joseph's Dream – when doubts and fears arise take it to the Lord in prayer; let him direct our life's journey.

6. The Birth of Jesus – yes the Messiah is born for all, however, Mary and Joseph will need all their faith to go on believing in the angelic visitations.

7. Shepherds and Angels – the shepherds were the first to hear the news of Jesus's birth, a reminder that Jesus the 'Good Shepherd' born of a royal line came for those who would least expect it.

8. Shepherds to the Manger - born in a stable with smells of cattle around him yet Jesus is the Saviour of the world, pray that in the most humble of occasions or surroundings we do not fail to see God's glory, grace or His continued presence.

9. The Naming of Jesus – the names we give to those we love can often mean so much to us, whatever people's beliefs we know that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that He is Lord.

10. The Magi – probably the first gentiles to visit and worship Jesus, let our lives as their gifts recognise His, “kingship’, priesthood’ and sacrificial death”.

11. Presentation – like Simeon let our eyes be open to truth that God has kept His promise of salvation, that Jesus is indeed the light for the whole world.

12. Flight into Egypt – as we remember how Joseph and Mary had to flee to Egypt as refugees, may God give us compassion to care for the stranger, the refugee, the homeless in far off lands often fleeing persecution.

13. Massacre of the Innocents – today we still witness the mass slaughter of the lives not yet lived, however, give thanks that Mary’s child escaped Herod’s death command and grew into perfect manhood, suffered a greater torment and broke the tyranny of death once and for all.

14. Return to Nazareth – the ‘Holy Family’ return home where the first announcement of God’s promise was made, Jesus’ arrival had ended centuries of expectation. Before we return home to the heavenly Father, there is a requirement that we follow Jesus’s example and make the most of lives here on earth according to God’s will.

The Nativity story is not only about the birth of our saviour Jesus Christ, but the need for us to listen to those still small voices and to respond accordingly. We should be patient and never stop praying because things will happen when God wills it. Tell others when God has done good things for us. We are encouraged to practice forgiveness, gentleness and acceptance of all those we come in to contact with.

Jesus is there to accept us with open arms if we have faith putting our trust in Him, be there sorrow or joy.

Mary finished with this prayer

Prayer:

Jesus bearer of our humanity; Mary gracious gentle mother. Joseph faithful and loving protectors have mercy on us. May God grant that the Holy Family of Nazareth shall be our protection and guide day by day, year by year, leading us to the full revelation of His glory.

AMEN

JG

Ecclesfield in Bloom

Christmas Coffee Morning

At St Mary's Church - Ecclesfield

Saturday 8th December 2012

Open 10.00 am to 12.30 pm

*There will be stalls selling, Toys, Handbags, Jewellery,
Decorations, Books, Raffle etc.*

Refreshments will be available.

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Prayers and Poems Page

I wish I were a teddy bear

For the arctophiles (teddy bear lovers) out there:

I wish I were a teddy bear
Especially in the snow
Cos even though its cold out there
I'd have nowhere to go!

I wish I were a teddy bear
And this is why, you see
I'd have a friend like you to care
And always cuddle me!

By Nigel Beeton

The Stranger

The stranger seemed to just appear
As if from nowhere, out of the air.
He knew her name and told her more
Of things that had never been heard before.
Time now had passed, they were ready to leave
An arduous journey for them lay ahead.
At last they had reached their journeys end
With nowhere to stay, just a sort of a shed.
Together in wonder they looked at the child
That they had wrapped in a blanket and laid in a
bed
And then they remembered the stranger who
called.
It all had happened, just as he said.

By Megan Carter

Christmas Prayer

Dear Lord,

What's it really all about, this "season of celebration"? People rushing everywhere, overspending, double-booking diaries in frantic attempts to meet the demands of a twenty-first century Christmas. And what about those who find Christmas anything but joyful – those who have lost loved ones, those who are old and alone and tired and longing for it all to be over? What's it really all about?

Lord, in the middle of the busy-ness and bustle, help us to remember that this is nothing new. Jesus came into a world of rush and frenetic activity. He came to a town so busy that there was no room for his family. And help us to remember that you know what it's like to have a loved one – your dear Son - away from home at Christmas.

Lord, still our hearts, and open them to recognise and receive your great gift to us. May we make room for Jesus and know the peace and security of his presence this Christmas. Help us to know that this is what it's really all about.

In the name of Jesus,

Amen

Christmas Presence (Isa 9:6, 7:14)

Unto us a child is born
To us a son is given...

And you will call him Immanuel,
God with us.

Jesus, God actually with us.
God's greatest gift,
Born into weakness and vulnerability,
Sharing life's raw reality,
Family rows, family rejoicing,
Broken relationships, broken hearts,
Grief and great suffering,
Rejection and injustice,
Despair and death.

Yet through it all
Still the gift goes on
Revealing God's grace and power
And peace to overcome.
This is a gift that cannot be wrapped,
That will never break
Or pass its sell-by date.
This is Jesus,
The greatest gift.

Receive God's Christmas presence
And walk on with him.

By Daphne Kitching

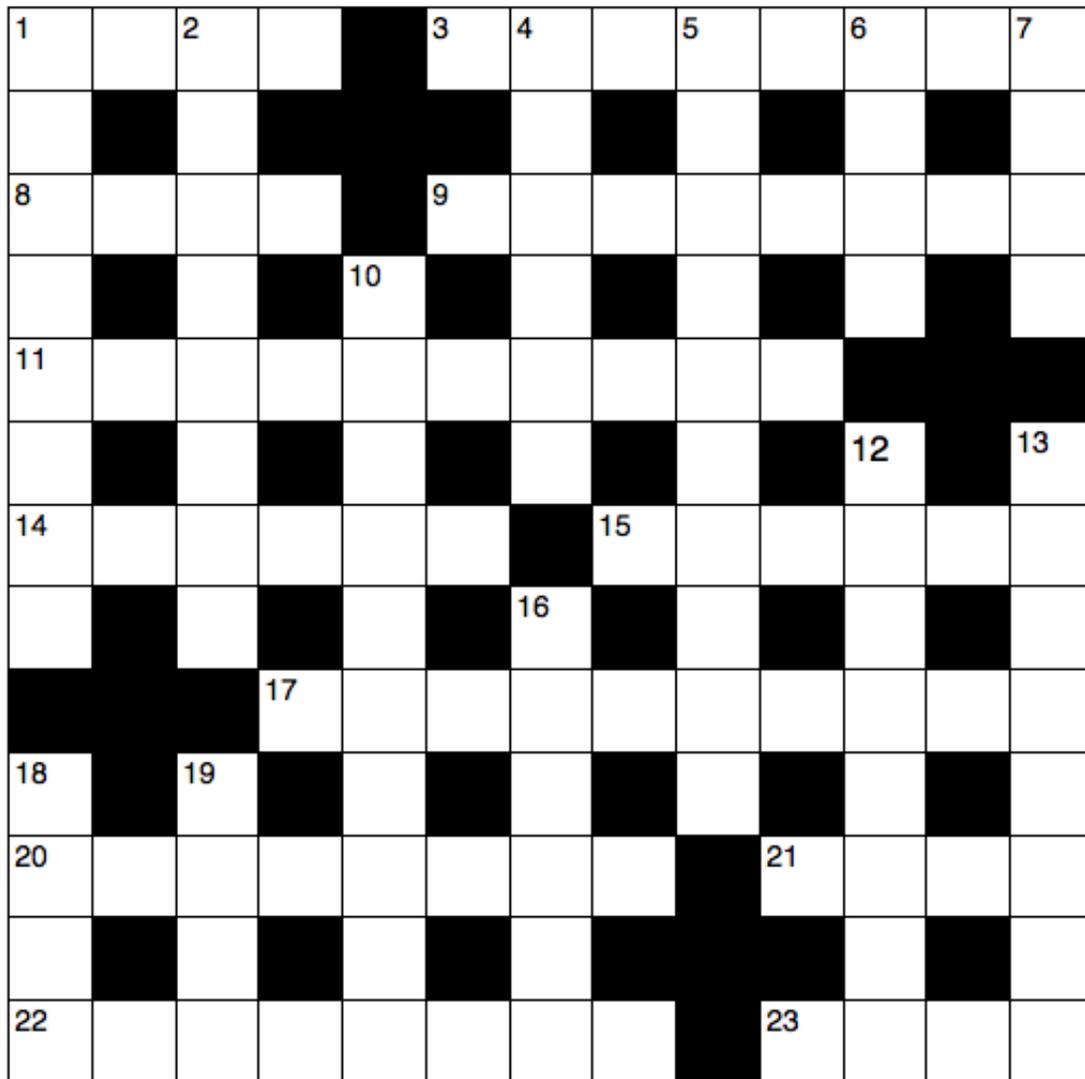
Crossword Puzzle

Clues Across

- 1 'The blind receive sight, the — walk' (Luke 7:22) (4)
- 3 Got (Philippians 3:12) (8)
- 8 Leave out (Jeremiah 26:2) (4)
- 9 Castigated for using dishonest scales (Hosea 12:7) (8)
- 11 Weighty (1 John 5:3) (10)
- 14 'Now the serpent was more — than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made' (Genesis 3:1) (6)
- 15 'Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot — God' (Romans 8:8) (6)
- 17 Because Israel lacked one of these, tools had to be sharpened by the Philistines (1 Samuel 13:19) (10)
- 20 In his vision of the two eagles and the vine, this is how Ezekiel described the latter (Ezekiel 17:8) (8)
- 21 Rite (anag.) (4)
- 22 Nine gigs (anag.) (8)
- 23 'The eye cannot say to the — , "I don't need you"' (1 Corinthians 12:21) (4)

Clues Down

- 1 'Flee for your lives! Don't — — , and don't stop anywhere in the plain!' (Genesis 19:17) (4,4)
- 2 Principal thoroughfare (Numbers 20:19) (4,4)
- 4 'The tax collector... beat his — and said, "God have mercy on me, a sinner"' (Luke 18:13) (6)
- 5 'The zeal of the Lord Almighty will — this' (2 Kings 19:31) (10)
- 6 'The day of the Lord is — for all nations' (Obadiah 15) (4)
- 7 Specified day (Acts 21:26) (4)
- 10 Deadly epidemic (Deuteronomy 32:24) (10)
- 12 Roman Catholic church which has special ceremonial rights (8)
- 13 Tied up (2 Kings 7:10) (8)
- 16 In his speech to the Sanhedrin, Stephen described Moses as 'powerful in speech and — ' (Acts 7:22) (6)
- 18 'Although he did not remove the high places, — heart was fully committed to the Lord all his life' (1 Kings 15:14) (4)
- 19 Tribe (Deuteronomy 29:18) (4)



Crossword Puzzle - Solution is on page 14.

Where did Christmas stockings come from?

No one is really sure, but a story is told of St Nicholas, a bishop who lived in the 4th century, who may have started the custom by accident. St Nicholas was of a wealthy family, and of a generous heart. As Christmas approached one year, he wanted to help a poor family whom he knew, but he did not want them to know it was him. So he climbed up on their roof on Christmas Eve and dropped some coins down the chimney.

The next morning the coins, to the great surprise of the family, were found in the stockings of the ladies, who had hung them to dry by the fire the night before. Every year after that they put their stockings out, in the hope that some more money would fall into them. They told the story of this amazing appearance to their friends and neighbours, and the custom caught on.

The Bishop's Letter, January 2013

'Looking back and looking forwards....'

As I write this, I am 2 stone lighter than on 1st January, 2012. Hopefully by the time you read this I will be lighter still – but perhaps not as Christmas comes in between.

The weight loss is mainly due to two things. The first is Ann rather putting her foot down. The second is the inspiration and practical help from the Hairy Bikers, Si King and Dave Myers.



They turned themselves into the Hairy Dieters last summer on television and produced a book of recipes which has been my food bible for several months now. I've cooked my way through it from beginning to end.

My story last year demonstrates that you have to stick with your New Year Resolutions and that most of us need help and support.

So where do you hope your journey with God will take you in 2013? What resolutions are you making for the New Year?

One of mine every year is to get to know God better, to sink my roots deep into the soil of his love and to enjoy the adventure of living that bit more. That means I need to take time at the beginning of the year to plan out how that's going to happen in different ways and at different times.

It's vital that we look after ourselves. That means watching over our health. But it also means watching over our inner life – our relationship with God, our prayer, our growing in faith.

Your parish church will be offering some great ways to learn and grow and go deeper in faith this year. Make sure you plan to join in. Put the roots down and branch out in a new part of the journey.

And a very happy New Year to you and all those you love

+Steven



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- * ***Raffle***
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Contact Numbers for Local Groups

Ecclesfield Rainbows

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Tuesday 4.45 pm to 6.00 pm
Leader - Mrs B Travis
Tel: 0114 245 3504

Ecclesfield Brownies

Gatty Hall
Monday 5.00 pm to 6.30 pm
Leader - Mrs J Hutchinson
Tel: 0114 257 8609

Ecclesfield Brownies

Gatty Hall
Tuesday 6.15 pm to 7.45 pm
Leader - Mrs A. Kendall
Tel: 0114 246 8866

Ecclesfield Guides

Gatty Hall
Thursday 6.30 pm to 8.30 pm
Leader - Mrs C Topham
Tel: 0114 246 1289

Ecclesfield Priory Players

EPPIC Theatre
Monday 7.30 pm to 10.00 pm
Wednesday 7.30 pm to 10.00 pm
Secretary –Carol Travis

Ecclesfield Community Garden

Ecclesfield Park,
off Mill Lane - Church Street
Wednesdays 10.00 am to 12.00 pm
Saturdays 12.00 pm to 14.00 pm
Tel: 0795 706 6404
email: rose@rosetanner.plus.com

Ecclesfield Cubs

Scout Hut (off Yew lane)
Wednesday 4:45 pm to 6:15 pm
2nd Pack 6.30 pm to 8.0 pm
Leader - Mrs A Hancock
Tel: 0114 245 2780

Ecclesfield Beavers

Scout Hut (off Yew lane)
Monday 6.00 pm to 7.15 pm
Leader - Mrs J Steel
0114 246 0218
Thursday 6.00 -7.15 pm
Rachael Otter 0114 246 1752

Ecclesfield Scouts

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Leader - Mr E. Buttimer
Tel: 0114 258 6935
Group Scout Leader
Rob Kirk Tel. 0114 220 9212

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