

News & Views From St Mary's Church Ecclesfield



Church Magazine for December 2014
And January 2015

www.stmarysecclesfield.com

Price 60p

First Words...

- **Christmas**

The Services for Christmas can be found in this magazine. You're warmly invited to attend any, or all, of these. These include our Christingle Service on Sunday 21st December at 4.00 pm, our Crib Service on Christmas Eve at 4.00 pm, our traditional Service of Lessons and Carols on Christmas Eve at 6.30 pm and our 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

Daniel Hartley



Prayer for Month

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 –South Elevation and the Stocks
Back Cover – Carols Around Christmas Tree Poster 2014

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Welcome to St Mary's Parish Church, Ecclesfield

The Vicars' Letter

“Joy to the world”

Advent is upon us and, in a few weeks' time, we'll be celebrating Christmas. Celebrating again the birth of our Saviour in a stable in Bethlehem. Singing again our Christmas carols. Enjoying again the festivities of the day. Christmas trees will be lit up and presents will be opened.

It's always tempting at Christmas time to talk about “our Christmas” – our Christmas in Sheffield, our Christmas in Ecclesfield, our Christmas with our family. In one sense there's nothing wrong with this. It focusses our attention on what the feast day means for us and for those around us. But in another sense it can lead us to miss the universal significance of the day. In the words of the famous hymn, we are celebrating “Joy to the world”.

The message of salvation has a universal meaning. Christ came into the world not to change one race or one people, but to change the whole of humanity. The coming together of the divine and the human in the person of Jesus changes all of humanity forever more. Christmas is about the unlocking of the human potential for good and the recognition of this same good in others. Peace and goodwill to all begins as we recognise the difference of other people as a positive. It begins as we seek to engage with those who are profoundly different from us in order that we might grow in our own humanity.

I'll set each person that reads this article a challenge for Christmas Day. At some point during the day see if you can find time to watch the News. Amidst the stories of celebrations and Christmas messages you are bound to hear of human misery and tragedy; a misery and tragedy that has been caused by humanity's own inhumanity to itself. In hearing these stories we begin to realise how far we have to come to be the people that Christ invites us to be. Of course this realisation will come and go as we continue to enjoy the festivities of the day. This is right and proper as Christmas is a day to enjoy. But when the festivities and enjoyments have finished, let us redouble our efforts to model Christ's presence in the world. Let us seek to be people of hope, peace and goodwill and let this be our Christmas message to the world.

Daniel Hartley

On why Carol Services are so dangerous

My dear Nephew Darren

The Rectory St. James the Least

So: you are excited about being invited to plan your first Carol Service. The dangers involved are only slightly less than being invited to judge the best cake made by the Ladies' Group. You seem to have no idea of the lifelong offence you will inevitably cause. In decades to come when you will either be a seasoned old clergyman – or more likely a double glazing salesman – you will be remembered as “the Curate who offended Mrs Smith.”

First, you have to decide which groups are going to be represented to give the readings. If the Brownies were asked last year, then it has to be the Cubs this time. But don't forget that every third year, the Boys' Brigade must be asked, or they will take their revenge and get their flag tangled in the nave chandelier come Remembrance Sunday. If someone represents the choir, then over a four year period, all four voice parts must be called on – and if the organist isn't asked on the fifth year, then all hymns subsequently will be played at double speed and with one verse missing. Should one person have been invited to read for two successive years, then their annual appearance thereafter will be taken as an inalienable right for the rest of their lifetime – and probably longer than that. To drop them may well invoke legal proceedings,

Then there is the batting order to be considered. Someone from the church council will take it as a deliberate slight if they are placed lower in the order than a representative of the Men's Fellowship and so self-respecting bell ringer would voluntarily follow a brass cleaner.

If you do not specify where they should read from and how the readings should end, then a form of ecclesiastical inflation will happen. If the first reader speaks from the chancel step, the next one will go to the lectern; after the sanctuary and pulpit have been utilised, the final reader will probably ask you to move so he can take your place. The variations on “Here endeth”, “This is the Word of the Lord”, and “Thanks be to God”, are endless and will increase in length as the Service progresses. The final reader will probably end with a lengthy exegesis on what he thinks the passage means, correcting whatever you said in your sermon.

I once made the mistake of not telling all readers which Bible translation to use. One, an Old Testament expert, therefore decided to read in Hebrew. Not to be outdone, another read her Gospel passage in Greek – apologising beforehand that it may not be a perfect rendering, as she was spontaneously translating it from the English. And some say Christians are not competitive. You have two alternatives: either repeat last year's Service without any alteration, saying that it could not be improved, or design your own – and then take Christmas off.

Your loving uncle, Eustace

The Everlasting Turkey

On the first day of Christmas my true love said to me
I've bought a big fresh turkey and a proper Christmas tree.

-----❁-----

On the second day of Christmas much laughter could be heard
As we tucked into our turkey – a most delicious bird.

-----❁-----

On the third day of Christmas people came from just next door,
The turkey tasted just as good as it had done before.

-----❁-----

On the fourth day of Christmas came relations young and old
We finished up the Christmas pud and had the turkey cold.

-----❁-----

On the fifth day of Christmas, outside the snowflakes scurried,
But we were nice and warm inside, and had the turkey curried.

-----❁-----

On the sixth day of Christmas, the Christmas spirit died.
The children fought and bickered – we had the turkey rissoles fried.

-----❁-----

On the seventh day of Christmas my true love he did wince
When he sat down at table - and was offered turkey mince.

-----❁-----

On the eighth day of Christmas, the dog had run for shelter,
For he'd seen our turkey pancakes and the glass of Alka-Seltzer.

-----❁-----

On the ninth day of Christmas, by lunchtime dad was blotto,
He knew that bird was back again, this time as a risotto.

-----❁-----

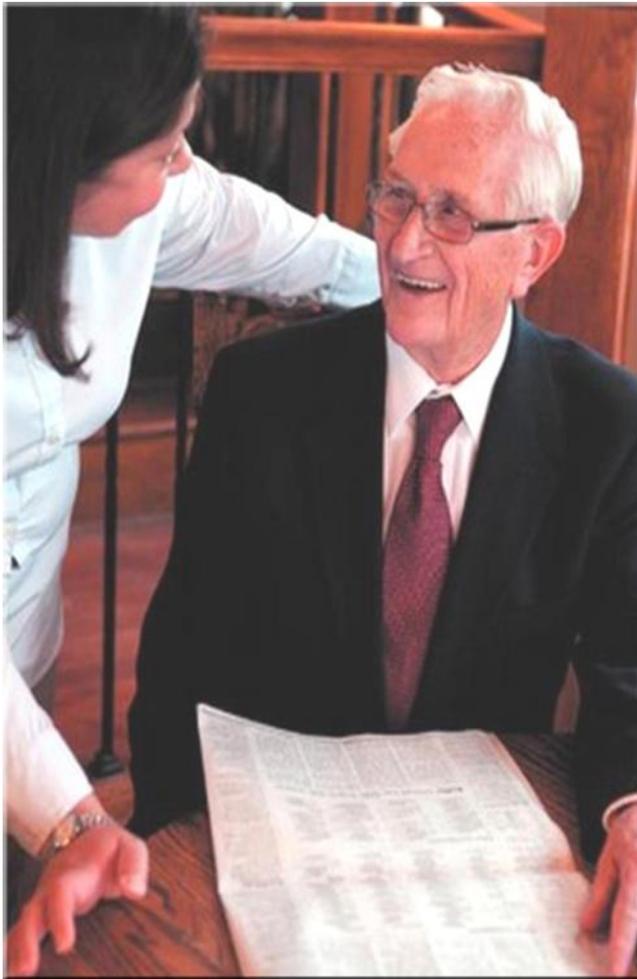
On the tenth day of Christmas we were drinking home-made brew,
Anything to help us face that steaming turkey stew.

-----❁-----

On the eleventh day of Christmas our lovely tree was moulting,
And with chilli, soy and oyster sauce, the turkey was revolting.

-----❁-----

On the twelfth day of Christmas we had smiles back on our lips,
The guests had gone, the turkey too – We Dined on Fish and Chips.



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The Bishop's Letter, December 2014

Bishop Steven writes

War and Peace

2014 has been a year when Europe has marked the centenary of the First World War. We've remembered those who sacrificed so much so that their children and grandchildren could live in peace. The beautiful installation of handmade poppies at the Tower of London has been a focus nationally. There have been many other services and acts of remembering across the Diocese.

Every year in Advent the Church reads again the great words of Isaiah about the coming of the Messiah. They are prophecies of peace, written in the midst of war. We should read them seriously this year.



Isaiah gives us the beautiful promise that one day “they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore” (2.4).

It is Isaiah who tells us that “the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire” because of the one who will come. He will be called “Prince of Peace” (9.5,6).

In the Christmas story, the promise of peace is echoed in the hymn of the angels “Glory to God in the highest heaven and on earth peace among those whom he favours” (Luke 2.14).

In a world torn by war, Christians need to keep the hope of peace alive. This year has seen bitter and violent conflict in Syria, in Gaza, in Sudan, in Iraq and Afghanistan and in many other parts of the world. War takes a terrible toll on those who fight and on the many who are displaced or maimed or bereaved. War exacts a terrible cost on the wellbeing of a nation.

Peace in the Bible translates the beautiful Hebrew word “Shalom”. Shalom is more than an agreement not to fight. It is more than quietness or silence.

It means completeness, soundness, health, fullness of life, being fulfilled, reconciliation.

Shalom is the fruitfulness of a well ordered garden, the peace and security of a just and fair society. Shalom is reconciliation within families and between nations. Shalom is tolerance and mutual respect between different religious beliefs. Shalom is prosperity and stability in society. Shalom is freedom of choice and conscience and respect for the rule of law. Shalom is fairness across a city. Shalom is security from violence and persecution of all kinds.

Shalom, peace, is the common vision of humankind. Shalom is what enables children to grow up without fear, the elderly to live with dignity, those who build houses to live in them and those who work to enjoy the fruits of their labours.

We give thanks at the end of this year for the peace which we enjoy and for those who make it possible. We remember and we pray for peace in those parts of the world torn apart by war today.

And we look forward in this season to celebrate the coming of Jesus Christ, the one who is called the Prince of Peace, the one who brings the gift of peace beyond understanding for human hearts and the rich promise of peace for the nations of the earth.

+Steven Sheffield



Festival of Prayer - by P Clarke

About 500 people from across our Diocese gathered at Philadelphia Church for the Diocesan |Development Day entitled a Festival of Prayer. The former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams was the keynote speaker, and what an excellent keynote speaker he was. His address was inspirational. He said that sadly prayer is something many Christians don't like to talk about, it's something we know we should do and something we feel everyone else does better than us. Everyone had the opportunity to attend three workshops on prayer which included Monastic Prayer, Praying with Icons, Prayer and Sexuality, Spirituality and Mission, Growing through prayer, Prayer in difficult times.

Continues overleaf

Festival of Prayer - *continued*

Prayer through Music, and one led by Rowan Williams “When the going gets rough”. It was a great day of teaching on prayer and a chance to meet up with folk from other churches around the Diocese.

The workshop lead by Bishop Rowan spoke to many people’s hearts and their present situations, some of them difficult. . Pray as you can, he said, not as you can’t reminding us that when the going gets rough the body of Christ kicks in. His words were be there for one another. We need, he said, structure, honesty, spirituality, words, and patterns of behaviour to keep us in touch. Honesty leaves room, he said, for God to be God, assuring us that the gods we invent won’t like it. . How we pray and how we live inject into a broken and chaotic world something which heals and pulls together. What God is doing does, he said, involve us saying our prayers.

The day closed with an address from Bishop Steven who reminded us that Jesus’ followers asked him, at the beginning of Luke chapter 11 to teach them to pray as John taught his disciples to pray. Why? The disciples saw something in Jesus prayer life that inspired them. They saw in him power, wisdom, and compassion for the world. Jesus in response gave them the Lord’s Prayer. The version of the Lord’s prayer below was used at a Reader Quiet Day

Father and Mother of us all,
you are love through and through,
and we bless you.
Let your new world come,
let what you long for be always done.
In everyone, everywhere – and in us.
be near enough to reach our need every day
Be gentle enough to forgive us
the hurt we have done to you –
as we are gentle and forgive in our turn.
Never let us fall,
but draw us away from evil and the dark.
For we know the world that is coming is yours,
all yours, in richness and beauty and splendour.
Amen

Links to visit - <http://youtu.be/PWEnK5qnGYo> and http://www.sheffield.anglican.org/UserFiles/File/Sermons/Bishop_Steven_Audio_Dev_Day.mp3

Will You Remember Them – December & January

Threat to Christianity in the Middle East - “An Indescribable Tragedy”

HRH - The Prince of Wales recently stated that the treatment of Christians in the Middle East is a “tragedy”. He shared his views through a video message played at the launch of a new report entitled ‘Religious Freedom in the World Report 2014’, in the House of Lords on 4th November. The report by ‘Aid to the Church in Need’, explores the extent to which freedom of religion or belief is upheld or denied in 196 countries worldwide, concluding that in 116 of these countries (60%) these freedoms are compromised.

Prince Charles recognised that Iraq and Syria have been of particular concern recently. “The horrendous and heart-breaking events in Iraq and Syria have brought the subject of religious freedom and persecution to the forefront of the world’s news. We have learnt with mounting despair of the expulsion of Christians, Muslims and Yazids from towns and cities that their ancestors have occupied for centuries”. Open Doors (A Christian charity) is now supporting over 6,000 displaced families in Iraq and 9,000 in Syria, through local partners and churches on the ground. Other faith and secular organisations are working in similar ways.

In his final remarks, Prince Charles observed that “our future as a free society – both here in Britain and throughout the world – depends on recognising the crucial role played by people of faith”.

Zoe Smith, Head of Advocacy at Open Doors said, “This was an incredibly timely launch of a significant report. It follows a year of persecution that has appalled the world and was on a night when two Christians accused of blasphemy in Pakistan were beaten and burned to death by an enraged mob. Our hope and prayer is that the message of this report will ensure that the right to freedom of religion or belief is universally accepted as a fundamental right, intrinsic to the inherent dignity of each human being”.

Please Pray

- That there will be a clear progression from recognition to collaborative action among political and religious leaders to see freedom of religion upheld around the world.

JD

Links HRH video - <http://religion-freedom-report.org.uk/>
Aid to the Church in Need - www.acn-intl.org
Open Doors - www.opendoorsuk.org

Mothers Union Meeting – 5th November

Our speaker at the November meeting was Maureen Brewis branch co-ordinator at St Saviours Mother Union High Green. She gave an interesting talk with ‘slides’ on a trekking holiday in Nepal. When Maureen and her husband retired, they wanted to do something different as a holiday. First they visited India where Maureen was born. A trekking holiday in Nepal was their next choice. Maureen has always been fascinated by Mount Everest and was delighted when their flight passed over the mountain where they took photographs of wonderful views.

From Kathmandu their trekking began with their ‘Sherpa’ guides, climbing long steep pathways and steps up into the hillside over beautiful terrain, lush vegetation and wild flowers. The people high up in the hillside villages are poor, but very proud people, most are friendly and welcoming. The parents of the children work extremely hard to enable them to send their children to school. The school Maureen visited was called ‘Samata’ school, a very large school built of ‘Bamboo’ educating children from Primary to Senior school age. The teachers are very dedicated to the children. Help is always needed to fund the school, which Maureen and her husband now support. Transport is very infrequent too some children may have walked a few miles to get there. The older boys taught ‘life skills’ such as tent making and ploughing, this is encouraged as many may have never been outside their villages. The staple diet is mainly rice, wheat and potatoes. The climate is warm and dry but gets cold in the evenings.

The animals in Nepal are treated with much respect and there is a saying with Nepalese people “Animals First – People Second”.

Nothing is wasted in Nepal and we saw on the slide a beautiful hotel carved and built using recycled wood.

A celebratory ‘meal’ with gifts was given to Maureen and her husband by the hotel staff where they stayed to celebrate their 40th Wedding Anniversary, which took place during the holiday.

Maureen’s talk was most interesting and enjoyable.

MP

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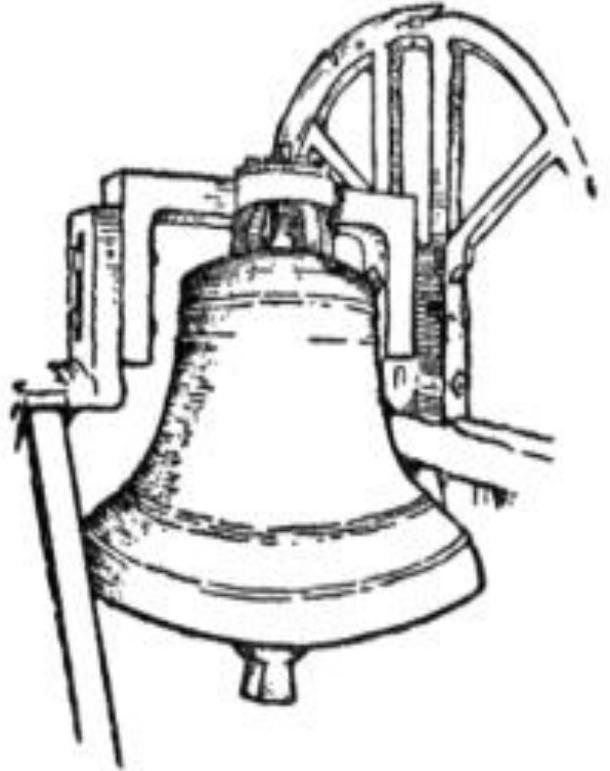


My First Bellinging Outing

On Saturday 15th November, many Ecclesfield ringers went on an outing to West Yorkshire.

First we went to a church called St Michael the Archangel which was in Emley. There were six bells.

At first I was nervous because I had only ever rung at St Mary's, my home tower, but after a first pull I got used to it and started to enjoy it. Once we got there we had a nice pull and some nice methods. I rang the second bell and we rang rounds. These bells were the lightest we rang and also these bells were not in a ringing room, they were in a gallery inside the church. I found that a bit strange.



After that we set off to our second church, where the bells were in a ringing room. The church was called All Hallows and it was in Almondbury. There were eight bells in this tower. These bells were my favourite even though they were the heaviest bells of the outing. On these bells I felt like I was so comfortable and I loved it.

The final tower was also called All Hallows and it was in Kirkburton. This tower also had eight bells. We had to climb some really steep stairs in a narrow staircase and the door into the ringing room was tiny, even I had to be careful not to bump my head. The ringing room was really small but these bells sounded amazing.

Once we rang them the whole room began to shake with the weight of the bells! It felt like being on a boat. The pictures were rattling on the walls! When we had rung all the bells we went to a place called the Foxglove and we all ended the day with a delicious meal. Although this outing was my first I think it will be the one I remember for ever.

By Faith Johnson

News from the Friends of Ecclesfield Library

So much has happened since the last edition that it's hard for us to believe it's been only 8 weeks since we took over the library. November was the busiest month we've seen so far. We're all delighted with this and the response we've had from the local community to the events we've hosted so far.

The start of the month saw us welcome the Heeley Development Trust into the library to run a course on tablet technology. This sold out quickly and we've already got a waiting list for the next one. We're keen that the library is available to all of us as a venue for learning so if there are courses you'd like to see us run please let us know.

On the subject of education, Ecclesfield Primary School is now a regular visitor on Monday and Friday afternoons. We're so happy to be able to support the excellent work of our local teachers in developing the literacy our children and we're keen to do more. Watch this space for details of the initiatives we plan to build for children.

Barbara Russell

Christmas at the Library

Children's Christmas Craft Club

Every Saturday in December 1pm -4pm

6th December Christmas Cards and Decorations,

13th December Christmas Gifts

20th December Decorate your Christmas Stocking

Cost £4 per session places limited so please book to avoid disappointment. Call 07411 977590 to book

Story Time with Santa

Monday 22nd December 2pm

Free to attend but if gift is required from Santa cost is £2.

Places are limited so please book in advance to avoid disappointment. Call 07411 977590 to book.

Christingle Service - 21st December – Ecclesfield Church.



Advent is the time for Christingles when Churches, Schools and Children's organisations up and down the country are holding their own Christingle Events.

In 2013 the total collected for the Children's Society to help Children and their parents fight the ever increasing Poverty in this country was £1,534.38 a wonderful effort from everyone.

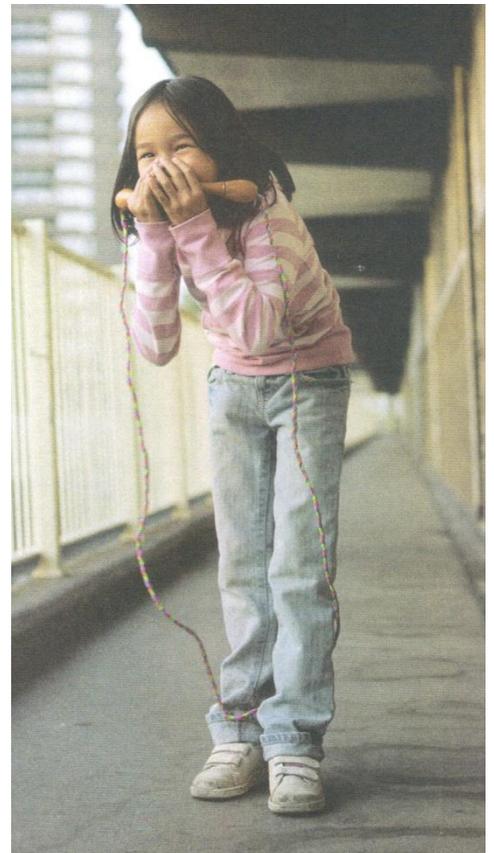
This year we hope with your help this will be maintained. We have the Box Collections, Coffee Mornings and the Christingle Service which all add up to the total amount we raise.

The Christingle Money Candle has altered in appearance this year; it is square and more sturdy than the Smartie Tubes of the past and more like a Money Box. The symbol of the Orange (the World) with the Candle (the Light of Jesus) on the top is just the same.

With a shocking 1 in 4 children living in poverty in the UK today, all of our support is needed more than ever. Poverty affects children in many different ways. It can harm their health and affect their way of life.

One child who was affected in this way was a young girl called Maya. For the first six years of her life she and her family lived in extreme poverty. Often this meant Maya went hungry because her parents couldn't afford to pay for her school lunches.

Thankfully, a teacher at Maya's school got in touch with the local Social Services because she was worried about Maya. This led to Maya's family being referred to a service run by The Children's Society, who helped Maya's parents receive the financial help they were entitled to.



PB

Diary for the Month of December

Tuesday 2 nd	7.30 pm	Bell Ringing Practice
	7.30 pm	Prayer Meeting in Church
Wednesday 3 rd	10.00 am	Service at Eva Ratcliffe House
	1.00 pm	Mothers' Union – Readings, Carols & Mince Pies
Thursday 4 th	9.30 am	Holy Communion
	7.30 pm	Fabric Team meets in Church
	7.30 pm	Ladies' Group in the Gatty Hall / Coffee Evening
Friday 5 th	7.30 pm	Bell Ringing Practice (Silent Ringing)
Sunday 7th		The Second Sunday of Advent
	10.00 am	Parish Communion
	12 noon	Baptism Service
	6.30 pm	Evening Service
Tuesday 9 th	7.30 pm	Bell Ringing Practice
Wednesday 10 th	10.00 am	Service at Eva Ratcliffe House
Thursday 11 th	9.30 am	Holy Communion
	2.00 pm	Service at Hartwell House
	7.30 pm	Ladies' Group in the Gatty Hall/Carols & Mince Pies
Friday 12 th	7.30 pm	Bell Ringing Practice (Silent Ringing)
Saturday 13 th	10.00 am	Coffee Morning – Fund Raising for Lewis Bagshaw
Sunday 14th		The Third Sunday of Advent
	8.30 am	Holy Communion
	10.00 am	Parish Communion
	2.00 pm to 3.30 pm	Christmas Crafts for Children
	4.00 pm	Living Stones
	6.30 pm	Carols round the tree.
Monday 15 th	7.30 pm	Outreach Team meets in Church
Tuesday 16 th	7.30 pm	Bell Ringing Practice
Wednesday 17 th	10.00 am	Service at Eva Ratcliffe House
Thursday 18 th	9.30 am	Holy Communion
Friday 19 th	7.30 pm	Bell Ringing Practice (Silent Ringing)

Sunday 21st

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

10.00 am Parish Communion
4.00 pm Christingle Service
6.30 pm Service of the Longest Night
7.30 pm Bell Ringing Practice

Tuesday 23rd

Wednesday 24th

4.00 pm Crib Service
6.30 pm Carol Service

Thursday 25th

Christmas Day

8.30 am Holy Communion
10.00 am Parish Communion

Sunday 28th

The First Sunday of Christmas

8.30 am Holy Communion
10.00 am Parish Communion
6.30 pm Evening Service

Tuesday 30th

7.30 pm Bell Ringing Practice

From the Registers

Baptisms

2nd November Otis Carter
2nd November Ava Clark
2nd November Theo Rodgers

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

Flower Rota

December 2014

7th Advent 2 - No Flowers
14th Advent 3 - No Flowers
21st Advent 4 - No Flowers
23rd - 24th Christmas Flowers
28th Vacant

January 2015

4th D & J Banham
11th J Bailey & M Roberts
18th V. Grey
25th A. Hackett & J. Beevers



Diary for the Month of January 2015

Thursday 1st 9.30 am Holy Communion
Friday 2nd 7.30 pm Bell Ringing Practice (Silent Ringing)

Sunday 4th The Second Sunday of Christmas

10.00 am Parish Communion
12 noon Baptism Service
6.30 pm Evening Service
Monday 5th 7.30 pm PCC meets in Church
Tuesday 6th 7.30 pm Bell Ringing Practice
Wednesday 7th 10.00 am Service at Eva Ratcliffe House
1.00 pm MU in the Gatty Hall / Joy Turnbull –
Armchair Keep Fit
Thursday 8th 9.30 am Holy Communion
10.30 am Prayer Meeting in Church
2.00 pm Service at Hartwell House
Friday 9th 7.30 pm Bell Ringing Practice (Silent Ringing)

Sunday 11th The Baptism of Christ

8.30 am Holy Communion
10.00 am Parish Communion
6.30 pm Holy Communion
Tuesday 13th 7.30 pm Bell Ringing Practice
Wednesday 14th 10.00 am Service at Eva Ratcliffe House
Thursday 15th 9.30 am Holy Communion
Friday 16th 7.30 pm Bell Ringing Practice (Silent Ringing)

Sunday 18th The Second Sunday of Epiphany

10.00 am Parish Communion
4.00 pm Living Stones
6.30 pm Evening Service
Monday 19th 7.30 pm Mission Team meet in Church
Tuesday 20th 7.30 pm Bell Ringing Practice
Wednesday 21st 10.00 am Service at Eva Ratcliffe House
Thursday 22nd 9.30 am Holy Communion
Friday 23rd 7.30 pm Bell Ringing Practice (Silent Ringing)

Sunday 25th

The Third Sunday of Epiphany

8.30 am Holy Communion

10.00 am Parish Communion

6.30 pm Prayer and Praise

Monday 26th

7.30 pm Ignatian Prayer in Church

Tuesday 27th

7.30 pm Prayer Meeting in Church

7.30 pm Bell Ringing Practice

Wednesday 28th

10.00 am Service at Eva Ratcliffe House

7.30 pm Fabric Committee meet in Church

Thursday 29th

9.30 am Holy Communion

7.30 pm Ladies' Group in the Gatty Hall / Coffee
Evening

Friday 30th

7.30 pm Bell Ringing Practice (Silent Ringing)

Quotes - With Christmas in mind:

- May the joys of Christmas also be the joys of your tomorrows.
- Believe in God and you'll believe in miracles. Believe in the baby of Bethlehem, and you'll experience one.
- It is no use saying that we are born 2000 years too late to give room to Christ... Christ is always with us, always asking for room in our hearts.... And giving shelter or food to anyone who asks for it, or needs it, is giving it to Christ.
- Human nature is like a stable inhabited by the ox of passion and the ass of prejudice – animals which take up a lot of room and which I suppose most of us are feeding on the quiet. And it is there between them, pushing them out, that Christ must be born, and in their very manger he must be laid.
Evelyn Underhill
- We must never allow anything to blind us to the true significance of what happened at Bethlehem so long ago. Nothing can alter the fact that we live on a visited planet. *J B Phillips*
- The Word of God, Jesus Christ, on account of his great love for mankind, became what we are in order to make us what he is himself. *Irenaeus*

The Gardening Year – December 2014 - January 2015

Light or Sandy Soils – these soils are easy to work and they warm up quickly in spring, so making them valuable for growing early crops. They are so porous, that soluble plant foods are constantly leached or washed out of them. This leaching can be reduced by digging in garden compost or well-rotted manure. The humus formed also acts as a sponge to retain moisture. To reduce loss from leaching add compost or manure in late winter or early spring rather than digging in before the main winter rains or snows have fallen. Many crops on light soils have to be watered in summer, but you can reduce the frequency of watering by spreading a mulch of peat at least 3in. deep along the rows of plants alternatively, crops can be mulched with spent hops, wood shavings, straw, bracken or black polythene, Always soak the ground well before laying the mulch. Before digging wood shavings or straw, sprinkle on sulphate of ammonia at the rate of 2oz. per square yard. Plants on sandy soils respond readily to general fertilisers, give several small applications over the growing period rather than one heavy dressing. Sandy soils are often deficient in potash so supplement a general fertiliser by adding sulphate of potash at the rate of 1oz. per square yard or use a tomato fertiliser which is high in potash content. Root crops, potatoes, onions, early cloche crops, outdoor tomatoes, asparagus and some of the less hardy tree fruits such as peaches and apricots can be grown successfully on well cultivated light soils. However, certain types of vegetables vary in their response to light soils. French beans, for example generally crop better than runner beans and New Zealand spinach better than summer spinach.

Chalk Soils and Peat Soils – these are the least common garden soils and are rare as chickens teeth around Ecclesfield and surrounding areas. Chalk soils are strongly alkaline and seldom need liming. The main need is for organic manures. Peat soils – there are two completely different types: Fen Peat's which are probably the richest and most productive of all soils and acid Peat's which are sour, often waterlogged and extremely difficult to make productive. The acid Peat's are found on and around moorland where decaying vegetation has accumulated over wet or impervious subsoil or rock. They are acutely short of Lime and of essential nutrients.

And that dear reader's is another year gone by, so I would like to wish all our readers and all at St. Mary's:

A Merry Christmas and a Happy Gardening New Year. *Colin Williams.*

Winter

Winter has its vicious grip on land air and sea
With howling gales and icy rain it takes its grasping hold
Trees, shrubs, flowers and grass retreat from growing time
Until this season of weariness has gone away once more.

The sun's glow has lost its warmth and no longer shines bright
The glimpses we have are watery and weak and have no heat
Jack Frost is making his presence real and patterns our panes
With swirls and sparkles which let us know how cold is the day.

Icicles cling precariously to frosted windowsills
And remain there frozen in time and space
Awaiting the melting thaw in springtime
A constant reminder of the passage of winter.

Tread carefully on your walks in the winter woods
For all is slimy, slippery and sodden underfoot
And the silence surrounds you eerily no animal prowls
The depths of the frozen forest grounds.

The birds have left this wild cold clime
To find a haven of summer sun elsewhere
So no birdsong lifts your spirits on your weary walk
Nor bluebells chime their welcome as you wind your way.

Yet still there is a solemn silence to give your mind a peace
That cannot be found with summer's noisy welcome
So breathe in the silence and the clean cold air
And refresh your mind and body apiece.

Beneath the forest floor lie the dormant roots and seeds
Which next summer will be a harvest of beauty and perfume
So when next you walk your weary winter trek
Take time to think about the bounty of summer to come.

And when snow and ice descend in a sudden squall
Of icy depth and frozen feet find footsteps hard
Still there is the promise that this will pass in time
And the sun will rise triumphant once more.

Sheila Johns December 2013



Ian Smith ATT Anne Smith BA (Hons)

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Quotes of the Month

As you entertain all the relatives this Christmas, remember:

- **Know** that even when you are in the kitchen, our Lord moves amidst the pots and pans. *Teresa of Avila*
- **My troubles** melt away before a fervent prayer – like snow before the sun. *St John Vianney*
- **Auntie**: one who has stopped growing at both ends, and who is now growing in the middle.
- **Egoist**: the relative who is usually me-deep in conversation.
- **Handkerchief**: cold storage by your cousin.
- **Secret**: something you tell to only one family member at a time.
- **Toothache**: the pain that drives you to extraction, even on Christmas Day.
- **Tomorrow**: one of the great labour-saving devices used by your sibling today.
- **Yawn**: an honest opinion from an uncle, openly expressed.
- **Wrinkles**: something your relatives have gained since you last saw them. You have character lines.

Crossword Puzzle - Solution is here

H	I	D	E		D	I	S	G	R	A	C	E
I		O		S		M		R		L		A
S	O	N	S	H	I	P		O	A	T	H	S
S		O		R		R		A		E		Y
T	U	T	T	I		I	G	N	O	R	E	
A				N		S				E		S
F	O	R	E	K	N	O	W	L	E	D	G	E
F		E				N		A				A
	A	S	H	R	A	M		M	E	N	O	R
J		T		E		E		E		E		C
A	R	O	M	A		N	I	N	E	V	E	H
D		R		C		T		T		E		E
A	M	E	T	H	Y	S	T		T	R	O	D

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Ecclesfield Ladies Group - November

Thursday 6th November - this evening we were entertained by Ray Lawrence and his two ladies (one of them his wife Kath) to amusing verses and sketches. It seemed years since we last had this kind of enjoyment and it was long overdue. Ray Lawrence is best known for his plays and comic monologues (available for world-wide performance from Lazybeescripts.com). All the money from the sale of his books goes to “Macmillan Cancer Support”.

Now here’s a Tall Tale.

I’m Adamant, I think...

There can be no doubt about it, I’m adamant, I think,
That I saw the Loch Ness Monster, very vague, bit quite distinct.
He had big rolling eyes and a set of wicked teeth
He was there down on the Loch – Or at least that’s my belief.
His body was all green – and lumpy with red dots –
Though he may have been dark blue and those lumps, perhaps were spots.
He was shaped just like a serpent and he chased me with a roar-
At least I think he chased me – I cannot be too sure.
Yes! There is no doubt about it, I’m positive – I think –
That I saw the Loch Ness Monster – but it might have been the drink!

Ray Lawrence

Thursday 13th November 2014 – Tonight we travelled to ‘The Plough’ at Bradfield for our annual Christmas Dinner. We thoroughly enjoyed the evening, the atmosphere was warm and relaxing, we had a room to ourselves which was just as well as were not noted for keeping a low profile. The meal was very good and the two young people serving us were really obliging.

They won’t thank me for telling you but next year is our 50th Anniversary, imagine that! The fact is that we have enjoyed each other’s company, have had many interesting speakers and outings, helped many charities both local and national, not to mention the Pantomimes we’ve put on. Ah! That’s a longer story.

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Crossword Puzzle (Solution is on page 25)

Clues Across

- 1** ‘How long will you — your face from me?’ (Psalm 13:1) (4)
- 3** ‘Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the — he bore’ (Hebrews 13:13) (8)
- 9** Posh sin (anag.) (Romans 8:15) (7)
- 10** Solemn pledges (Matthew 5:33) (5)
- 11** Italian term for full orchestra (5)
- 12** ‘For he who avenges blood remembers; he does not — the cry of the afflicted’ (Psalm 9:12) (6)
- 14** Prescience (1 Peter 1:2) (13)
- 17** Where a Hindu holy man lives (6)
- 19** ‘If he found any... who belonged to the Way, whether — — women, he might take them as prisoners’ (Acts 9:3) (3,2)
- 22** Fragrance (2 Corinthians 2:15) (5)
- 23** Vine hen (anag.) (Jonah 1:2) (7)
- 24** Precious stone decorating the twelfth foundation of the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:20) (8)
- 25** ‘Will you keep to the old path that evil men have — ?’ (Job 22:15) (4)

Clues Down

- 1** ‘Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with — — ’ (Numbers 20:11) (3,5)
- 2** ‘You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, “ — — murder”’ (Matthew 5:21) (2,3)
- 4** One of Paul’s many hardships endured as a servant of God (2 Corinthians 6:5) (13)
- 5** ‘We ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, — inwardly’ (Romans 8:23) (5)
- 6** Changed (Daniel 6:8) (7)
- 7** ‘My yoke is — and my burden is light’ (Matthew 11:30) (4)
- 8** Recoil (Revelation 12:11) (6)
- 13** ‘O Lord, you have — me and you know me’ (Psalm 139:1) (8)

15 ‘ — to me the joy of your salvation’ (Psalm 51:12) (7)

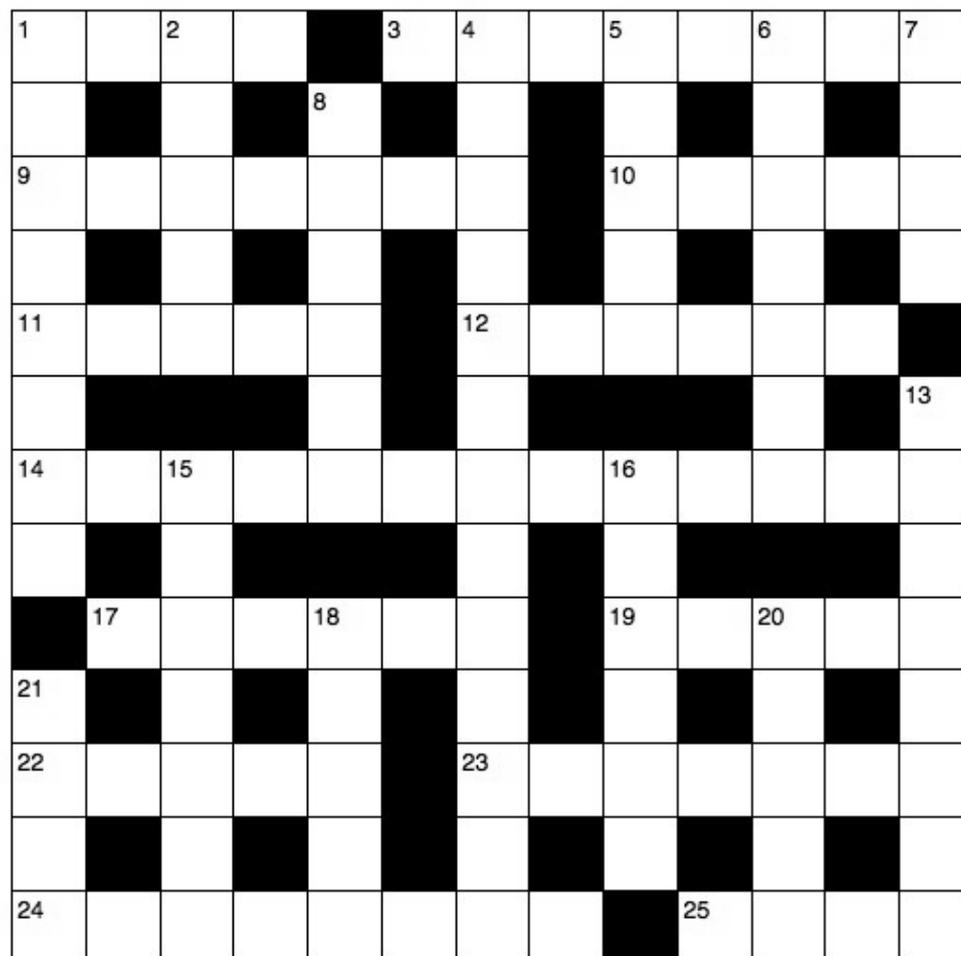
16 Express sorrow (Isaiah 16:7) (6)

18 ‘Then he said to Thomas, “ — out your hand and put it into my side”’ (John 20:27) (5)

20 ‘God has said, “ — will I leave you; — will I forsake you”’ (Hebrews 13:5) (5)

21 Son of Onam and brother of Shammai (1 Chronicles 2:28) (4)

Crossword Puzzle - Solution is on page 25



Christmas carols

One night as Christmas approached, some friends decided to go carol singing. A man answered the door of one house, and gasped as they launched into the opening lines of the first carol. Within half a minute, he looked stricken. Soon tears were welling up in his eyes. The carollers sang and sang, and the man looked more and more moved by what he heard. At last the carollers stopped, and one ventured: “I understand – you are sad because our singing reminds you of your happy childhood Christmas days.” The man looked at her with misery in his eyes. “No,” he whispered back. “It’s just that I am a musician!”

Prayers and Poems Page

Prayer for Christmas Presence

Generous Father,
At this busy time of year, help us to remember the important things. In all the rush of sending cards and giving presents may we make time to be still, to acknowledge your sending and giving of the greatest gift of all, Jesus. Thank you that he didn't stay in the stable in Bethlehem, but lived and died and became the Saviour of all who put their trust in him. May we receive afresh the gift of your presence with us in Jesus, now and for ever, with great thankfulness. In his name, we pray. Amen.

By Daphne Kitching

Ring Out The Bells

Ring out the bells and let them tell
The wondrous news throughout the land
How Christ was born in Bethlehem
And brought salvation down to man.

God's wisdom had confounded all
Who could have thought of such a plan
As Deity descended low
God's Son encompassed in a span.

He tabernacled here with us,
As God He laid His glory by
He lived as man to bear our sin,
And though a king was crucified.

And can it be He came for us
To take our sin, not just in part?
If this be true, come celebrate
And let the bells ring in our hearts!

By Megan Carter

Away with the In-Laws

Away with the in-laws, so far from my bed
A lumpy old pillow to rest my poor head
It's Christmas tomorrow, but will I survive?
When twenty relations for dinner arrive?

Then comes Christmas morning, but I'm really blue
(I've waited an hour to get in the loo)
I stand on the landing, the door's firmly closed
While Aunty Miranda is powd'ring her nose.

So when I get downstairs the coffee is cold
The bacon was lovely, or so I am told
For that too was hist'ry at that advanced hour
And it was for nothing that I'd rushed my shower.

But it doesn't matter, for lunchtime comes soon
With mushy potatoes to heighten my gloom
The turkey is nice, of that there's no doubt
But nothing is worse than a cold Brussels sprout.

And then come the presents – the children go wild
The latest contraptions, the most modern styles
A costly new doll, a computerised boat –
But the kids are all playing with grannie's old coat!

At last it is evening, and we can say 'bye'!
And start the car engine with a grateful sigh.
We're laughing like children on our homeward way
As we're looking forward to our Boxing Day!

By Nigel Beeton

Saint of the Month - January 2nd Basil and Gregory

Lives of costly discipleship

By David Winter

‘Discipline’ is now virtually a banned word, along with ‘risk’, ‘problem’ and ‘failure’. They seem to have been replaced respectively by ‘focus’, ‘safety’, ‘challenge’ and ‘opportunity’. On the occasions when we do recognise and applaud the virtue of discipline, it’s usually in the lives and activities of soldiers, police officers, dressage horses and the dog. But every year the Church Calendar remembers (on 2nd January) the lives of two outstanding leaders of the fourth century Church, Basil and Gregory. The hall mark of their lives was an iron self-discipline. Life-long friends since they were students together, they committed themselves to an almost ferocious austerity. In fact, both died early from the long-term consequences of extreme self-denial.

Bishops in the Eastern Church, they looked more to the new city of Constantinople than to Rome, but they both faced powerful opposition. Basil’s unwavering commitment to the faith earned him many enemies, not only from secular sources (political and even imperial) but also from within the Church. Gregory, a less robust character, faced similar insults and even physical violence when he set out to reform the church at Constantinople. Eventually this opposition cost him his bishopric.

Basil was an activist, Gregory a contemplative, yet their lives followed a similar path of costly discipleship. Basil was born into a wealthy and influential family, but during a time of famine he felt it was his Christian duty to distribute the entire family inheritance in the form of food for the poor in his city. From then on he lived an austere, even frugal life, and died at the age of 49, worn out by disease and physical weakness. Gregory too had poor health, largely through self-imposed poverty.

In the declining years of the Roman Empire and in an atmosphere of moral laxity they believed that as Christian leaders they should set an example. ‘Do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord’, says the Bible. Perhaps modern Christianity is a little too quick to see discipline in terms of subjection and punishment. But ‘those whom the Lord loves he disciplines’. Basil and Gregory, whatever we think of their lifelong regime of self-denial, were clear that their life of discipline was motivated by love of the same Lord who in love disciplined them. Without going to the extremes that they did, perhaps a little godly discipline might help us to build a healthier relationship with the God we try to ‘trust and obey’.

Contact Numbers for Local Groups ☎

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Leader - Mrs B Travis
Tel: TBA

Ecclesfield Brownies

Gatty Hall
Monday 5.30 pm to 6.45 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

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Wednesday 7.30 pm to 10.00 pm
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Theatre Tel No. 0114 240 2624

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email: ecclesfieldlib@gmail.com

Ecclesfield Cubs

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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

Scout Hut (off Yew Lane)
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Leader - Mr E. Buttimer
Tel: 0114 258 6935
Group Scout Leader
John Otter Tel. 0114 246 1752

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