

News & Views From St Mary's Church Ecclesfield



Church Magazine December 2024 & January 2025

stmarysecclesfield.org.uk

Price 60p

Christmas Services - St Mary's 2024

Christingle Service

Celebrate Christingle with us on
Sunday 15th December 4:00 pm

Service of the Longest Night

Saturday 21st December at 6:00 pm
All welcome

Christmas Eve

Crib Service

Join in as we hear the well-known story of
Jesus' birth - for children and their adults
Tuesday 24th December 4:00 pm

Nine Lessons & Carols

Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols
With the Steel City Choristers
Tuesday 24th December 6:30 pm
All welcome

Christmas Day

All Age Communion for Christmas

A traditional family service
Wednesday 25th December 10:00 am
All welcome



First Words

Here we are, at the end of one year and the beginning of another. December is always a busy month, and this year is no exception.

We begin on **Advent Sunday, 1st December**, the beginning of the Church year. There will be **Eucharist at 10am** and **Baptisms at 12 noon** and a special service of **Advent Carols and Readings at 4pm**.

On **Sunday 8th December** we have our monthly **Prayer & Praise at 10am** followed by an extra **Baptism at 11.30am** and **Community Carols round the Christmas Tree at 4pm**.

We have a **burial of ashes in the Churchyard on Tuesday 10th December at 2.30pm**, and **two funerals, 10am and 2pm** in Church on **Wednesday 11th December**.

On **Saturday 14th December** we have **Prayer Breakfast at 9am** and **Bereavement Cafe at 10.30am**.

On **Sunday 15th December** the **Parish Eucharist** will be at **10am** and the **Christingle** service at **4pm** in Church.

Monday 16th December is the local '**Ecclesfield Carols**' we meet in the **Churchyard** at the **Christmas Tree at 7pm** and move into **Church at around 7.45pm**.

On **Saturday 21st December** there is the **Service of the Longest Night at 6pm** in Church.

On **Sunday 22nd December** **Parish Eucharist** is at **10am** and the **Evening Service at 6.30pm**.

There is a **wedding rehearsal on Monday 23rd December at 5pm**.

Christmas Eve - 4pm Crib Service and **6.30pm Nine Lessons and Carols by Candlelight** - led by the Steel City Choristers.

Christmas Day, 10am Christmas Eucharist.

Please Note, **Thursday 26th December - No Mid-week Communion.**

Saturday 28th December 11am Wedding in Church.

Sunday 29th December 10am Eucharist. No Evening Service.

Then in 2025:

Thursday 2nd January 9.30am Mid-week Communion.

On Sunday 5th January at 10am we celebrate the **Feast of the Epiphany.**

Saturday 11th January 9am Prayer Breakfast; 10.30am Bereavement Cafe.

Sunday 12th January, 10am Prayer & Praise, 12 noon Baptisms.

On **Monday 13th January** we welcome a **Reception Class** into Church at **1.30pm**, and at **4pm the Saints Alive** course begins in Church.

On **Monday 20th January at 1.30pm** we welcome a second **Reception Class** into Church & at **4pm** it is the **second Saints Alive session.**

Wednesday 22nd January - Finance Committee meeting in Church.

Monday 27th January, 4pm Saints Alive part 3 in Church; **7pm Baptism Preparation** in Church.

A busy December and (hopefully) a quieter January. Lots to do and to enjoy as we celebrate the great feast of Christmas together. Please do invite family and friends along to the Christmas Services.

God bless, and a very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year. Tim.

Saints Alive!

Look out for information about the up-coming Saints Alive course. It is a Spirit-centred introduction or refresher course on the Christian Faith. The course is practical and experiential, not just ideas and books! The course will begin on Monday 13th January at 4pm.

For more information see Tim.

Service of the Longest Night. Really? Is it for me?

The longest night of the year can mean extended darkness and maybe low mood to match in spite of the season. This Service (sometimes called Blue Christmas) is for anyone who finds the thought of Christmas overwhelming, or even something to be avoided. The service will be an hour of quiet reflection, with music, prayers and candles giving us time to lay down the troubles of our present days and go forward into Christmas renewed and refreshed. Recognising the true heart of Christmas - simply love. Nothing will be asked of you in this time. Just come as you are and enjoy a quiet hour remembering, reflecting and having a peaceful moment or two for yourself. See you there. 21st December at 6pm.

Jeni



On behalf of Tim and the finance team we would like to thank you all for your generous giving and donations during the year. This has helped greatly towards the upkeep and running of the church.

Wishing you all a Happy and Peaceful Christmas Time and all the very best for 2025



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Front Cover – Hand blown glass bauble – from the web

Inside front and back pages – Christmas Services and Hand Bell Ringers posters

Back Cover – Nine Lessons and Carols poster

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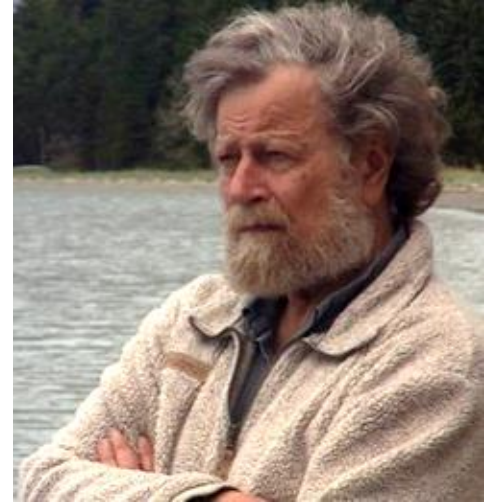
God in The Arts - Music

Editor: *The Revd Michael Burgess continues his series looking at great works of music.*

‘Glorious the song when God’s the theme’:

Morten Lauridsen, American composer

In the Middle Ages, at the end of the Christmas Midnight Mass, the clergy would often tell the animals’ version of the Nativity story and imitate the sound of each animal. The cock would crow ‘Christus natus est.’ (Christ is born). The cows would moo ‘Ubi?’ (Where?). The sheep would bleat ‘In Bethlehem.’ And the donkey would cry ‘Eamus’ (Let us go there). It was a way of expressing something of the joy and fun of the Christmas celebration.



Commercialism with all its trappings has sadly made that fun and festivity the be all and end all of Christmas. We need to capture again the heart of the Incarnation, which is a mystery rooted in silence and wonder. The book of Wisdom reads ‘For while gentle silence enveloped all things, and night in its swift course was now half gone, the all powerful Word leapt from heaven, from the royal throne.’

Those words remind us that at Bethlehem there is that silence and wonder. The animals may rejoice to tell the Good News of the Incarnation at the Midnight Mass, but at the crib they gather with the Holy Family and the shepherds. We are given no words of Mary and Joseph and the shepherds around the crib. The mystery of what was happening seems to have intensified their silence. They did not know what the future held for this new-born child, but they did know that God was acting in a special way. They were like people standing in the faint light of the dawn, and their response was an expectant and wondering worship.

It is at the heart of this month’s beautiful and moving setting of some words from the matins of Christmas morning, ‘O magnum mysterium.’ ‘O great mystery and wondrous sacrament, that animals should see the new-born Lord, lying in the manger. Blessed Virgin, whose womb was found worthy to bear Christ the Lord. Alleluia.’ The words were set by the American composer, Morten Lauridsen in 1994 and first performed a few days before Christmas in Los Angeles. Since then, the setting has been sung by choirs, both professional and amateur, around the world.

Morten Lauridsen has composed many works for the human voice, and all of them are sensitive and heartfelt responses to the words chosen. No more so than in ‘O magnum mysterium.’ After the opening chord, the altos introduce us to a motif that pervades the work: D to a rising 4th, and a falling 3rd that lights on A. It is like the movement of the heart, rising in praise and resting in hope at the mystery of the Incarnation. The joy is inner and deep and suffuses the music as it reaches a climax with Alleluia. The final words are that all this glory lies in a manger, where the animals gather.

The world will call us in this month to a frenzy of doing and buying amid a clamour of noise and muzak. ‘O magnum mysterium’ by Morten Lauridsen invites us to step into the stable again and join the animals, the Holy Family and the shepherds to find a joy and a wonder there that can nourish the soul. At the crib we can know ‘the silence of eternity interpreted by Love’ and with the choir we can respond Alleluia.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Morten_Lauridsen

Mothers Union 3 October Meeting

Our speaker this month was Sally Newsome who was well known to many members as her father still lives in the village. Sally began her career as a teacher but realised she was being called to something different. She went on the Mothers' Union Parenting Course and began her work with young mothers. This she found very fulfilling but also very challenging. Many young mums feel very isolated because friends are at work and families don't often live near, her work with them gave them some comfort and friendships.

Sally began by showing how she worked with them and began to challenge us on our thoughts and experiences. Many of us realised how lucky we had been with friends and family around and no chance of going back to work after nine months.

As we began to answer Sally's questions, we began to be aware of the challenges they face which we avoided- work, isolation, lack of knowledge about how families function and general expectations. She left us with a challenge to be kind and offer a helping hand when we saw a a mother struggling with her children and don't stand back criticising. Hopefully we will be more sympathetic.

Our December meeting will be carols and mince pies with Jeni leading.

Looking forward to seeing you there

Our next meeting will be on 8th January. This will be our Annual Meeting with reports and we still need a Branch Leader and committee members, is it your time to volunteer!

Norma Priest

Ecclesfield Carols



Thursday 5 December – 8:00 at The Black Bull

Thursday 12 December – 8:00 at The Greyhound

Monday 1 December – 7:00 around the Christmas tree
in St Mary's Churchyard

Monday 16 December – 7:45 inside St Mary's Church

Thursday 19 December – 8:00 at The Black Bull

Crossword Puzzle - Solution is here

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Reflecting Faith: Christmas Tree Decorations

Editor: The Revd Dr Jo White considers the stones and mortar...

Over the decades the decorations on my home Christmas tree have come and gone. From an eclectic colourful mix of baubles and home-made items when the children were young, to a radical change to 'contemporary' and 'sophisticated'. It didn't last long, as quite frankly they seemed a bit dull, lifeless and lacking real meaning.

We quite rapidly added mementoes from holiday places to the mix to jazz it up a bit. In more recent years we've been receiving and proudly displaying creations from the next family generation - so we come back to the start.

How about your tree?

And what about the tree decorations you have in your church? What is the story behind those? Are they identical or very different?

In 1957 at Ascension Lutheran Church, Danville, USA, Frances Kipps Spencer thought that the traditional, brightly coloured Christmas ornaments were not fitting for a worship setting, so she started thinking about a way to reflect the Christian faith through ornaments.

The first ornament was the name of Jesus and His title: Christ. The Greek Chi (X) Rho (P) is the monogram for the Greek word Christos (Christ).

There followed over the years a whole collection symbolising the life of Jesus and his ministry.

These ornaments even have their own name: 'Chrismons,' which comes from the words Christ and monogram.

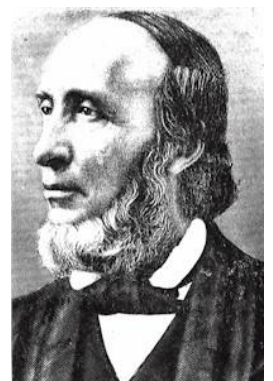
Just as wall paintings and stained glass in churches tell the Christian story these Chrismons are a clever way to communicate the same key ideas of the Christian faith particularly to annual church visitors.

Chrismons are white and gold, representing purity and value. When used with an evergreen Christmas tree, symbolising eternal life, and white lights covering the tree, symbolising Jesus as the light of the world the whole gives a story just in its use of colour with no words required.

This month: Have a look at the tree decorations in a church near you. What does the overall effect say? and are there any 'Chrismons' on it?

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

Sometimes rendered as "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear", is an 1849 poem and Christmas carol written by Edmund Sears, pastor of the Unitarian Church in Wayland, Massachusetts. In 1850, Sears' lyrics were set to "Carol", a tune written for the poem the same year at his request, by Richard Storrs Willis. This pairing remains the most popular in the United States, while in Commonwealth countries, the lyrics are set to "Noel", a later adaptation by Arthur Sullivan from an English melody. Edmund Sears composed the five-stanza poem in common metre doubled during 1849. It first appeared on December 29, 1849, in *The Christian Register* in Boston, Massachusetts.



Carols from King's 2016 - "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear" <https://youtu.be/jAq29n4BGoA>

St James the Least of All

Editor: The Revd Dr Gary Bowness continues his tongue-in-cheek letters from 'Uncle Eustace'...

On why Carol Services are so dangerous

The Rectory
St. James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren.

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 no 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

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Prayer for the Month

***Almighty God,
give us grace to cast away the works of darkness
and to put on the armour of light,
now in the time of this mortal life,
in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility;
that on the last day,
when he shall come again in his glorious majesty
to judge the living and the dead,
we may rise to the life immortal;
through him who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.***

This prayer for Advent Sunday comes to the Church from the Prayer Book of 1662. It was an ancient prayer when Cramner wrote the BCP, and it is a prayer that is still widely used today.

For me it is a reminder of the hope of the Christian faith, and Advent is all about hope. There are four 'traditional themes' that we are encouraged to reflect on during Advent as we prepare to celebrate the feast of Christmas. These themes are Death, Judgement, Hell and Heaven.

They are sobering themes and not, at first sight, very hopeful. But what transforms them, what transforms Advent is that God in Christ has revealed to humankind His true face. The God who made us, the God to whom we are responsible and before whom we will all one day give an account of ourselves has shown Himself in Jesus Christ.

In Christ God has shared our human life. He knows the reality of our life with its joys and pains; God knows human love and heartbreak. He understands us. More than this in Jesus the One to whom we are accountable was born for us and has died for us. In Jesus we see that God is for us.

In life and in death and in eternity the Christlike God is with us, this is the reason for our hope this Advent and for the coming year.

May Christ bless us this Advent season as we prepare once again to celebrate His birth in Bethlehem.

Sing & Share

In the New Year we are planning to start a new group on Sunday mornings for small children called 'Sing and Share.' The group will run during the middle of the 10am Sunday Service on the first and third Sundays.

We need at least four people to help with the group, and in pairs each person will be called on to lead the group once a month (if we have more than four volunteers each person will be on for less than once a month).

The group meetings will be a fun time of singing and stories and will not need too much preparation.

If you are interested in helping please speak to Tim.

The “cheek and chic, pose and poise” of Noel Coward

Just 125 years ago, on 16th December 1899, Noël Coward, British playwright, composer, director, actor and singer, was born. His plays include *Hay Fever*, *Private Lives* and *Blithe Spirit*.

Coward was a supremely talented individual, starting as a child dancer who made his professional debut at the age of 11 and progressing to become a success in many areas of show business. He published more than 50 plays and hundreds of songs, most of them set in the kind of high society that he himself soon inhabited, despite his unpretentious upbringing in Teddington. His acting and directing career lasted six decades.

He received some education at the Chapel Royal Choir School, but he later described his spiritual attitude as “unregenerate” and became agnostic. He said: “I have a selfless absorption in the well-being and achievements of Noël Coward... I am jolly kind to everybody and still attentive and devoted to my dear old mother.”

He found it easy to make friends and possessed what *Time* magazine called “a sense of personal style, a combination of cheek and chic, pose and poise”.

His many successes, including those in cabaret from the 1950s, led to a knighthood in 1970. Much earlier, by 1930, he had become one of the world’s highest-earning writers, with an annual income of £50,000 – equivalent to more than £4 million today.

During the Second World War he worked for British Intelligence and ran the British propaganda office in Paris. It is reported that Churchill preferred his role in entertaining the troops.

Towards the end of the 1960s Coward developed arteriosclerosis and suffered from bouts of memory loss. He received many other awards, including an honorary Doctor of Letters degree from Sussex University.

Iconic Bethlehem Carol Sheet celebrates 70 years in print

It was back in 1954 when the charity, BibleLands Mission Aid Society, first tentatively decided to print a colourful compilation of popular Christmas carols, alongside images of some of the people BibleLands served.

From the start, the scheme was an immense success. The carol sheets were so popular that even that first year, 100,000 copies were insufficient to meet the demand of schools, churches, British army bases at home and abroad and Royal Navy ships across the world. The donations appeal towards the BibleLands projects in the carol sheet also raised hundreds of pounds.

When 500,000 copies were quickly sold in 1955, BibleLands knew it had a winner on its hands.

So it was that, in 1956, with 1.5 million carol sheets sales as the target, an accompanying catalogue of Christmas cards and gifts and prayers for God’s favour was also launched. The plan was overwhelmingly successful – much needed funds were raised for the work of BibleLands.

Since then, many millions of carol sheets have been sold, until this year the charity, now renamed Embrace the Middle East, has produced a new-look Edition with 27 popular carols, including three new additions for this year: *O Holy Night*, *See Him Lying on a Bed of Straw (Calypso Carol)* and *The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came*.

For more information or to purchase your copy, visit <https://shop.embraceme.org/collections/bethlehem-carols>



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What's the Big Idea? - Books of the New Testament: John

Editor: Canon Paul Hardingham begins a new series which will run for the next two years.

'John's Gospel is like a pool in which a child may wade and an elephant can swim. It is for the beginner in the faith and for the mature Christian.' (Leon Morris).

The Apostle John is usually credited with the authorship of this Gospel, writing in Ephesus at the end of the First Century. His purpose is *'that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.'* (20:31). Throughout he stresses the deity of Christ and presents Jesus as the Son of God.

In the prologue (1:1-14) Jesus is presented as the pre-existent and incarnate Word of God revealed by the Father. It also highlights how He has come as light into the world, so that those who believe in Him will not remain in darkness (cf [12:46](#)).

The heart of John's narrative contains 7 *signs* or miracles, which demonstrate who Jesus is and demonstrating His transforming power over creation and people: turning water into wine (2:1-11); healing the royal official's son (4:46-54); healing the paralytic (5:1-18); feeding the 5000 (6:1-14); walking on the water (6:16-21); healing of the man born blind (9:1-41) and raising Lazarus (11:1-44).

After these signs, the story moves into the upper room discourses followed by the story of His death and resurrection. The whole Gospel is a revelation of the glory of God's only Son, who comes to reveal the Father and then returns in glory to the Father. It can be well summed up in the famous verse: *'For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.'* (John 3:16).

Sol Invictus, Emperors and how Christmas began

It was 1,750 years ago, on 25th December 274, that the Roman Emperor Aurelian founded and launched the cult of Sol Invictus as an official religion. He erected a temple and declared 25th December a national holiday, to be known as the Feast of the Unconquered Sun. In 336, after the conversion of the emperor Constantine, the Church in Rome began to celebrate Christmas on 25th December.

Aurelian, who was born in Moesia – the south-eastern Balkans – rose from modest beginnings to become a strong and successful Emperor at one of the most difficult times in Roman history. He defeated many attempts to destroy the empire from without and within, notably attempts by the Gallic and Palmyrene Empires, and improved the lot of the common people.

His idea in promoting Sol Invictus as the main divinity of the Empire was to try to give everyone a god to believe in without betraying their own gods. However, when Constantine the Great, who was born during Aurelian's reign, became Emperor in 306 and converted to Christianity, it was the beginning of the end for Sol Invictus – and the start of the dominance of Christianity in the Roman Empire.

The date of 25th December was taken over and celebrated as the birthday of Jesus – and has been ever since, though scholars agree that this is an impossible date because flocks of sheep would not have been out in the fields in the dead of winter, and therefore shepherds would not have been out either. Other dates have been suggested, of which perhaps the most convincing is September 11.

It is a happy irony that in English, Christmas can be described accurately as the Feast of the Unconquered Son.

God in the Sciences

This series is written by Dr Ruth M. Bancewicz, who is Church Engagement Director at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge. Ruth writes on the positive relationship between Science and Christian faith.

Meditation on the Incarnation

*After the bright beam of annunciation
fused heaven with dark earth
His searing sharply-focused light
went out for a while
eclipsed in amniotic gloom:
His cool immensity of splendour
His universal grace
small-folded in a warm dim
female space*

This extract from Luci Shaw's poem *Made Flesh* captures something of the wonder of the moment when the second person of the Trinity became an embryo. How does a single cell turn into an infant, and what does that process say about us – and God? These are the questions that Professor Jeff Hardin, a developmental biologist, asks himself. Having studied theology as well as science, he has a unique perspective on embryonic development.

A new-born baby is made of around five trillion cells. These cells come in hundreds of different types, each of which must be in the correct place for the child's body to function properly. Every new life is the result of intricate and highly ordered processes. Three things must happen as an embryo develops.

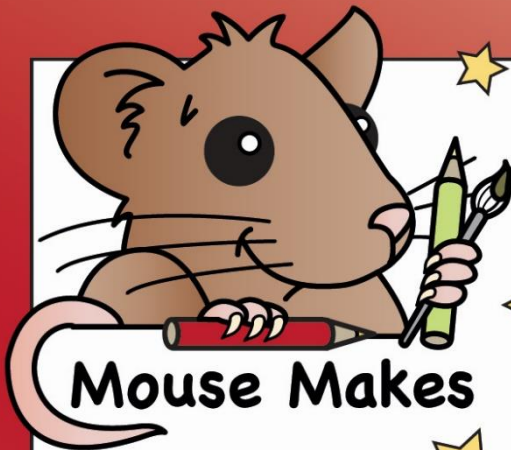
The first important process is for cells to take on their identity as types of muscle, bone, nerves, and so on. The second is when each cell learns which part of the body it belongs to. Third, those cells are moved around to form the different tissues and organs. These three are not discrete stages, but they all happen at around the same time, building up gradually like the different aspects of a picture coming into focus.

All three of these processes are driven forward by the movement of cells, the connections between them, and the signals they pass to each other. Jeff studies a sort of cellular glue which is involved in joining cells together. Making and breaking these adhesions can affect how cells move and signal to each other, their identity in the body, how they are organised as groups, and ultimately their survival. This glue is found on the surface of cells throughout the animal kingdom, including the small worms Jeff's lab studies.

For Jeff, peering down a microscope at tiny worm embryos can be an act of worship. It is also an exercise in art appreciation, as he learns to appreciate the created order. Understanding the complexities of development, while also being aware that God knows that process intimately both as Creator and created, fills Jeff with a profound sense of awe, wonder and worship.

Does the minute scale of our early development, compared to the incomprehensibly vast and ancient universe, give us a sense of insignificance? Psalm 8 says, "When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established; what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?"

For Jeff and the Psalmist, such feelings can be a positive experience if they serve as a reminder to be humble in the face of a universe that is vastly complicated but also deeply meaningful, made by a God who loves each one of us.



Mouse Makes

"Jesus said,
I am the ___ Y
and the ___ U ___
and the ___ I ___.
No one comes to the Father
except through me."
John 14:6

"The child to be born
will be called
H _____, the
_____ of _____"
Luke 1:35

"For unto you is born
this day a
S _____
who is
_____ R _____
the ___ R ___"
Luke 2:11

THE GREATEST GIFT

"She will bear a son,
and shall call his name

_____ for he will save his
people from their sins."
Matthew 1:21

"Jesus said,
I am the

_____ and the life."
John 11:25

B L I G H T L O
R A Y W O J J R
E M M A N U E L
A B Y J E S O
D S A V I O U R
S A V R J S D

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

JESUS
—
THE
GREATEST
GIFT
OF ALL!

P R O P H E T I
R E D E E M E R
I E M I L I G
E M E S S I A H
S R M E G F T
T E A C H E R E

E V E R L A S T I N G
K I N G O F K I N G S
I N K I G W F D O U
S E S O N O F G O D D
S E W O C O U W O R D
C O U N S E L L O R U

EMMANUEL • MESSIAH REDEEMER • KING OF KINGS • WORD
SON OF MAN • EVERLASTING • SHEPHERD • PRIEST • PROPHET • TEACHER
LIGHT • BREAD • VINE • DOOR • LAMB • COUNSELLOR • CHRISTMAS • GIFT

Find the words from the Bible verses too!

Dec24 © deborah noble @ parishpump.co.uk

Thought for the Month

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

This time of year is so busy that we scarcely have time to think about what we are doing, let alone to find the space to reflect on the past year. And yet, as one year draws to its close and we look ahead to the coming year, it is a good time to recall and to think about what the past year has brought, and to look ahead to the year that is about to dawn.

We will all have things to celebrate, things to be thankful for - friends and family, a holiday or a big family event. And we will all have regrets, things that if we could change we would.

I try, at this time of year to offer all of these things to God, thanking God from whom all good things come for the good things of the past year, and asking forgiveness for my failings and for healing for the hurts.

As I look ahead to 2025, I try to remember St Ignatius' call to find God in all things and in all people.

Life is a gift, not simply the fact of life, but everything in life comes to us as a gift, and we can find God in all things. I believe that God laughs and God weeps with His children, that we are never alone. I try to remember this as I look behind me at the year past and as I look ahead to the coming year. In all things God is with me. I pray that I will have the grace to see the face of Christ in every person that I have any dealings with in the coming year.

At the heart of the Christmas story is God with us; with us in the joy and the vulnerability of a tiny child; God with us in our flesh and blood. And with the Christ comes the promise that the God who made us, the God whose face we see in the face Jesus will never leave us or forsake us wherever our path may lead.

May Christ fill your hearts with His love and your homes with His joy, this Christmas and ever.
Amen.

From the Registers

Baptisms

Sunday 3rd November

Millie Grace Hedley & Erin Kathleen Hedley
Jade Bishop and Ryder Rae Bishop

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

Marriages

Saturday 9th November
Saturday 30th November

Daniel Hugh Bell & Isabelle Grace Bertram-Lax
Scott Robert Cartledge & Sarah Jane Higgs

May each be to the other strength in need, a comfort in sorrow, and a companion in joy

Funerals

Monday 11th November
Thursday 14th November
Wednesday 11th December
Wednesday 11th December

Susan Margaret Rodgers
Maureen Hancock
Ruth White
Joyce Erica Baynes

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

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Chapelton – Sheffield – South Yorkshire

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Help needed in the church garden

If you can, mow, weed, strim, sweep, pickup sticks, rake leaves or drive a sit on mower, we need you. If you can spare just one or two hours a week it would be a great help. Not only will the church look good, but you might even feel your spiritual and physical well-being improve and in our small way help the environment. We come to the churchyard every Tuesday and Friday afternoon (weather permitting) followed by a drinks and biscuits, sometimes even a cake.

Any help most welcome. Thank you. Pat Wood

Dwight L Moody – extraordinary evangelist and peacemaker

It was 125 years ago, on 22nd December 1899, that Dwight L Moody, the famous American evangelist, died.

Moody was born in Northfield, Massachusetts, in 1837 and raised in the Unitarian Church. But his father died when he was four, and he had a hard upbringing as one of nine children. At 17 he moved to Boston to work in his uncle's shoe shop – a job he got on condition that he attended the Congregational Church of Mount Vernon. There he was converted to evangelical Christianity through his Sunday school teacher, Edward Kimball.



One of Moody's favourite quotes was "Faith makes all things possible. Love makes all things easy." He devoted himself to bringing the Gospel to as many people as possible. Unwilling to fight in the Civil War, he worked among the troops with the YMCA, and then built up a strong evangelical church in Chicago – only to have the building, his house and the homes of many in the congregation destroyed in the Great Fire of 1871.

Re-evaluating his priorities, Moody teamed up with Ira D Sankey, a hymn writer, and they made a number of tours to Great Britain, where he avoided divisive doctrines, preaching "the old-fashioned gospel". They drew large crowds, inspiring many local people to start Sunday schools for children and young people. News of this had a big influence in Sweden, though the Americans had no knowledge of Swedish.

Moody showed his fearlessness in going to Ireland, where Catholics and Protestants were at loggerheads. He ignored the sectarian divide and was welcomed by both, leading to revival there.

He had meanwhile returned to Northfield to live, and ten years after his death the Chicago church was renamed the Moody Church in his honour. President Dwight D Eisenhower, born in 1890, was named after him.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dwight_L._Moody

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The Gardening Year – December & January

The garden year for December and January. In my opinion December and January are the two quietest months of the gardening year. So fruit trees can be pruned, plots tidied, and frost precautions taken before the Christmas holiday puts a temporary stop to your gardening.

Still on the subject of container gardening, here is some storage tips, on how to keep your compost in prime condition.

- 1 - store all compost in a cool, dry space
- 2 - preferably store inside cool buildings such as a garage away from heat sources
- 3 - if storing outside avoid direct sunlight. A north facing wall is ideal
- 4 - if storing outside, keep rain off the compost, a porch roof or tarpaulin is ideal
- 5 - minimise heat damage by covering with white plastic sheeting
- 6 - keep bags of compost off the ground, a pallet can help
- 7 - when you buy new compost, use the old compost first
- 8 - reseal a new bag after use to keep contents moist and prevent contamination

Layout - now you've learned about the space you have available, the number of hours of sunlight on your plot and the different types of compost available, it's time to plan the layout of your container garden. Make sure you leave enough room between containers. if you find nowhere to empty and fill pots or you can't get to them when everything is fully grown you'll probably give up. Sunshine hopefully you now know where the sunniest areas are on your plot. You might have south-facing walls which can be utilised to their fullest. Perhaps you have a south-facing patio. On the other hand you might have to contend with partial shade which will reduce the types of crops you can grow. You might be able to increase light with the use of reflecting materials or taking down structures that cast shadows. Take growth into account. A plot can look very different when empty containers are placed on it compared to the height of the growing season. Remember your plot will grow sideways as well as upwards, so ensure you leave plenty of space in-between pots for growth and for you to get around. You need to be able to water, weed and harvest and plants need room to thrive. If they are too cramped, they can die. Some plants like to sprawl sideways or snake along the ground take all this into account before sowing your first seeds.

And finely may I take this opportunity to wish all your readers and all at St Marys - A Happy Christmas and A Happy New Year

Colin Williams

Eat the Seasons – December & January

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

Editor's Humour & Philosophy Page

Links and some images in this magazine are clickable - enjoy

"Never odd or even" spelt backwards is still "Never odd or even"

Travel advice: Don't waste money buying new clothes, visit countries where people haven't seen your old clothes.

Wife ... "Do you want to know why I'm not talking to you?" **Husband** ... "No, I respect and trust your decision"

Stop blaming yourself and others, learn Feng Shui and blame the furniture...

Dog owner: The bad news is I took the wrong medicine this morning. The good news is I'm protected from ticks and fleas for a month.

Teacher: Use "I" in a sentence. **Schoolboy:** I is... **Teacher:** No, you should say "I am" not "I is". **Schoolboy:** I am the 9th letter of the English alphabet.



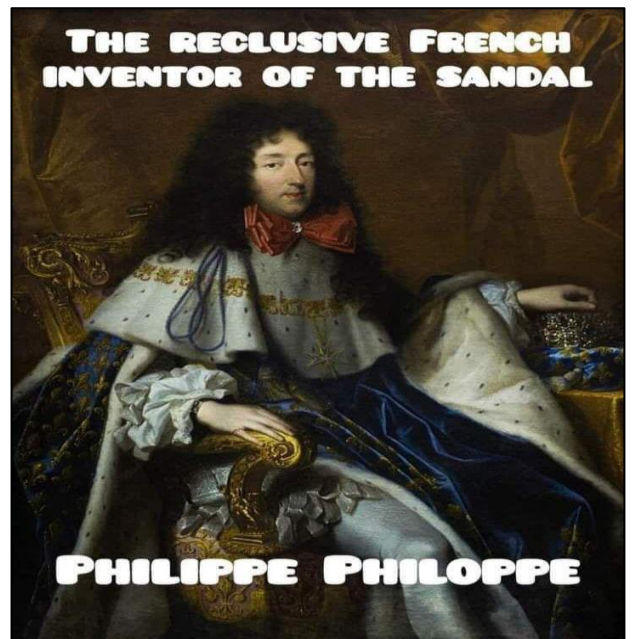
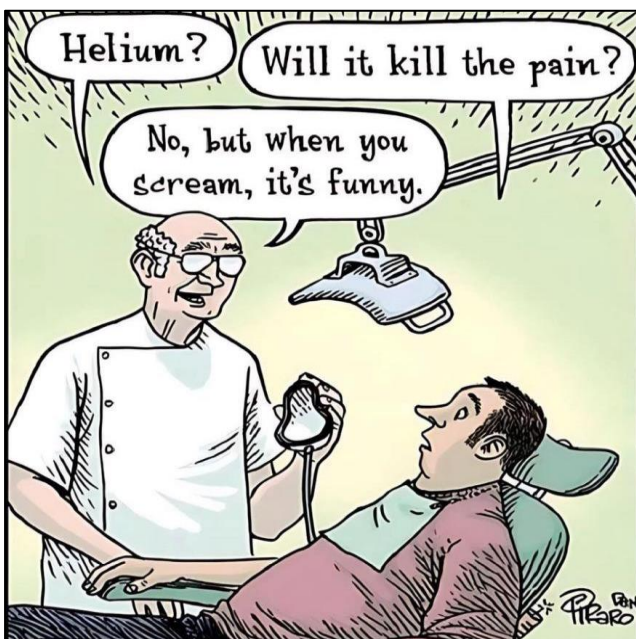
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angel_of_the_North

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helium>



<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MasterChef>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sandal>



ERIC EYRE

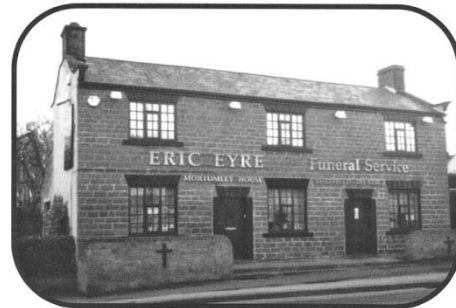
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British Institute of Funeral Directors Eric Eyre National President
1989 - 1990



It is time to eat Swede - Rutabaga

Larger than the turnip and with a rough skin that is partly tan and partly purple, the swede's unpolished appearance belies its fine texture and distinctive, sweet tasting flesh.

When roast or mashed, swede makes a simple and tasty side dish. It can also be used to add interest to stews or in a variety of twists on mashed potato.

The swede is thought to have originated in central Europe and has a relatively short culinary history compared with many vegetables. It was known in France and England in the seventeenth century and became an important European crop by the eighteenth century. During the nineteenth century it reached the USA (where it is known as **Rutabaga**) and then Canada.

To this day it is a much more popular food in northern and eastern Europe than any other region.

A member of the Cruciferae family, Brassica napus is a hardy plant that is frost-tolerant and thrives in moist soil.

Buying - Storing - Preparing.

Choose swede that is firm, solid and heavy for its size. The skin should be free of major damage but the rigid scars around the top are natural. Smaller examples are generally sweeter and milder.

Swede will keep well in the fridge for a couple of weeks or more.

Peel before use. As the skin is quite thick and uneven you may find it easier to quarter the swede and cut off the skin with a knife, rather than using a peeler.

Roasting will concentrate the swede's flavour, whereas boiling will dilute it. Cut swede into chunks or cubes, according to preference, and cook until tender. Baking at 200°C will take around 30 to 45 minutes, boiling will take 10 to 20 minutes.

Swede can also be used raw; try it finely grated in a salad. Swede has a good mineral content including calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium and manganese. It is low in saturated fat and relatively high in sugars. It also provides some fibre and vitamins A and C.

In Scotland swede is known as neeps and is served mashed alongside haggis as part of the traditional supper on Burns Night.

Swede, leek and potato gratin

<https://www.waitrose.com/ecom/recipe/swede-leek-and-potato-gratin?>

Roasted Cardamom Vegetables

<https://recipes.oregonlive.com/recipes/roasted-cardamom-vegetables>

Creamed swede with sage recipe

<https://realfood.tesco.com/recipes/creamed-swede-with-sage.html>



<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rutabaga>

Chapelton & District Probus Club



We had a good turnout at our November meeting and welcomed Stuart Atkins with his presentation "My Life In Music". He told us how he got into music from starting with playing piano, then moving on to trombone with Flockton brass band. He became involved with the local orchestra dance hall circuit prior to call-up and even managed time to play piano at Bettys in York. He joined the Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and was invited (required) to become a member of the Regimental Band to play trombone outdoors and piano indoors at military events.

A Big jump then to having own orchestra and playing all over world including Batley Variety Club with many big names such as Frankie Vaughan; Jane Mansfield; Al Martino; Sammy Khan and the Bachelors for whom he arranged most of their hits. He also had a girl group for some time with him called Cool Breeze who eventually went on their own. Stuart ended up marrying one called Pattie Gold. A fascinating life, far too rich to cover in a short article. Afterwards, 22 people enjoyed lunch at Wortley Hall.

We visited the South Yorkshire Police stables at a large farm in Cudworth and were very impressed by how effective police on horseback can be in very difficult situations, especially areas which can be "no-go" for police in cars or on foot.

Probus Club meets every month in the Community Centre in Grenoside. The club is about providing a relaxing social environment to welcome retired and semi-retired men including those still working but with time on their hands. You can visit a meeting as a guest or choose to become a member. Please make contact with the Secretary, Trevor Winslow (see below).

11th December – Mike Higginbotham – Waterways and Railways in the Peak District

8th January – David Templeman – Ancient Suburbs of Sheffield Part 2

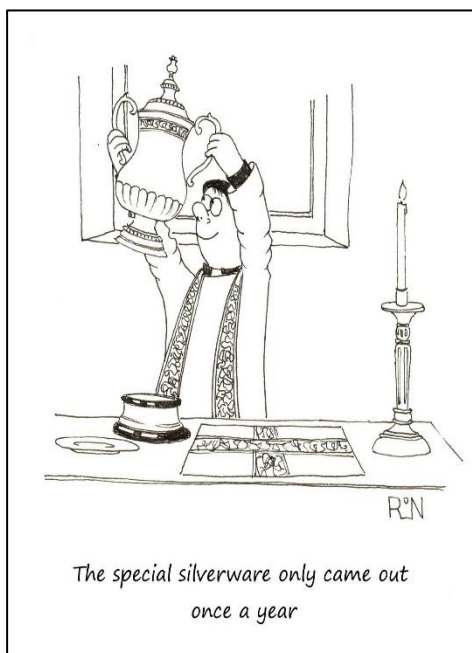
12th February – Mark Dawson – The History of Henderson's Relish

18th February – Winter Lunch at Wortley Hall – guests welcome

Contact details: e-Mail chapelton.probus@gmail.com

Website <https://chapelton-probus.org.uk/>

Andrew Robinson



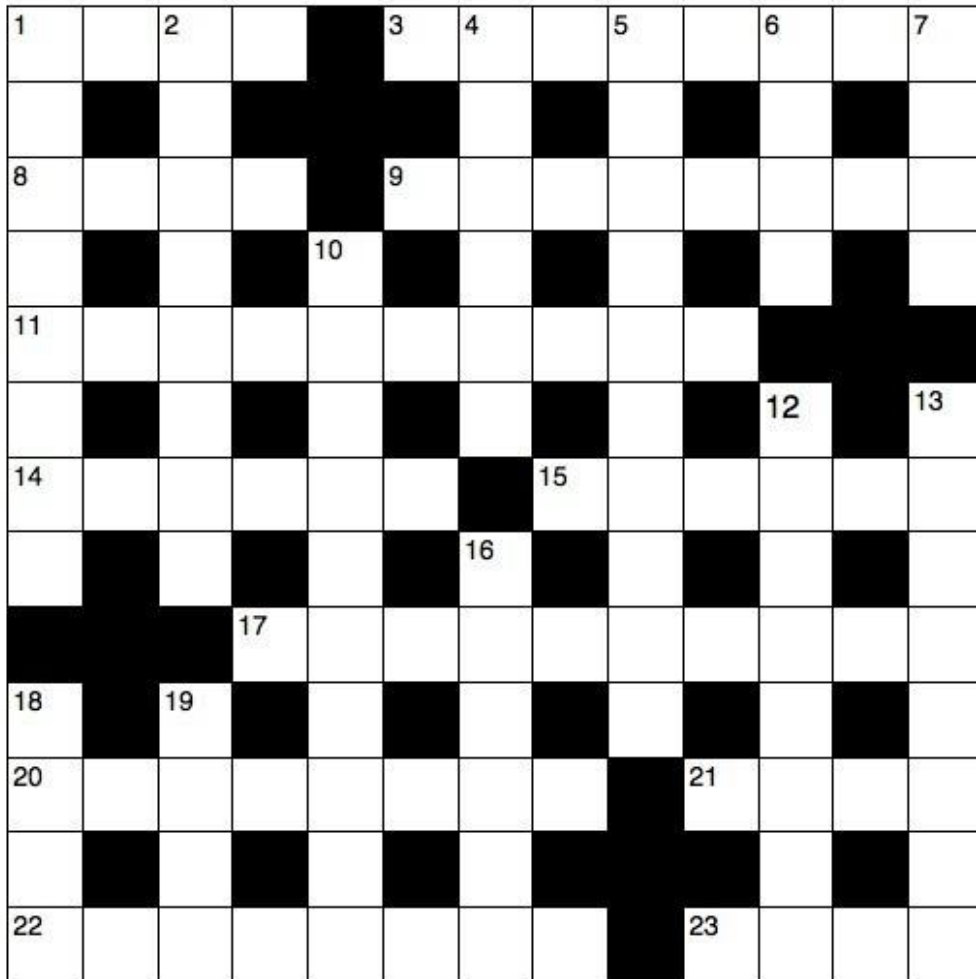
Crossword Puzzle

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)



Prayer for December 2024

Father, the days are short; darkness deepens in December and this year it seems to reflect the darkness in so many parts of the world. We think especially of the land You came to, all those years ago, and other nearby lands where so many are suffering.

Father, thank you that Jesus came into the world as Your Light; that He shines today as brightly and powerfully as He did then, and will do forever.

Help us to open our hearts and minds to allow His light to fill us with the assurance that, no matter what is going on, we are safe in Him.

Thank you that, in Jesus, You have conquered death and darkness; that one day, everyone will bow before Jesus as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, whose Kingdom shall never end. Help us, in thankfulness and love, to share Your Christmas Light and Hope and Joy. Hallelujah! In Jesus' name. Amen.

By Daphne Kitching

Everyday Christmas - *By Daphne Kitching*

(Mal 4:2, Mt 1:23)

Light a candle,
Look into the light,
Pray.

Light and life to all He brings,
Risen with healing in His wings

As the flame rises,
Smooth, bright,
Know the comfort of Christ
In the carol speaking
Afresh.
Bringing Jesus
Into heart and prayer.

Emmanuel, God with us.
Light of the world,
Out of the stable
Into our situations.

Because of Jesus
Christmas is everyday.

The Lord is here.
Hallelujah.

Nolite Timere

(Do not be afraid) - *By Nigel Beeton*

Do not be afraid
Of angels in the sky
Nor of the Babe in manger laid
Or of the death He'd die.

Do not be afraid
Of magi bearing gold
Their clothes of velvet and rich braid
As mysteries unfold.

Do not be afraid
Of Herod's fatal rage
Or soldiers on a killing raid
On those of tender age.

Fear not, instead rejoice!
For joy the angels bring!
Good news is in the angel's voice
Of Christ, our Saviour King!

Christmas Trees - *By Megan Carter*

Norway sent a Christmas tree
It marks the Saviour's birth,
The incarnation manifest
As God came down to earth

A babe born to a virgin
Would grow up as a man,
Yet still divine, such mystery,
To implement God's plan.

Another tree was put in place
A sacrifice was made,
As on that cross He gave His life
That all men could be saved.

So celebrate that wondrous day
When Jesus left His home,
To bring salvation down to man,
And claim us as His own.

The Christmas Kitchen- *By Nigel Beeton*

The kitchen is, at Christmas
A very busy room!
Lots of work in such a rush
Or Christmas Day will loom.

First there is the cake to bake
And many pastries too,
Mince pies and biscuits, festive fare
There is so much to do!

Then comes the day, the kitchen fills
With wondrous cooking smells,
As turkey roasts and parsnip toasts
The cooks must work their spells.

The dinner's on the table
We gather round and eat,
But someone has to wash the pots
And make the kitchen neat.

So have a happy Christmas,
Enjoy the festive fare,
But grab a towel and help the cook,
And show them that you care!

Contact Details for Local Groups

Ecclesfield Rainbows

Gatty Hall
Thursday 5.00 pm to 6.15 pm
Contact - Girl Guiding Website / To
Register Interest

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 - Emma Addy
Theatre Tel No. 0114 240 2624

Ecclesfield Community Garden

Ecclesfield Park - Located between
Ladycroft bridge/stream and Bowling
greens. Open Wednesday + Saturday
10 am to 12 noon
Tel: Robert 0114 246 1095

Friends of Ecclesfield Library

Run by the community for the community.
Volunteer helpers always needed.
Tel: 0114 246 3651
email: ecclesfieldlib@gmail.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)
Thursday - 5:45 - 7:00 pm
Contact Shane Porteous
shane@ecclesfieldscouts.org.uk

Ecclesfield Scouts

Scout Hut (off Yew Lane)
Thursday 7:15 pm to 9:00 pm
Leader - Bryony Hemming
25theecclesfieldscouts@gmail.com

The Grenoside Singers

Practice Monday in St Mark's
Church Hall at 7:30 pm
Secretary: Judith Gill Tel: 0782 411 2584
www.grenosidesingers.co.uk

Whitley Hall Cricket Club

Matches every Saturday and some
Sundays and weekdays.
Please make contact if you wish to play or
learn. Secretary: Joe Webster:
whitleyhall@yocspl.co.uk
Website:
whitleyhall.play-cricket.com

Chapelton and District PROBUS Club

Meets every 2nd Wednesday in the month
in Grenoside Community Centre
All retired and semi-retired gentlemen welcome
Contact the Secretary: Trevor Winslow
chapelton.probus@gmail.com
We are now face to face see
www.chapelton-probus.org.uk

If you would like your local group advertised, please contact:
Mrs P Blackburn ☎ 0114 246 8453



<u>Vicar:</u> Revd. Tim Gill	E-mail: ttimgill@aol.com	Phone: 257 0002
Church Office Tuesday 9:00am to 1:00 pm Thursday 9:00am to 12:00 pm	office.stmarys.ecclesfield@googlemail.com	245 0106
Website	https://stmarysecclesfield.org.uk/	
Groups:	Times and Days:	Phone:
Choir Practice in Church Contact: Lynda Pearce	7 pm on Friday Practice in Church	208 3500
Music Group Contact: Andrea Whittaker	7:30 pm Thursday Practice in Church	246 0746
Mother's Union in Gatty Hall Contact: Maureen Lambert	1.00 pm 1st Wednesday of the month	246 9690
Ecclesfield Ladies Group Contact: Anne Rostron	2.00 pm Thursday in Gatty Hall	245 5492
Bell Ringers Contact: Phil Hirst	7:30 pm Tuesday in Church Belfry	286 2766
Gatty Hall Bookings		0780 307 8223
For Baptisms or Weddings Enquiries please contact the Vicar		
Magazine e-mail:	stmarys.magazine.ecclesfield@gmail.com	

We thought you might find it helpful to know what the significant days and Sundays of each month are called

Date	Day	Colour
Sunday 1 st December	1 st Sunday of Advent	Purple
Sunday 8 th December	2 nd Sunday of Advent	Purple
Sunday 15 th December	3 rd Sunday of Advent	Purple
Sunday 22 nd December	4 th Sunday of Advent	Purple
Sunday 29 th December	1 st Sunday of Christmas	White



Ecclesfield Handbell Ringers

Christmas Concert

Saturday 7th December

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or email : ecclesfieldhr@gmail.com

Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

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December 6:30 pm

All welcome

