

News & Views From St Mary's Church Ecclesfield



Church Magazine December 2018 & January 2019

www.stmarysecclesfield.com

Price 60p

First Words

As usual December is a very busy month at St Mary's.

We begin with the **Christmas Fayre on Saturday 1st December** in the Gatty Hall and Church.

Then on **Sunday 2nd December** we will hold a very special service of **Advent Carols at 10am**.

Our Christmas services and events begin on **Sunday 9th December**. After the 10am service from **11.30 to 12.30** we will be having **Christmas Crafts** aimed at Primary School age children. Parents and guardians are welcome to stay for refreshments, (tea, coffee and cake!), and see what their children are up to! For more information see Stephanie Dale. At **6.00pm** also on the **9th December** we will be hosting the annual **Community Carols** around the Tree in the Churchyard.

On Sunday **16th December at 4pm** we have our popular **Christingle Service**, raising funds for The Children's Society.

On **Monday 17th December at 7pm** we are pleased to welcome **Ecclesfield High School for their Christmas concert**.

And on **Tuesday 18th December** at 2pm Key Stage Two children from **Ecclesfield Primary School** will be in Church for their **Christmas Carol Service**.

There is a change of key on **Friday 21st December at 7pm with the Service of the Longest Night**.

On **Christmas Eve, Monday 24th December at 4pm** we will be holding our **Crib Service** and at **6.30pm it is the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols**.

Finally, on **Christmas Day, Tuesday 25th December** on Jesus Birthday we will celebrate an **All Age Eucharist at 10am**.

There is something for everyone. Could I encourage you to pray about all of these events, and also think about who you can invite to one of these special services.

January is usually a quiet month in the Church's calendar, but there are some events to take note of.

On **Monday 7th Jan at 7.30pm** we have the first **PCC Meeting** of 2019.

On **Wednesday 9th Jan at 1.30** it is the **Mothers' Union AGM** in the Gatty Hall, and on **Wed 23rd Jan at 12.30** there is the annual Mothers' Union Christmas Lunch.

On Monday 28th Jan at 7.30pm the Ecclesfield Community forum will meet at the Gatty Hall (TBC)

Please note that from **Sunday 13th to Sunday 20th Jan** St Mary's will be holding a **Prayer Week**. As part of this week there will be a time of Reflection, Worship and Waiting on God held on **Wednesday 16th Jan 2.30 - 4pm**. It is an invitation to pray for our Church, its mission and ministry at the beginning of the New Year. More details soon.

God bless,
Tim



Front Cover – Poinsettia -The plant's association with Christmas began in 16th-century Mexico, where legend tells of a girl, commonly called Pepita or Maria, who was too poor to provide a gift for the celebration of Jesus' birthday and was inspired by an angel to gather weeds from the roadside and place them in front of the church altar. Crimson blossoms sprouted from the weeds and became poinsettias. From the 17th century, Franciscan friars in Mexico included the plants in their Christmas celebrations. The star-shaped leaf pattern is said to symbolize the Star of Bethlehem, and the red colour represents the blood sacrifice through the crucifixion of Jesus. Photo by Scott Bauer

Back Cover – Carols around the Christmas Tree Poster

Thought for the Month

December is the time when we prepare for Christmas. In Church it means decorating and carol services. At home it means buying presents and sending cards; decorating and preparing special food. We have parties, we make a point of visiting family and friends. So much to do. So many mince pies. So little time.

Little wonder then that Advent is in danger of being swallowed up by the Christmas preparations. And that is a pity, because Advent is also a time to prepare for Christmas, but in a different way. It is an opportunity to prepare ourselves to celebrate the great mystery at the heart of our faith: that in Jesus born to Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem, God comes among us as one of us, as our hidden saviour.

In Jesus we see the truth of God; we see God as He has revealed Himself. That is why John in his Gospel calls Him the Word of God. In the baby laid in the manger and in the man that the baby grew into, God shows Himself to us.

Jesus has been called the “Unexpected God;” because He did not meet the expectations of the people of His day. Many of the prophecies that people thought applied to the Messiah were not fulfilled in Jesus; instead He fulfilled hopes and promises that no one before Him ever thought applied to God’s promised King.

People expected a powerful war-like king who would bring judgement and punishment on the people and on the nations. Malachi’s vision was of the Messiah who would come as a refiner’s fire purifying God’s people (Malachi 3:1-3).

Instead God came as a powerless, vulnerable child. He would purify the people by carrying their sin and guilt. Jesus was forced to endure imperfect and unjust human judgement. Even as a child He had to endure the murderous jealousy of Herod, becoming a refugee in Egypt before He was two years old.

In Jesus we are surprised by the humility and the love and the mercy of God ... for us. He came as the prince of peace and as Emmanuel, the child who would bring reconciliation and healing.

I invite you in all of the busyness to take a little time this Advent, to pause and to remember the heart and soul of our faith. That God is as He is in Jesus. As we tell the familiar story of the child born in the stable and laid in the manger, worshipped by shepherds and hunted by a king, remember that this child is God. God come among us. God come to find us. God come to bring peace among us and to reconcile every one of us to the Father.

Jesus was the Messiah that no one expected and very few wanted, but He is the Messiah that we all need. He is the Christ, our saviour and our lord, seeking out the lost. He is Jesus God with us.

Amen.

God and The Arts

Editor: For 2018, the Rev Michael Burgess is exploring symbols of the Christian faith as found in works of art.

'He gave us eyes to see them' - a Catalan artist's nativity in Barcelona

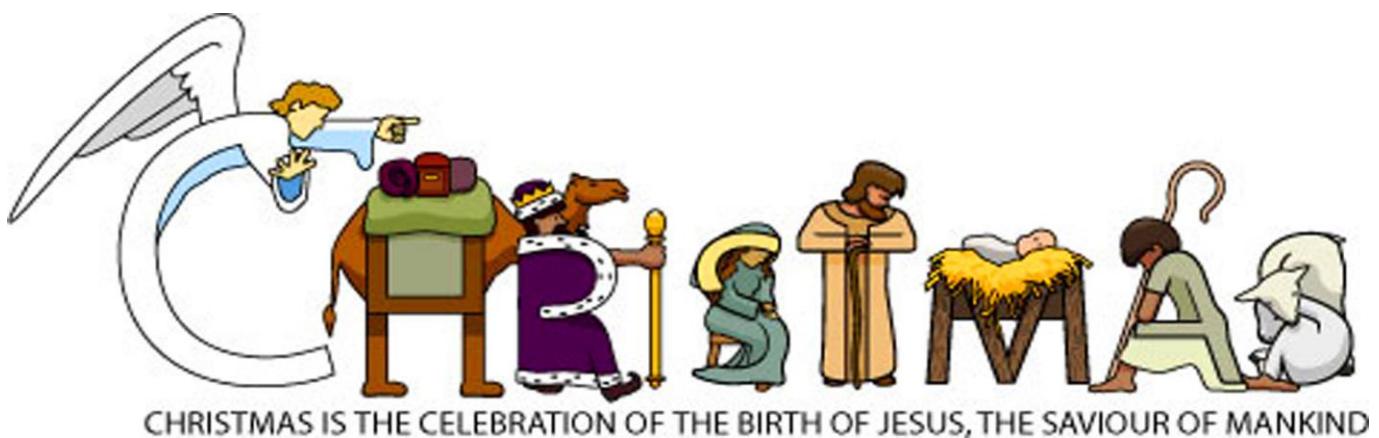
In January we began this course exploring signs and symbols with the Cross: a sign of death, but also a sign of victory. We end the year with a sign that proclaims birth and new life: the crib of Christmas. In December cribs will be set up in churches, homes, villages and town centres. It is a tradition that goes back to the nativity scene in a cave outside Greccio in Italy on Christmas Eve, 1223.



St Francis of Assisi invited all the people to a service there to remind them of a truth they had either forgotten or neglected: that Love came down at Christmas. We are told that as they looked inside the cave and saw the crib with the ox and ass, St Francis prayed and took up the infant Christ in his arms. Christ was 'the peaceful, tender and loving brother,' a vulnerable baby needing affection and care.

The simplicity and the beauty of that nativity scene is portrayed in this 12th century painting by an anonymous Catalan artist in a museum in Barcelona. Cribs were often very elaborate and ornate creations, bejewelled and decorated with episodes from our Lord's life. Here the scene is ordinary with few details. The haloes around the heads of Mary and the Christ-Child may look a little odd, but the artist and St Francis are at one in proclaiming a sign of life and love in this birth.

Each Christmas we are called to kneel before the crib with the animals and the shepherds. A 13th century Franciscan invites us to 'Gaze on the face of the babe with devotion...and delight in Him.' May we see the light of God's love in the new-born babe as we look into the crib, and may we delight to offer our hearts and lives in His service.



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St James the Least of All

On two wise men, one three-legged sheep and a tipsy tree

My dear Nephew Darren.

The Rectory,
St. James the Least

It really is time to get some new figures for the crib. After a series of accidents over the years, we are now down to two wise men, two shepherds, and one three-legged sheep that only remains upright if it is leaning against a shepherd.

Joseph, having been obliged to stand outside the shelter of the stable for the last four decades, is now comprehensively veneered with bat droppings. In a rather desperate effort to enlarge this rather frugal cast, Miss Timmins hit on the idea of introducing characters from the children's Easter garden. This would have all been very well if both sets of figures had been to the same scale, but we now have the shepherds apparently being threatened by two ten feet rabbits.

One of our local farmers – I am sure very kindly meant – donated far more straw for the stable than was necessary. Our decorators, refusing to let his generosity go to waste, used the lot. The result is that Mary and Joseph stand up to their waists, looking as if they are being engulfed by a straw snow drift. The crib, along with baby Jesus, has disappeared entirely. The latter is not entirely to be regretted, since no one can now see that Jesus has no nose and only one arm, the result of one of our children dropping Him on the floor at last year's Crib Service.

I am sure your ecologically appropriate Christmas tree, made of re-cycled dustbin liners will be much appreciated by your congregation, knowing that they are saving the planet for future generations. We however remain traditional, with a tree always donated by the local squire from his estate, even if it is at the cost of adding another degree to global warming. Not only does it look more fitting, but it gives our verger something to do on twelfth night, as he sweeps up several hundredweight of pine needles.

I sometimes wonder if it is entire coincidence that the tree is always delivered by the estate staff on a day when there has been torrential rain in the area. Carrying it into church up the aisle makes it look as if the parting of the Red Sea has unsuccessfully taken place inside St. James'. The major problem every year is getting the wretched thing to stand upright in the sanctuary. It takes so long that I sometimes feel it would be quicker to re-align all the church pillars to the same angle as the tree itself.

Last year's decision to have tree lights which flashed in succession was not a success. Those members who stared at them for too long while singing carols tended to fall over – although I suspect that Major Crump's inability to remain upright at the midnight Service was for rather different reasons. Not using flashing lights this year, the Major will have to find a different excuse.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

Mothers' Union

We enjoyed a wonderful illustrated talk by the Rev. Gordon Taylor, our Chaplain, about his collection of Nativity Cribs which he had collected over the years. The tradition of having a crib began in 1223 with St. Francis trying to show the village people how it really happened and how poor Mary and Joseph were. Jesus being born in a cave/stable with animals around and the shepherds (who were the outcasts of the village) receiving the message first and being welcomed in to see the Christ Child. This scene inspired many down the ages to make their own cribs and to make them as best they could with whatever materials they had. Often, they would make models of people in their villages showing that all were welcome at the crib, there could be the baker, the woodman, the blacksmith, women and children.

The figures in the crib scenes became more stylised as time went on - Mary was shown in blue (the most expensive dye known) on her cloak, Joseph had a beard and staff and the baby in hay in a manger or cradle. It was interesting to see changes in skin colour, there were other features and other animals as the idea spread around the world.

We also admired the materials used in different countries - Chile used copper, China painted pictures on the figures on the main characters, in Peru Jesus had a little woolly hat just like everyone wore. The crib figures from Bethlehem were made from beautiful figured olive wood which we would have loved to touch and feel. Many were of wood and clay but all with the ability to tell the story of the Messiah's birth and so obviously made with love and care and to the best of their ability - we wondered how the people of Austria managed to get theirs into a matchbox!

As our thoughts turn to Christmas and the greatest story on earth perhaps if you have crib scene it might take pride of place amid all the decorations and cards this year.

God bless you all from the Mothers' Union

The Children's Society

December is the most wonderful time for the Children's Society, as up and down the country Churches, schools, and children's organisations are holding their own Christingle Service. This year is extra special as it is the 50th Anniversary of Christingle.

Christingle was established by the Moravian Church in 1747 as a symbol of Christ's light and love. The Children's Society adopted it in 1968 and it has since become a popular family and community event.

The Christingle itself is made up of a lighted candle or glow stick (symbolising Jesus, the Light of the World) mounted on an orange (representing the world). A red ribbon or tape around the middle of the orange (indicating the blood of Christ) with four cocktail sticks bearing dried fruit and sweets to signify the four seasons and the fruits of the earth. These are given out to the children during the service.

Here at St. Mary's the Christingle Service is on Sunday 16th December at 4pm The candles to save pennies in will have gone out to the children's organisations in the village, if you know of any other child who would like one please ask at church.

Continues on page 18

Andrew Jones

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Children's Christmas Activity

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St. Mary's Church

Sunday

**9th December 2018
11.30am to 12.30pm**

(following the 10am Morning Service)

**Refreshments available
All are welcome**



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Will You Remember Them – December & January 2019

The 2018 Open Doors World Watch List

Over 200 million Christians around the world are persecuted, denied education or job opportunities, their churches and homes bombed and burned, their children abducted. The World Watch list is Open Doors annual ranking of the 50 countries where Christians face the most extreme persecution.

It is a unique, in depth record of the places where faith in Jesus costs the most. For over 60 years Open Doors has been on the ground with persecuted Christians. In over 50 countries around the world, our underground networks are equipping them with bibles and training, providing them with practical and spiritual support, and sharing their lives.

It is this first-hand knowledge and experience that makes the world watch list such a unique window into the world of persecuted Christians. Extreme persecution is increasing and so are the needs of our brothers and sisters. As you read about the plight of persecuted Christians around the world, we pray that you will be not only informed, but inspired to see how your support can make a real difference to Christians facing extreme persecution.

Global Trends

Over 3,000 killed for their faith in 2018. More countries than ever before classed as countries of extreme persecution. India has risen from 15 to 11. Eritrea from 10 to 6. Egypt from 21 to 17. North Korea remains Number 1 for the 17th consecutive year, followed by Afghanistan and Somalia.

Good News

Perhaps the best news is that more and more people are waking up to the reality of extreme persecution and are willing to speak up for those whose voice is being silenced. The truth is that the persecuted church is not merely surviving, it is active and alive. Christians are daring to demonstrate the life-changing reality of the kingdom of God. The challenges faced by these believers are increasing day by day and they need the support of the wider body of Christ to help them stand firm be a light to their nations

Prayer - Please pray for the suffering church around the world

JD

Link - www.opendoorsuk.org/persecution/countries/

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from your Local Ecclesfield Library

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The library will be closed from 12.30pm on Saturday 2nd December until 10am on Wednesday 2nd January 2019

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Or

Enter our **Christmas Raffle** and win one of a variety of wonderful prizes, like a Christmas Hamper, a pamper box, a digital camera to name but a few of our prizes on offer!
(winners drawn on Friday 14th December)

Or

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(drawn on the last Friday of the month)

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For more information about our library or any of our weekly and monthly events, including a reading club, creative writing classes, our Little Bears Club, Knit & Natter, local history group and free events for children, please call in, phone us, email us at ecclesfieldlib@gmail.com or follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

Ecclesfield Library is run entirely by volunteers. It is a not-for-profit charity which relies on donations and grants to keep it open, so if you can help then please visit our Facebook or Web site and click on the DONATE button.

Prayer for the Month - Renewed; Released; Rejuvenated.

Living God

*Jesus calls His followers to seek first your Kingdom.
Renew us as we make your love known;
Release us to share freely together in mission;
and Rejuvenate us to be fruitful in your service.
Give us courage, wisdom and compassion,
that strengthened with the grace of the Holy Spirit,
we may, as the Diocese of Sheffield, both flourish and grow
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

This is our new Diocesan prayer, launched by Bishop Pete at the Diocesan Development Day in October. Over the past few months he has been presenting his vision for the diocese from January 2019 until 2015. At the same time he has been sharing with us the challenges in both ministry and finances that we are facing as a Diocese.

At the same time he has written a prayer and is calling together a 2025 Prayer Community, a group of at least 2025 people who will commit to praying this prayer every day for 6 years from January 2019 until 2025. Alongside the Diocesan Prayer he is asking that the Prayer Community commit to reading a verse of Scripture, praying the Lord's prayer and asking God to bless our Diocesan Strategy.

On Advent Sunday I will be handing everyone in Church a personal copy of this prayer on a bookmark - convenient for slipping into a Bible!

I have some forms available for those who wish to sign up to join the Prayer Community, those who sign up will get updates and prayer resources.

We are facing challenges as a Diocese, and I am pleased that our bishop is calling us first and foremost to prayer. Because this is God's Church and God's mission. If God is with us we have all the resources that we need.

Perhaps God has brought the Church in this land to the place where we have to put our trust and confidence in Him and in His grace so that we can become more effective in our mission to bring the Gospel of Christ to all the people of our land.

Please pray daily for our Church and for our Diocese; and please consider whether you are able to make the commitment to join the Prayer Community.

God bless you.

Tim

St Mary's – Regular Services

8.30 am Holy Communion (BCP) - On 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month

10.00 am Services

1st Sunday of the month - Parish Communion with organ and choir

2nd Sunday of the month - Service of the Word with music group

3rd Sunday of the month - Parish Communion with organ, choir and music group

4th Sunday of the month - Parish Communion with organ, choir and music group

5th Sunday of the month - Sunday Celebration Services

12:00 pm Baptism Service

Baptism Service 1st Sunday of the month – (Except: August no baptisms)

6.30 pm Evening Service

Except: 2nd Sunday of the month Holy Communion and 4th Sunday of the month Prayer and Praise

Midweek Holy Communion – Thursdays at 9.30 am

Time for God – Wednesday at 7.30pm

Every 2nd & 4th Wednesday during school term time

A time for worship, teaching and prayer

St Mary's - Activities & Groups

Church Office Opening times

Tuesday 9:00 am to 1.00 pm

Thursday 9.00 am to 12.00 pm

Coffee Shop

Tuesday 10.00 am to 12.30 pm

Friday 10.00 am to 12.30 pm

Bell Ringers

Tuesday 7.30 pm Bell ringing practice

Friday 7.30 pm Silent Bell ringing practice

Choir Practice

Friday 7.30 pm Choir practice in choir vestry

Music Group Practice

Thursday 7:30 pm Music group practice in church

Church Diary Items to Note - December 2018 & January 2019

December 2018	Time	Item
Saturday 1st	4:00pm	Bell ringers meeting
Monday 3rd	7:30pm	PCC
Thursday 6th	10:30am	Alpha Course
Saturday 8th	9:00am	Prayer Breakfast
Sunday 9th	6:00pm	Community Carols around the Christmas Tree
Tuesday 11th	7:30pm	Prayer Meeting
Wednesday 12th	9:00am	Lound Infant School - Rick Stordy
Thursday 13th	10:30am	Alpha Course
Monday 17th	1:30pm	Ecclesfield High rehearsal in Church
Monday 17th	7:00pm	Ecclesfield High Christmas Concert
Tuesday 18th	2:00pm	KS 2 Christmas Service - Ecclesfield Primary
Friday 21st	7:00pm	Service of the Longest Night
Sunday 23rd	4:00pm	Christingle Service
Monday 24th	4:00pm	Crib Service
Monday 24th	6:30pm	Lessons and Carols
Tuesday 25th	10:00am	Christmas Family Service
January 2019	Time	Item
Monday 7th	11:30pm	Memorial Service followed by interment of ashes
“ “	10:00am	Beginners Photography Course
Saturday 12th	9:00am	Prayer Breakfast
Saturday 12th	2:00pm	Wedding
Monday 14th	10:00am	Beginners Photography Course
Monday 21st	10:00am	Beginners Photography Course
“ “	7:30pm	Fabric Team Meeting
Sunday 27th	6:30pm	Prayer and Praise
Monday 28th	10:00am	Beginners Photography Course

From the Registers

Baptisms

25th November Beu-Octavia Cawthorne

May she know the love of God in her life and may all things of the Spirit live and grow in her

Funerals

1st November	Jaqueline Chambers	74
6th November	Susan Anne Birds	46
13th November	Patricia Mary Richards	82
20th November	Albert Crixby	80
28th November	Angela Elizabeth Marsden	68
3rd December	David Emery	78

Grant them, O Lord, refreshment, light and peace.

Flower Rota December 2018

2nd December	Advent 1 - No Flowers	16th December	Advent 3 - No Flowers
9th December	Advent 2 - No Flowers	25th December	Advent 4 - Christmas Flowers

30th December Vacant

Flower Rota January 2019 – (subject to confirmation!)

6th January	J. Bailey & M. Roberts	20th January A. Hackett
13th January	V. Grey	27th January S. Dale & P. Blackburn



Did you know that Ecclesfield has its very own Christmas carols?

They are older than, and quite different from, the usual well-known carols, and they're sung at the Black Bull on Thursday evenings from mid-November until Christmas.

The carols are lively and sung with passion rather than finesse, and go down especially well with a few drinks! Come along just to listen and soak up the atmosphere, or to join in if you wish. No singing skill is required and the tunes are easy to pick up. Copies of the words are available there.

Ecclesfield is one of only a small number of villages in Britain that have kept locally-written carols alive. A couple of centuries ago communities each had many individual traditions, including their own carols. The Victorians then introduced a standard set of carols, and the local ones were thrown out of churches and generally forgotten. But in just a few villages - mainly around the north and west of Sheffield - they were kept alive by families and local musicians, and by singing in pubs.

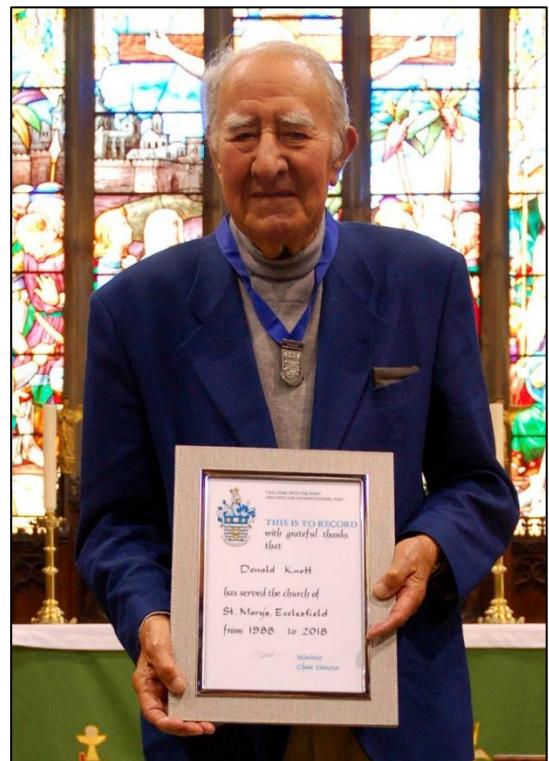
The Black Bull sings were started nearly seventy years ago by Ike Baxter, whose father founded Whitley Hall Cricket Club, and they are as lively now as ever. Do come and experience this special part of Ecclesfield's history and enjoy a unique local flavour to Christmas.

**The Ecclesfield Carols are sung at the Black Bull
on Thursdays: 15 November 2018, starting at 8:30pm
22 November to 20 December, starting at 8:00pm**

St Mary's Church Choir

St. Mary's church has had a robed choir for at least one hundred and thirty-six years. During this time the choir has been re-formed several times as organist and choir masters moved on.

There are very few robed choirs left in Sheffield, so we are fortunate that in nineteen eighty-eight Rev. David James appointed Don Knott as organist. Don is an exceptionally accomplished organist. His wife Madge, a trained music teacher was both very keen to re-form the choir and their enthusiasm was infectious. Even though many members of the choir were unable to read music Madge was able to teach us to sing in four parts quite an achievement only possible by the patience, dedication and confidence of Madge and Don; under their guidance the choir grew in number and ability.



The choir's repertoire included Easter Cantatas, secular concerts, anthems for Sunday services, carols at Christmas. We also sang at several other churches in the dioceses.

Sadly, Madge died suddenly just before Christmas in two thousand and seven but despite this Don carried on and the carol service continued as Madge would have wished.

Under Don's leadership and with the help of Lynda Pearce the choir continued with their ministry of music, although as members aged many have died or are unable to continue due to ill health, this leaves a small group of faithful members. We would love to keep a robed choir at St. Mary's but need new members, so if you enjoy singing and fellowship please consider joining us on Friday evenings especially as we start practicing carols for Christmas.

On Sunday 30th September Don was presented with a medal and certificate for thirty years loyal service. Several choir members also received a certificate for thirty years' service. This is proof of the enjoyment and fellowship which is part of being a member of St. Mary's Choir.

Shirley Simester

Encouragement

The minister was having a tough time in the run-up to Christmas. He finally stretched himself out on the couch to do a bit of what he thought to be well-deserved self-pitying. He moaned to wife: 'Nobody in this church loves me ... the whole town hates me!'

His wife passed by with this encouraging word: 'That can't be true, Sam. I'm sure most people don't give you a second thought.'

The Gardening Year – December 2018 – January 2019

Little can be done in the Garden in December and January, so I will remind our readers of the benefits of fertilisers and manures. Most soils contain natural foods in varying degrees because they are constantly being utilised for plant growth and are also leached out of the soil they have to be replenished with fertilisers and manures. Of the numerous chemicals Elements in the soil, nitrogen, phosphate, potassium, magnesium, calcium and sulphur are required in substantial quantities. Iron, boron, zinc, magnesium, copper and molybdenum are present as minor or trace elements and are required only in small quantities. Nutrient materials are absorbed in solution by the roots of plants: of the six major elements, nitrogen, phosphate and potassium are the most important and must be available in the correct balance. Trace elements occur as impurities in the major elements and also naturally in garden compost and peat. Only in the case of severe deficiencies do trace elements need to be supplemented. A fertiliser is a substance which supplies one of the major nutrients – nitrogen, phosphate or potassium to the soil. Manures supplement the plant nutrients already present, but also provide hummus and improve the condition of the soil. Fertilisers may be of organic or inorganic origin. They are derived from animal and/or vegetable matter, from mineral deposits or produced synthetically. Inorganic fertilisers are often termed ‘artificial’ or chemical fertilisers, but this does not imply an inferior quality. An important difference between organic and inorganic fertilisers is that the chemical elements in an organic fertiliser have to go through a process of conversion before they become available to plants: consequently, an organic fertiliser is long lasting. In an inorganic fertiliser the plant nutrients are readily available and are therefore quick acting. Manures are usually dug into the soil while plant growth is dormant, generally at the rate of a bucketful per sq. yd. Fertilisers may be applied either as a base dressing or as a top dressing. As a base dressing fertiliser is applied to the top few inches of soil prior to sowing or planting. It is lightly raked or hoed in, following the manufacturers recommended rates of application when used as a top dressing. Fertiliser is applied during the growing season: it should be spread evenly, not concentrated round the base of a plant, and hoed into the surface of the soil. It should not be allowed to fall on the foliage or stems of plants.

Finally, may I wish everyone at St. Mary’s and all your readers A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Colin Williams

Eat the Seasons - Seasonal food for December

Vegetables - Beetroot, Brussels Sprouts, Cauliflower, Celeriac, Celery, Chicory, Horseradish, Jerusalem Artichoke, Kale, Kohlrabi, Leeks, Parsnips, Potatoes (Maincrop), Salsify, Shallots, Swede, Truffles (Black), Truffles (White), Turnips, Wild Mushrooms

Fruit - Apples, Clementines, Cranberries, Passion Fruit, Pears, Pineapple, Pomegranate, Satsumas, Tangerines

Herbs – Nuts - Almonds, Brazil Nuts, Chestnuts, Hazelnuts, Walnuts

Meat - Duck, Goose, Grouse, Guinea Fowl, Hare, Mallard, Partridge, Pheasant, Rabbit, Turkey, Venison

Fish - Clams, Cod, Coley, Dab, Dover Sole, Gurnard, Haddock, Halibut, Hake, Langoustine, Lemon Sole, Lobster, Mackerel, Monkfish, Mussels, Oysters, Plaice, Red Mullet, Scallops (Queen), Sea Bass (Wild), Sea Bream, Skate, Turbot, Winkle

Visit - www.eattheseasons.co.uk

The Children's Society - continued

On Saturday 15th December at 10.00am a small team of willing helpers will make 140 oranges into the Christingles for the special service on the Sunday.

I wish to take this opportunity of thanking everyone for their time in making this Christingle season so memorable for the children.



In 2017 The Children's Societies project workers worked one to one with 1,514 children who went missing. At the age of 12 Amanda was put into care because of serious problems at home, she felt that she had no choice but to run away from everything. Fortunately, the police found Amanda and referred her to Gillian a project worker. Gillian worked with Amanda in one to one sessions providing the expert care and support that she so desperately needed. Through Christingle Amanda received the support she needed which changed her life.

In 2017 St. Mary's and friends raised an amazing £1,700 pounds through Collecting Boxes, Coffee Mornings and Donations. We wish to take this opportunity of thanking everyone for their generous giving.

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Peaceful Praise on a silent night

Editor: an article about Silent Night - by Canon David Winter

200 years ago, this Christmas Eve a parish priest near Salzburg in Austria and his organist wrote a new carol for the midnight mass. The priest, Fr Joseph Mohr, provided the words in a poem he had recently written. The organist was Franz Xavier Gruber who created a tune of haunting beauty. The carol, *Stille Nacht*, was duly sung at the service.

We don't know what the congregation thought of it, though I bet someone said, 'I can't stand all these new tunes!' But the simple words and wistful melody were to become one of the world's favourite carols, translated into hundreds of languages, 'Silent Night' as we know it.

My father told me of his experience in the First World War, when on Christmas Day the British troops heard the sound of German soldiers singing *Stille Nacht*. They responded with *Silent Night*, and the sacred words echoed across the blood-stained no man's land. It is a carol that breathes peace, quite unlike the traditional ones that stir us to action – 'O come all ye faithful', 'Hark the herald angels sing'. This German song is about the infinite peace of nativity – Mary pondering her heart all that was happening and the shepherds returning to their fields. The birth of this royal baby went largely unnoticed. There were no crowds, no cheering, no processions. But for two centuries people have sung this precious song of peace to recall that silent and holy night.

Crossword Puzzle - Solution is here



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Saint of the Month - 12th January - Aelred of Rievaulx

Aelred of Rievaulx - Abbot and Writer - an English Cistercian monk, abbot of Rievaulx from 1147 until his death, and known as a writer. Aelred was born in Hexham, Northumbria, in 1110, one of three sons of Eilaf, priest of St Andrew's at Hexham, himself a son of another Eilaf, treasurer of Durham. Aelred spent several years at the court of King David I of Scotland in Roxburgh, possibly from the age of 14, rising to the rank of Master of the Household before leaving the court at age twenty-four (in 1134) to enter the Cistercian abbey of Rievaulx in Yorkshire. He may have been partially educated by Lawrence of Durham, who sent him a hagiography of Saint Brigid.

From 1142 – 1143, Aelred served as novice master at Rievaulx, of a new daughter house of Rievaulx at Revesby in Lincolnshire. In 1147, he was elected abbot of Rievaulx itself, a position he was to hold until his death. Under his administration, the abbey is said to have grown to some 140 monks and 500 conversi and laymen. His role as abbot required him to travel. Cistercian abbots were expected to make annual visitations to daughter-houses, and Rievaulx had five in England and Scotland by the time Aelred held office. Moreover, Aelred had to make the long sea journey to the annual general chapter of the Order at Cîteaux in France.

Alongside his role as a monk and later abbot, Aelred was involved throughout his life in political affairs. In 1138, when Rievaulx's patron, Walter Espec, was to surrender his castle at Wark to King David of Scotland, Aelred reportedly accompanied Abbot William of Rievaulx to the Scottish border to negotiate the transfer.

In 1142 Aelred travelled to Rome, alongside Walter of London, Archdeacon of York, to represent before Pope Innocent II the northern prelates who opposed the election of William, nephew of King Stephen as archbishop of York. The result of the journey was that Aelred brought back a letter from Pope Innocent summoning the superiors whom Aelred represented to appear in Rome the following March to make their deposition in the required canonical form. The resulting negotiations dragged on for many years. The fourteenth-century version of the Peterborough Chronicle states that Aelred's efforts during the twelfth-century papal schism brought about Henry II's decisive support for the Cistercian candidate, resulting in 1161 in the formal recognition of Pope Alexander III.

Aelred wrote several influential books on spirituality, among them *Speculum caritatis* ("The Mirror of Charity," reportedly written at the request of Bernard of Clairvaux) and *De spirituali amicitia* ("On Spiritual Friendship"). He also wrote seven works of history, addressing three of them to Henry II of England, advising him how to be a good king and declaring him to be the true descendant of Anglo-Saxon kings.

In his later years, he is thought to have suffered from the kidney stones and arthritis. Walter reports that in 1157 the Cistercian General Council allowed him to sleep and eat in Rievaulx's infirmary; later he lived in a nearby building constructed for him. Aelred died in the winter of 1166–7, probably on 12 January 1167 at Rievaulx. For his efforts in writing and administration Aelred was called by David Knowles the "St. Bernard of the North." Knowles, a historian of monasticism in England, also described him as "a singularly attractive figure," saying that "No other English monk of the twelfth century so lingers in the memory."

Christmas throughout the Christian world

For nearly four weeks leading up to Christmas Christians recognise a period called Advent. It means ‘coming’. It is a time of spiritual preparation. ‘Coming’ refers to Jesus’ first coming as a baby, but it also looks forward to a day when Jesus is expected to return in triumph at his ‘second coming’ to establish perfect justice and a new order of peace.

Originally Christians marked Advent as a time when they refrained from excessive eating and drinking. Then Christmas Day reintroduced them to the joys of feasting. Christmas celebrations lasted for twelve days, with gifts exchanged as a climax at Epiphany (6 January). Today, however, Advent is more likely to be associated with accelerating festivity, with the days following Christmas something of an anti-climax until ‘twelfth night’, on which decorations are removed. Many Christians worldwide are trying to revive the spirit of Advent by setting aside time to pray and address global poverty.

Christmas Day is celebrated as the anniversary of Jesus’ birth, although the actual date is not known. Most Christians celebrate it on 25th December. However, the Orthodox Church (the ancient churches in Eastern Europe and parts of Asia) follows a different calendar and celebrates on 7th January. Christians make a point of taking communion on Christmas Day. Many make it the first thing they do as the clock strikes midnight.

On 6th January the Christmas festival continues with a celebration of Epiphany, which means ‘the appearance’. Christians remember the visit of wise men (magi) to Jesus, bringing gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. The Christmas tradition of exchanging gifts originally honoured these men, who were the first non-Jews (Gentiles) to worship Jesus. It forms a reminder that in Jesus God was giving Himself for the benefit of the entire world.

Orthodox Christians use this day to recall the baptism of Jesus as a grown man. The significance of Jesus being baptised was that He identified Himself with human beings in all their need. They mark the day by praying for God’s blessing on rivers, wells and water sources.

Christmas has never been just an escapist festival for Christians. Those who treat it seriously recognise that not all the world is able to face the days with frivolity or joy. The day after Christmas, Boxing Day, was historically marked as the feast of St Stephen. He was the first man to be put to death rather than give up his belief that Jesus was God. And two days later a day remembering the Massacre of the Innocents recalls Herod’s attempt to destroy Jesus by killing all male babies in Bethlehem. Although not so widely marked as Christmas Day, it gives Christians the opportunity to pray for children in today’s world who suffer as a result of the actions of adults.

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Crossword Puzzle

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)

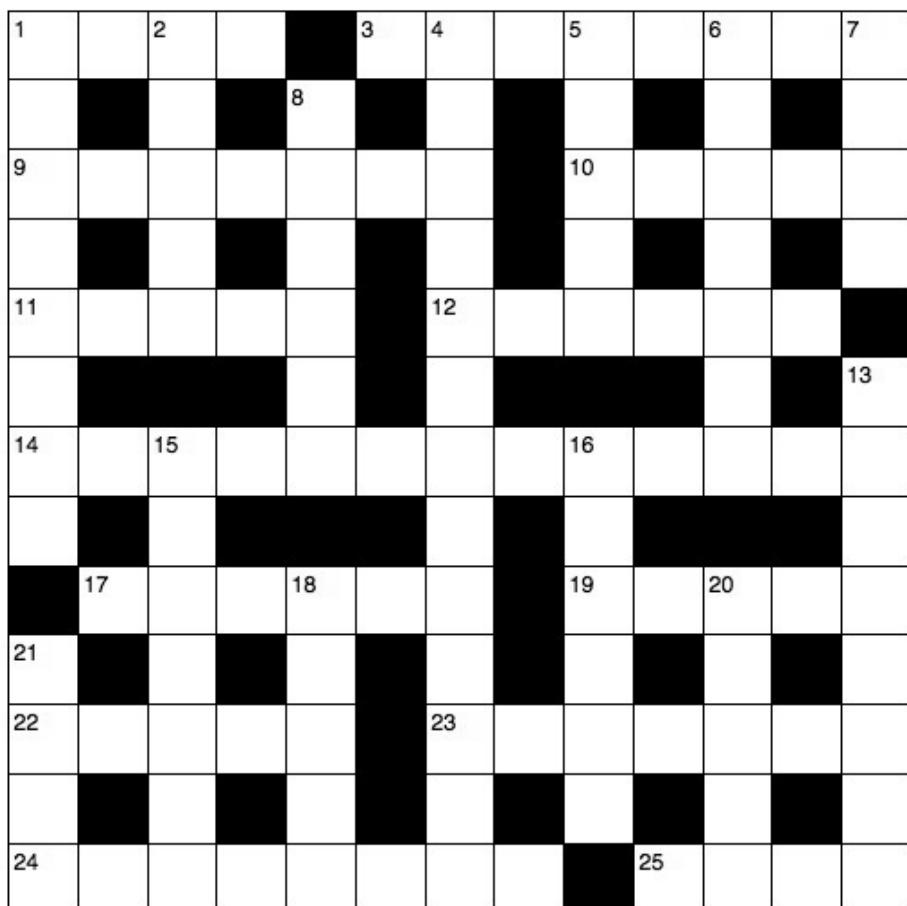
16 Express sorrow (Isaiah 16:7) (6)

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)

Solution is on Page 20



Poster found in a church in France

En visitant cette église à Noël, il est possible que vous entendiez l'appel de Dieu. Cependant, il est peu probable qu'il vous appelle sur votre mobile, alors merci de l'avoir désactivé. Si vous voulez parler à Dieu, choisissez un coin tranquille ici et parlez-lui. Si vous voulez le voir plus tard, envoyez-lui un texto en conduisant.

(translated)

As you visit this church this Christmas, it is possible that you may hear the call of God. However, it is unlikely that He will call you on your mobile, so thank you for turning it off. If you want to talk to God, please choose a quiet corner here, and talk to Him. If you want to see Him later, send Him a text while driving.

Prayers and Poems Page

Prayer for Christmas Joy

Loving, generous Father,

This Christmas, please help us to keep you at the centre of our preparations and celebrations. May our thankfulness for the gift of your precious son, Jesus, motivate all that we think and say and do. May the joy of His coming shine from us and attract those who don't know what Christmas really means, so that they want to find out!

In Jesus' name and for His glory,
Amen.

by Daphne Kitching

Advent

Advent's upon us once more!
A season to fast, and adore
Our Jesus who came
Salvation to gain
And worship, as shepherds before.

But is it a season of hush?
Or Christmas commercialised mush?
We miss Advent's joys
Buying trinkets and toys
For Advent's the season of rush!

Nor is it a season of fast
As it was in the days now long past;
We don't get much thinner
With pre-Christmas dinner
Or parties with edibles vast!

But we who love Jesus decide
To set Christmas hurry aside
And spend time each day
To read and to pray
And discover the true Adventide!

by Nigel Beeton

The Christ who came

Christmas looms
And cardboard boxes stored away
With tinsel, tree and trinkets
Are brought out -
Fripperies spared the ever-growing landfill sites
Because they have the power to bring our memories
Of yester-year into the present day.

So too the Church in all its Advent preparations
Paves the way to celebrate the past and present
Incarnation
In ancient tales told year by year
To weave the fabric of eternal truth
 Into the garment of our loving
 In God's world to-day:

That truth of God's activity
Through human kind
In the Christ who came
 And still comes to His own
 To live
 And love
 And serve God's world

Through those who welcome Him
In heart and home.

by Sam Doubtfire



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Leader - Mrs J Hutchinson
Tel: 0114 257 8609

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Leader - Mrs A. Kendall
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Rachael Otter 0114 246 1752

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