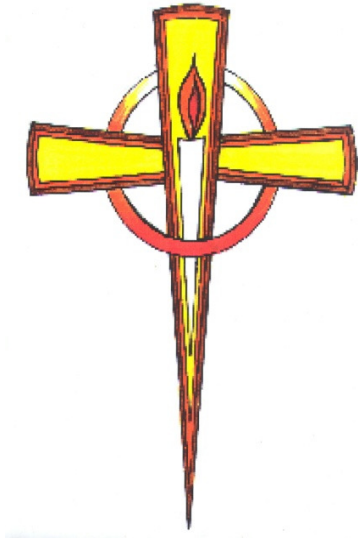


Christ Church Walmersley

in the Benefice of Walmersley Road



Magazine

Spreading the Word

December 2011

Thought for the Month

As I write this it is a glorious sunny day in November, the autumn colours are still with us and we have yet to have the first frosts of winter. But, by the time you read it we will be in December and the build up to Christmas will have begun in earnest. The season of parties, Carol Services, and nativity plays will be upon us.

In December Alan and I shall be going, along with members of Junior Church, to a performance of "A Christmas Carol" taking my young god-daughter and her brother with us. We shall have lunch out first, drinks in the interval and no doubt sweets during the performance. I am looking forward to it immensely.



Earlier this year, I saw a different interpretation of "A Christmas Carol" when my friend Alison had been involved in a flower festival at Houghton Tower where her flower club had produced a depiction of Christmas past – along with ghost. It was a wonderful event and the standard of flower arrangements (although that is an inadequate description) amazing.

Thinking of these two events made me remember Christmases past and recollect how the celebrations have changed, even in my lifetime. As a child in wartime Britain, my earliest Christmases were somewhat Spartan, food was scarce, the Christmas tree was an old, battered artificial one with real candles, decorations were very simple paper chains, presents were of the useful variety and any toys were home made or second hand. The family still gathered together and shared whatever was available.



As times became more affluent, turkeys appeared and even glasses of sherry. As a young mother married to an Art teacher, we had no decorations in the house until Christmas Eve as my husband was so fed up with making them at school. At that time I regularly cooked Christmas dinner for twenty two people. It was hectic but wonderful.

Over the years, the people gathering at the table have changed and decreased as the family has become smaller and more widespread. Christmas has become a quieter affair. This year, the decorations will be up well ahead of Christmas Eve, the Christmas feast will certainly be different from that of the nineteen forties and I have no doubt we will share twenty first century gifts.

Christmas has changed in so many ways for other people too. It has certainly become more commercial and expectations have increased enormously, putting great pressure on families.

But, whatever changes we may see, some things are constant.

We still echo the words of the angels– “peace on earth, goodwill to all mankind.” Like the shepherds we still worship the child in the manger and like the wise men bring our gifts to him.



Yes, whatever else may change, we still celebrate the greatest gift in the world – the gift of a Saviour, born to an earthly family in a humble stable. A gift which is full of promise and hope.

May you know the unchanging joy of the angels and the peace of the Christ child in your homes this Christmas.

Yours in Christ

Handwritten signature of Margery

Spreading the Word

SERVICES AND READINGS FOR DECEMBER



December 4th **Second Sunday of Advent**

- 9.00 a.m. Holy Communion (BCP)
2 Peter 3: 8-15a; Mark 1: 1-8
- 10.30 a.m. Holy Communion (CW)
2 Peter 3: 8-15a; Mark 1: 1-8

December 11th **Third Sunday of Advent**

- 9.00 a.m. Holy Communion (BCP)
1 Thessalonians 5: 16-24; John 1: 6-8, 19-28
- 10.30 a.m. Family and Parade Service
John 1: 6-8, 19-28

December 18th **Fourth Sunday of Advent**

- 9.00 a.m. Holy Communion (BCP)
Romans 16: 25-27; Luke 1: 26-38
- 10.30 a.m. Holy Communion (CW)
Romans 16: 25-27; Luke 1: 26-38
- 6.30 p.m. Carol Service

December 24th **Christmas Eve**

- 6.00 p.m. Family Celebration
- 11.30 p.m. Holy Communion
Titus 3: 4-7; Luke 2: 8-20

December 25th **Christmas Day**

- 10.00 a.m. Holy Communion (BCP)
Titus 3: 4-7; Luke 2: 8-20

December 26th **Saint Stephen's Day**

10.00 a.m. Holy Communion
Acts 7: 51-60; Matthew 10: 17-22

January 1st **First Sunday of Christmas**

9.00 a.m. Holy Communion (BCP)
Galatians 4: 4-7; Luke 2: 15-21

10.00 a.m. Holy Communion (CW)
Galatians 4: 4-7; Luke 2: 15-21

A Novel Advent Bible Study

Based on the novel, "A Christmas Carol"
by Charles Dickens.

This is running for four weeks from
Tuesday, November 29th
starting at 7.30 p.m.
at 150 Walmersley Road.

Led by Una Kroll and Ian Banks

The sessions will be:

1. Scrooge - Mark 8:36
2. Marley and the Ghost of Christmas Past - Ecclesiastes 3:15
3. Ghost of Christmas Present - 2 Corinthians 7:10
4. Ghost of Christmas Future - 1 Thessalonians 5:9



ARE YOU ON DUTY?

If you are unavailable, please arrange to exchange with someone else.

READINGS

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| December 4 th | Sybil Fryer |
| December 11 th | Jean Slater |
| December 18 th | David Peters |
| December 24 th | Barbara Silvester |
| December 25 th | Jennifer Wood |
| January 1 st | Alison Fewtrell |

INTERCESSIONS

| |
|-----------------|
| Bob Taylor |
| Barbara Taylor |
| Margery Spencer |
| Nigel Silvester |
| Joe McDermott |

SIDESMEN / WOMEN ROTA

| | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| December 4 th | Jean Slater | Alan Spencer | Roy Warburton |
| December 11 th | Sybil Fryer | Chris Standring | Bill Noble |
| December 18 th | Ian Riddick | Shelagh Beetson | Geoff Hamilton |
| December 25 th | David Peters | Nigel Silvester | Pamela Hoyle |
| January 1 st | Alison Fewtrell | Jean Slater | Alan Spencer |

LAY ASSISTANTS


| | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| December 4 th | Margery Spencer | Tricia Stokes |
| December 18 th | Nigel Silvester | |
| December 24 th | Margery Spencer | Barbara Silvester |
| December 25 th | Barbara Silvester | Jennifer Wood |
| January 1 st | Tricia Stokes | Jean Slater |

FLOWERS

in church have been given:

- December 4th In memory of J Melling and M Illsley
December 11th Mrs. O Greenhagh
December 18th Mr & Mrs R Nicholls in memory of their parents
December 25th Congregation



| | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
|  | Baptisms November 6 | Benjamin Daniel O'Brien |
|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

As usual there will be a board at the back of church dedicated to our Christmas greetings to each other. You may wish to make a donation to charity rather than send cards to many members of the congregation. This is an opportunity to display one card for all to see.



The 'post-boxes' will be available as usual during December to facilitate the exchange of cards to those to whom you wish to send a more personal greeting.

From the OLD to the New

During this year, which marks 400 years of the Bible in English, we have been quoting parts of the Bible in the King James' Version and putting beside them a modern translation. For our last reading we have chosen part of the Christmas story.

King James Version

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.



And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

Contemporary English Version

About that time Emperor Augustus gave orders for the names of all the people to be listed in record books. These first records were made when Quirinius was governor of Syria. Everyone had to go to their own hometown to be listed. So Joseph had to leave Nazareth in Galilee and go to Bethlehem in Judea. Long ago Bethlehem had been King David's hometown, and Joseph went there because he was from David's family.

Mary was engaged to Joseph and travelled with him to Bethlehem. She was soon going to have a baby, and while they were there, she gave birth to her first-born son. She dressed him in baby clothes and laid him on a bed of hay, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Prayer Mat

Week One

***Make Way, Make Way,
For the King of Kings, For the King of Kings,
Make Way, Make Way,
And let his Kingdom in.***

(Graham Kendrick)

A voice of one calling,
"In the desert prepare
the way for the LORD
make straight in the wilderness
a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be raised up,
every mountain and hill made low,
the rough ground shall become level,
the rugged places a plain.
And the glory of the LORD will be revealed
and all mankind together will see it.
For the mouth of the LORD has spoken."
(Isaiah Chap. 40, vv 3-5)



Week Two

Lord Jesus, Light of the world,
born in David's city of Bethlehem,
born like him to be a king:
Be born in our hearts at Christmas,
be king of our lives today. Amen.
(Common Worship: Times and Seasons)

Week Three

Lord, prepare us for your coming
Prepare us for your love
Prepare us for your being
The Light of the world.

Lord, prepare us for your grace
Prepare us for your Spirit
Prepare us for your guidance
The Light of the world. Amen.



Week Four

God our Father,
today the Saviour is born
and those who live in darkness are seeing a great
light.

Help us, who greet the birth of Christ with joy,
to live in the light of your Son,
and to share the good news of your love.

We ask this through Jesus Christ,
the light who has come into the world. Amen.

(Common Worship: Times and Seasons)

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Logo

2012 sees a new magazine for the joint benefice.

It would be great to have a new logo on the front, to represent the parishes of Christ Church and St John with St Mark – the parishes of Walmersley Road.

colourful? dramatic? stylized? modern?

Adults, children, - let us have your designs, please, by 6 January to any PCC member.



Tuesday, 13th December

10 a.m. **Springside School Carol Service**
in Church

Parents, grandparents, carers, friends - please support our children.

Sunday, 18th December

10.30 a.m. **Holy Communion**
will include a nativity play
with the children and
leaders of Junior Church



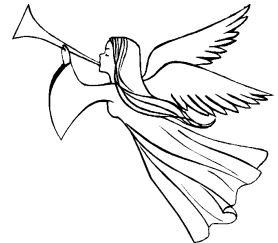
Another opportunity to hear the familiar story presented in a different way.

and at 6.30 p.m.

Jointly with St John with St Mark's and St Joseph's congregations
(this year it is the turn of St John with St Mark to host)

Festival of Lessons and Carols

with Nigel McCulloch
Bishop of Manchester



and the Haslingden and Helmshore Brass Band

Hear the GOOD NEWS and join in singing new
and traditional CAROLS – a great opportunity to
celebrate with all the family.

Saturday, 24th December

5 p.m. at St John with St Mark

Crib Service

to which everyone is welcome



6.00 p.m. at Christ Church
Passing it around

All ages are invited to come and UNWRAP
the Christmas Story

11.30 p.m. **Holy Communion**

Share in the first Eucharist of Christmas

Sunday, 25th December

10.00 a.m. **Holy Communion**

Celebrate the birth of a Saviour



Monday, 26th December

Feast of St Stephen

"a man full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost,"

10.00 a.m. **Holy Communion**

I am delighted to say that we now have two more new members in our Branch – Ruth Butcher and Geoff Stokes. We now have well over fifty members and it is wonderful to be getting new ideas and being able to pass the Mothers' Union message to more and more people.

The pie and pea supper following communion went down well as usual and we had many interesting postcards on the subject of children. The winner was Hilary Riddick and we await her choice of subject for next year with excitement!

We were joined that evening by our Community Officer who had approached Sybil Fryer and expressed an interest in what we do. I think we made a good impression! She may become a member at our next communion service in the New Year.

Our speaker at our second November meeting was Revd. Angela Dand who is the Action and Outreach Coordinator for Mothers' Union in Manchester. She led us through all the activities that we are involved in:

- ❖ Virtual babies in community projects
- ❖ Support for hostels
- ❖ Away From It All breaks
- ❖ Hospital projects
- ❖ Parenting groups
- ❖ University projects – Welcome Week and weekly soup kitchen
- ❖ Overseas links – Nigeria, Congo, Kenya

and introduced the exciting opportunities that are coming up in Prison outreach.

Volunteers are needed for a variety of jobs in the Visitors Centre and the Visits Hall at HMP Manchester. There is a tea bar and a crèche to be staffed.

There is also a Mothers' Union pilot project with an organisation called Time for Families. TFF would be putting on courses for prisoners and their partners covering Relationships and Communication; Parenting Skills and Budgeting - six, one day a week sessions for prisoners with a release date in view. Mothers' Union would provide two volunteers to welcome prisoners and partners as they arrive, make them tea, settle them down and help them to understand the tasks set. This would be at Forest Bank Prison, Salford.

If you are interested in either of these, please let me know.



As we approach the end of the year we find ourselves surrounded by the hustle and bustle associated with parties and family gatherings. Everything seems to be a rush as time is taken up with preparations of one kind or another. With this in mind I would draw your attention to our Advent Meditation on December 7th. It

is an opportunity to take time out for peace and reflection on the true meaning of Advent and Christmas.

Dates for your diary

| | | |
|-----|------|--|
| Nov | 24th | Quiet Day Manchester Cathedral 10am-2.30pm |
| Nov | 27th | Deanery Advent Carol Service 2.30pm St.Philip's, Stubbins |
| Dec | 1st | Advent Carol Service St Ann Manchester 2.00pm |
| Dec | 3rd | Christmas Fair Christ Church MU Café (donations of mince pies very welcome) |

Meetings

| | | |
|-----|------------------|---|
| Dec | 7 th | Advent Meditation |
| | 14 th | Christmas Meal at 'The Pavillion' Birtle NB. This is not 3 rd Wednesday |

Cath Hilton
branch leader

Children's Corner



Unscramble the letters to find the words in our

Christmas Anagram



bennorw _____

ghiinns arst _____

deehprss _____

aceefiknnrs _____

aiintvy _____

aeglns _____

abelst _____

aegmnr _____

aailmns _____

ejssu _____

Glory to God in the
highest, and on earth,
peace, good will toward
men.

Luke 2:14



Christmas grows closer

Lord Jesus, Light of the world,
John told the people to prepare
for you when you were very near.
As Christmas grows closer day by day,
help us to be ready to welcome you now. Amen



Lettings

I have taken *Lettings* this month from the book I have reviewed, "*Do Nothing Christmas is Coming*" by Stephen Cottrell. This is an Advent Calendar with a difference & very thought provoking. I reproduce an extract from the book by kind permission of Church House Publishing

"What is the sound of one cracker being pulled? What about all the people who will be on their own at Christmas? What about those who don't have a home, let alone a dining room?"



About half a million people spend Christmas on their own each year. Some do this out of choice, preferring the solitude of their own company to the forced merriment of others. Some do not. Many people are just isolated, alienated, forgotten or abandoned. The overcrowded noisiness of our busy, prosperous culture can be the lonliest place on earth. Some people can go through a whole day with very

little human contact. Everything is automated. We interact with our computers and our phones, but not with each other. We know the names of those who live in Albert Square. We've barely spoken to our next door neighbour.

There's a vast number of people who don't have any home at all. Nobody is sure how many, but last Christmas the charity Crisis served 35,000 meals in its shelters across London. Then there are half a million or so "hidden homeless": people living in squats or bedsits, families in temporary accommodation, people sleeping on a friend's sofa.

What is it that everyone remembers from the Christmas story?
There was no room at the inn. God entered the world through the experience of homelessness and the rejection and isolation that goes with it. How can we reach out to those whose experience is the same today?



- *Do you know anyone who might be alone this Christmas?*
- *What could you do to offer them company*
- *Find out about what happens in your local community to support the homeless people. As well as national charities like Crisis and Shelter there are often local projects and centres that need support. Offer them some help. Take them some food or warm clothing*

We, at Christ Church are made aware of some of the need in our locality and support charities like Porch Box and Mustard Seed but like me, I am sure, feel we could do more.

This extract was taken from the writing for December 8th and finished with these words from Mother Theresa of Calcutta.....

The greatest suffering is being lonely, feeling unloved, having no one. I have come more and more to realize that it is being unwanted that is the worst disease that any human being can ever experience.....

If you have an interesting article for *Settings* or a Christian Book recommendation for *Book Review*, please contact Jean Slater



Book review 1

First, an apology for the fact that the title for last month's book review title was not very evident on the picture. The book by Adrian Plass was entitled "***Blind Spots in the Bible***"

Carol by Bob Hartman

- A story for Christmas - nice and easy to read only 96 pages.

Carol a modern retelling of Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol.

Jack O' Mally hates shopping. He hates snow. He even hates Christmas. All three at once is Jack's idea of a really bad day.

Storming into a bookshop after nearly being killed by a woman in a 4x4 to have a coffee and unwind, he literally bumps into Carol - a beautiful and mysterious woman. His entire life past, present and future flashes before his eyes.

What a difference a cup of coffee can make

Bob Hartman is an author of over 30 books and plays. He lives in Pennsylvania but does make it across the Atlantic.



| | |
|--------|---|
| When: | 2 December 2011 An Advent Meditation |
| Where: | Lower Room, Church Hall |
| Time: | 2 p.m. – 3 p.m. |

Everyone is welcome, so do come and join this informal meeting for fellowship, worship and time for tea and a chat. Transport can be arranged for you if necessary.

If you require any more information, please contact Jean Slater

Book review 2

“Do Nothing Christmas is Coming” an Advent Calendar with a difference.

This month, as we celebrate Advent and prepare for Christmas I would like to recommend a book written by the Church of England bishop of Chelmsford, Stephen Cottrell. I bought it last year and have only just started to look at it properly.



I quote from the book:

Christmas is one of the most joyful times of the year. It can also be one of the most stressful. So rather than a chocolate Advent calendar this book offers you an Advent countdown with a difference.

From 1st December all the way through to Christmas Day, Stephen gives you short, practical steps that you can take each day to slow down, take time out – and enjoy getting ready for Christmas.

Pray-ing

An hour of singing contemporary worship songs with time for prayer and maybe a scripture reading or two.

Relaxed, gentle fellowship and all very informal.

At the home of Barbara & Nigel Silvester, 49 Fairlands Road, Limefield.

7.30pm on
Friday 9th December and Monday 9th January

What's on in Walmersley

December

- Thu 1 Thursday Prayers
- Thu 1 Mothers' Union Advent Service
St Ann Manchester at 2 p.m.
- Sat 3 Winter Fair at CCW
- Sun 4 Eid-Christmas Cracker – detail in church or from Jill Smith
- Wed 7 Mothers' Union Advent Mediation
- Fri 9 Pray-Sing
- Tue 13 Springside Carol Service
- Wed 14 Mothers' Union Christmas Meal
- Thu 15 Joint PCC
- Thu 29 Get together at the Vicarage at 7.30 p.m.
Standing committees, choir masters and organists, music group leaders, sacristans, clergy, readers and all their spouses or guests are all cordially invited.
- January 5 Thursday Prayers – Epiphany Communion 2 p.m.

WINTER FAIR on Saturday 3 December

Bring your friends, neighbours, family

**Café, tombola, cakes and produce stall,
Real Christmas stall and activities,
jewellery and accessories, books, games,
gift wrapping service, and much more**



Items for these stalls will be gratefully received - please bring to church or give to any PCC member.

Girls



in

action

