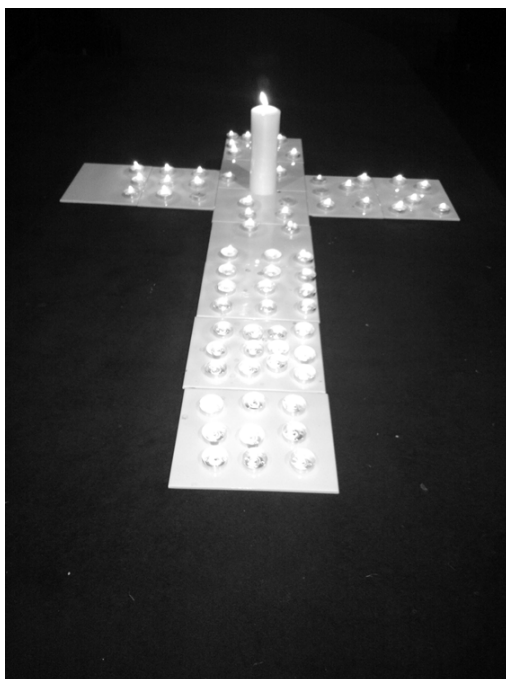


December 2014

Parish News

St Mary's, Woodkirk

Happy Christmas !



This Month:

**The Changing Church; Turkeys and
Christmas Cakes; Patrons; Hope;
Poppies and Devils.**

www.stmarywoodkirk.org

Who's who at Woodkirk

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Glyn Jennings 01924 470272

Organist: George Ford

PCC Secretary: Dawn Tattersfield

PCC Treasurer Gary Mortimer 0113 252 8935

Social Chairman: Brian Gledhill 01924 405790

Parish Centre Hire: Brian Walshaw 01924 479380

Parish Centre Manager: Glyn Jennings 01924 470272

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Data Protection Officer: Neal Pinder-Packard 0113 2524001
& Deputy Church Warden

Magazine Editor & David Townsend 0113 2528710

Weekly News Sheet. Email: dave2408.townsend@gmail.com
Magazine Articles by the 20th of the month.
Mobile: 07745 301746
Contributions for the Weekly Sheet
by Thursday evening please.

Deanery Synod rep: Glyn Jennings

Elected Members of the Parochial Church Council:

Elizabeth Aveyard, Derek Barraclough, Brian Gledhill, Julie Hyde, Gill Mahoney,
Averille Milburn, Gary Mortimer, Neal Pinder-Packard, Dawn Tattersfield, Dave
Townsend, Gail Townsend, Barbara Tate.

If you enjoy the magazine– a donation of 50p really helps to keep it going!

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Welcome!

Enjoy reading this Parish magazine and, if you wish to know more about Church Groups, please get in touch with the Movers and Shakers - their names are on the inside front & inside back covers. Service times are on the back page. You'd be most welcome to join us. May God bless you and all whom you love.

Parish News by Post

This magazine can be delivered monthly by sending a minimum donation of £12 a year to cover magazine costs including post and packaging to: Margaret Longden, 64 Woodkirk Gardens, Dewsbury WF12 7JA. Call Margaret on 01924 473064. It's a brilliant gift for friends or family living near or far. Cheque's to Woodkirk PCC please.

Web site & Twitter

Further news and pictures of what is happening at St Mary's can be found on our web site located at: www.stmarywoodkirk.org

Copies of the magazine can be downloaded from the web site from the middle of the month of publication.

We are on Twitter: twitter.com/stmarywoodkirk

Wheelchair Access

A wheelchair is available to help people move easily between the church and Dewsbury Road. Just ask.

Trevor's Teasers

If I went to a book shop and asked for the self help section, would that defeat the object?

If a deaf child signs swear words, does his mother make him wash his hands?

What was the best thing before Sliced Bread?

If a turtle doesn't have a shell, is it homeless or naked?

What do you do if you see an endangered animal eating an endangered plant?

If you have been successful in your failed attempt, have you succeeded?

Trevor Sykes

Soaking it in.

The first sign that Christmas is on the way in the Vicarage is the making of the Christmas cake. It's a tradition that it's made at the end of October – because when the children were at home it was half term. The children are no longer at home, but traditions die hard – especially around Christmas. Actually, the tradition of having a Christmas cake at all is one we wonder about – with only two of us at home, it has taken us until August to finally use it all, only to begin again two months later!

I have learnt, from over 30 years of following this tradition, that Christmas cakes can't be hurried, either in the baking or the eating. I remember the first year I baked one. Newly married and proud of the cake as it was taken from the oven, I proceeded to take it out of its tin straight away. Slowly the sides bowed outwards, the centre sank and the whole thing ended up in crumbs. (It tasted very nice with custard, however, for several weeks after.) I learnt that waiting is an essential part of the art of the Christmas cake. Another year I omitted to remove the greaseproof paper before adding the marzipan – an interesting eating experience. I learnt that year that hurry doesn't help. I have learnt from my mistakes over the years. I can't claim to be a great baker, but at least I'm persistent!

Now I have progressed to soaking the fruit in brandy overnight. (My mum goes for three nights for an even plumper experience). It makes for a richer experience, of better quality. But it takes time.

I wonder if there is a parable in this for all of us? That a better quality Christmas, a richer experience, is not about trying to pack more in to the 24 days of December before it arrives, but of taking time to soak in the experience. To try to take time to slow down. It is extremely difficult. It's a case of 'Less is more'. And that means asking which of the long-held traditions I've become so attached to can be shelved in order to create some space. Some of them, like my October baking day, applied when the circumstances of life were different. Time has moved on and yet the traditions have not. I am

considering freezing half of this year's cake for next year, and for the first time in 30 years, not making a cake in 2015. Radical, I know. But, nice though Christmas cake is, it's wearing thin by August.

It's easy to build up layer upon layer of Christmas tradition over the years without ever letting those which might be past their sell-by date to go, and the result is frazzled, exhausted people who have lost sight of what Christmas is all about.

Perhaps one way to 'soak it in' is to make some space for coming to St. Mary's this Christmas, perhaps not just to the service you 'always go to' –because it's tradition! At St. Mary's, we will have to learn to adapt to our changing building – to ask how to make old traditions live again in a new environment. "We always do it this way" is not necessarily the best way to embrace a message which burst into a tired world with a freshness no-one expected! Come and share the joy of that with us over this Christmas season, whether you do so every year or not!

Rev. Amanda



Welcome to Tim.

Tim Freemantle came to play the organ for us for our Memorial Service on 9th November. A new church, a new organ for him, but he coped admirably! And he has agreed to spend the next 6 months with us to get a feel for the church and our worship, with a view to becoming our new organist.

Tim works full time and he has a commitment to a scout group so there will be occasions when he is unable to be with us, but we are excited to be able to explore how it will work for the future. Tim will be playing for us from Sunday 30th November. I know I can rely on the very warm welcoming community of St. Mary's to welcome him into our church life. It is a great answer to prayer that we have been able to appoint an organist in time for our Christmas services! Thank you Tim!

We are enormously grateful to all those organists who have sustained our worship over the last 3 months since George Ford left us. Between them, David Austin, Derek Bellwood, Bryan Robinson and Ken Wright have done an amazing job in covering our Sunday services, with only one Sunday which it proved impossible to find cover for.

Revd. Amanda.



So who is new Organist Tim..?

Tim comes originally from Horden, near Peterlee in Durham and came to Leeds in 1995. he went to a traditional Anglican Church and spent time there as a Chorister. As a teenager, he was one of the first to be diagnosed with dyslexia, but still managed top grades in Music. He learnt to play the piano as a boy - as did all of his 4 brothers and sisters. After school, a friend applied to Cambridge University on Tim's behalf - and won him a scholarship at Trinity College. Tim repaid the favour by gaining his Batchelor of Music.

Tim is also a qualified Nurse, and worked at Leeds General Infirmary for 7 1/2 years in the trauma team, before moving to Nuffield Hospital where he still works today. Married to Alison, they have three children - Holly 11, Charlie 9 and Archie who weighs in at 4 years old. Now they live in Halton on the east side of Leeds, and Tim is Akela (Leader) of the Scout Group at Sherburn in Elmet. He leads a busy life which includes some weekend work at the hospital.

Welcome to Tim from the Church family.

David

#Christmasmeans

The Church's successful twitter campaign, #Christmasmeans will be running again this year giving congregations and individuals across the country a chance to show what Christmas means to them, with image, videos and 140 character reflections. Last year more than four million people connected with #Christmasmeans with short videos, pictures from Christmas services and Bible verses.

"We are delighted that #Christmasmeans gives us this opportunity for parishes to take the good news of the first Christmas beyond churches and into people's lives and homes" says the Revd Arun Arora (@RevArun), Director of Communications at the Archbishops' Council.

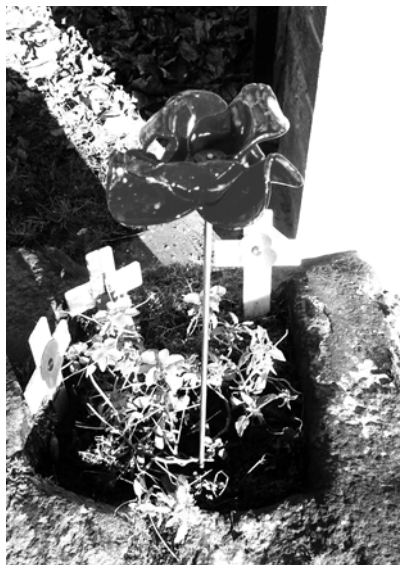
The Tower of London Poppies.

The major art installation Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red at the Tower of London, marked one hundred years since the first full day of Britain's involvement in the First World War. Created by artists Paul Cummins and Tom Piper, 888,246 ceramic poppies progressively filled the Tower's famous moat between 17 July and 11 November 2014.

Each poppy represented a British military fatality during the war. The poppies encircled the iconic landmark, creating not only a spectacular display visible from all around the Tower but also a location for personal reflection. The scale of the installation was intended to reflect the magnitude of such an important centenary and create a powerful visual commemoration.

All of the poppies that made up the installation were sold, raising millions of pounds which were shared equally amongst six service charities. Glyn Jennings has bought one of the Poppies and you can see it below.

David



Glyn with a Ceramic Poppy from the Tower of London display.

Thank You for Harvest.

At our family service in October, we gave thanks for having food in plenty. We thought about people in this country and abroad who struggle to feed themselves and their families.

Food was collected for Food banks and a collection was made for Christian Aid which raised £98-80. This money will be put to good use in countries where resources, particularly water, are in short supply. Christian Aid helps with expertise to build irrigation systems etc. so that the best use can be made of the land, enabling the population to become self-sufficient. Some of the countries they help are the poorest in the world.

Sally

The Children's Society.

Thank you once again for your generous giving. Our box collection this year has raised £905-54. We have about thirty box-holders at present and if anyone would like a collecting box please let me know.

Your support through your box donations makes a real difference to the lives of vulnerable children and young people. Thank you

Susan Walshaw

Christmas Fair takes off....

This year's Christmas Fair went down a storm, with over a hundred visitors and a variety of Stalls: Books and CD's, a Tombola, Christian Bookshop, Chocolates and Cakes, Scouts Bric-a-brac, Pickles and Plants, a Hamper Raffle (amongst others), Fair Trade, Hair Decorations and the Brownies Cards, Crafts and Lucky dip, all meaning that we raised a fantastic:

£1459-12

I think we deserve a collective pat on the back for that - with special thanks to Brian Gledhill for organising everything (even if he did forget the table plan!).

David

Prayerful Thought...December 2014.

Hello there. Well here we are into another December, and some of us are just getting started on our festive preparations, some of the very organised among you will no doubt be well on with your shopping, cooking etc that are all part of our modern Christmas.

Now I got my idea for this month's prayerful thought at the end of October! I think it was because I had heard a Christmas style advert on the radio that was something to do with ordering furniture that would be delivered in time for Christmas and it got me thinking about 'The perfect Christmas'.

We are bombarded by TV advertisements that show us lovely living rooms that would be a perfect setting in which all our friends and family can relax in when they call to see us over Christmas, and all the food retailers provide images of the perfect Christmas table groaning with gorgeous tasty morsels and suggesting that with all these things we can have a 'perfect' Christmas.

To a certain extent they probably have a point. I remember WHAM's 'Last Christmas' music video in the 80's and longed to be part of a house party like that (I wasn't bothered whether George Michael and Andrew Ridgeley were there, but the house party looked lovely) and the ski chalet setting with loads of snow, a roaring fire and some mulled wine looked very inviting.

So yes, I do get sucked into all the festive preparation and I don't think there is anything wrong in it per-se, but I do recognise it is a huge financial burden to families when budgets are tight anyway and yet money has to be found for food and presents for your family members, especially children.

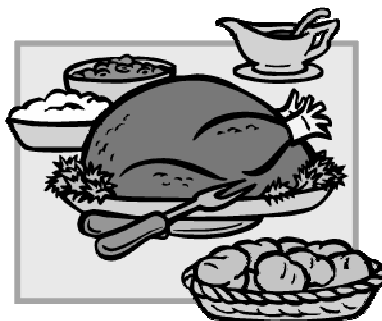
Ah now then, the food, well I could go on for pages about the lovely food to tempt us, that we want to provide on Christmas Day.

I love watching TV Chefs when they do their Christmas Specials. I've watched Hugh Fearnley Whittingstall with his themed meals at River Cottage HQ in Devon and I always remember watching Nigella Lawson putting a turkey big enough to feed a small army into a big bucket of water, infused with juniper berries, peppercorns and other spices, on Christmas Eve, to prepare it for cooking the next day.

Every home/cookery magazine has a 'timetable' or 'countdown' list to enable you to 'cook the perfect Christmas dinner' with the minimum amount of stress and fuss, so that you can spend some time with your children/family on Christmas Day and not spend it chained to the kitchen!

The funny thing is, I remember having a turkey left in my freezer one Christmas and as they tend to take up a fair amount of room, thought I would cook it one random damp and drizzly Saturday in January/February and invited my family for a meal, and yes, this was exactly the same people that I would have cooked a Christmas Dinner for, and yet the whole cooking and serving of the meal was completely unstressful.

I wasn't worried that the bird wouldn't be cooked; or that I wouldn't have enough to go around; or that the cooker wouldn't work; or that we'd have a power cut in the middle of cooking it!!! And the many other things we stress about when cooking a Christmas dinner.



I've thought a lot about this whilst preparing this article and I'm not sure I've come up with an answer, but I wonder if at Christmas, we are just conscious of (or subconsciously worried about) the media representation of that perfect Christmas. We want everything to look right and taste gorgeous, we want a lovely selection of goodies to share. If we have tightened our belts and saved some extra money for Christmas treats we want to share and enjoy them with our families and friends, and this makes us worry about everything.

But really we shouldn't worry about Christmas. I mean after all it's been around for a long time, and it doesn't move, we know when it's coming and we can prepare for it. (perhaps part of the problem is having a year to plan, do we overcomplicate it?)

This then got me thinking about that first Christmas with Joseph taking Mary to Bethlehem so that they could be registered in his home town.

Nowadays, even though babies still tend to come when they like and are not predictable to a specific day and time, you can be fairly sure of the week that your baby is 'likely' to arrive in. Well that wouldn't have been the case back in Jesus' time, no scans there. I'm sure families had a rough idea that a baby would take a certain time period to be ready to be born, but nowhere as sophisticated as today's methods.

I always feel for poor Mary too. I have never had a baby so I cannot speak from personal experience, but I do have five nieces, a

number of godchildren and friends who have had babies, not to count (as a Human Resources Manager) the number of ladies who I worked with who I went through maternity entitlements with, so I have seen ladies at most stages of their pregnancy, but not at the latter end when they are carrying the full weight of a soon to be born baby.

I bet if I asked any of these ladies they would grimace at the thought of sitting on donkey in order to undertake a long and tiring journey!

Then there's the whole 'no room at the inn' situation and although (despite Victorian Christmas card scenes and Christmas carol words) it would not have been a snowy scene, middle eastern lands whilst hot during the day, do get cold at night. Mary knew that her baby was going to be born, and luckily a kind innkeeper found space for her and Joseph, (and the donkey) in a stable.

Over the past few years we have been offering a room for the night to Mary and Joseph and the donkey with our Posada, the South American custom of small figurines depicting these three characters which you have in your home overnight. I have managed to get my name on the list and hosted Mary, Joseph and the donkey each year and am amazed at the sense of calmness and serenity I feel whilst these three little figures are in our house.

I would urge you, if you haven't already done so, and if there are any spaces left, to host our Posada during Advent and see if the magic of those three little figures will help you 'de-stress' in the run up to Christmas. And whilst I know you may be manically busy over the festive period, if you can, even if it's only once, take a few seconds to nip outside one evening after dark and look up at the stars in the sky.

Just take a moment or two looking at that brightest star and remember, that amongst everything else that our modern day Christmas is, you can share those few moments remembering the star which stopped over the stable many centuries ago, and the baby that God sent, to remind us of how much we are loved.

Happy Christmas.
Dawn Tattersfield

What is there 'Beyond Ourselves'?

Ever wanted to know more?

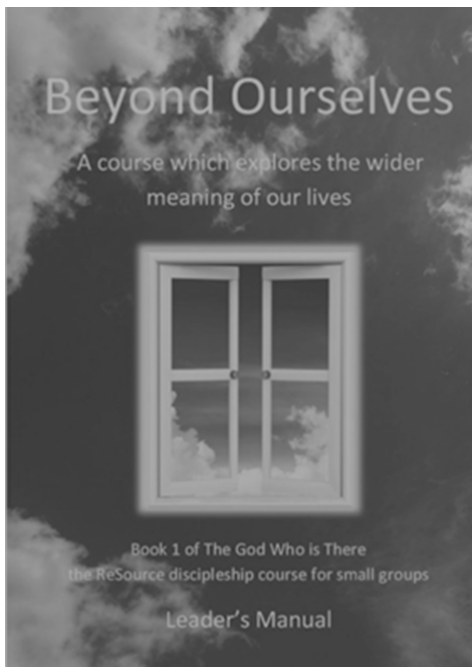
'Beyond Ourselves' is a 10 week course exploring the big questions about what Christian faith is all about, what is there 'beyond ourselves', why there is suffering in the world. It may interest a variety of people:

- Those wanting to explore what Christians believe
- Those who want to get confirmed (specifically when Bishop Nick rededicates the church on Sunday 3rd May 2015)
- Those who want to refresh their understanding
- Those who want to get to grips with the Bible.

A small group will be embarking on this course beginning on Tuesday 13th January 2015 at 7.30pm at the Vicarage. The 10 week course will be completed on 17th March, in time for our Easter celebrations and anticipating the forthcoming rededication service.

Why not ask Amanda if you think this may be the course for you? Phone 01924 472375 or e-mail vicar@stmarywoodkirk.org for more information.

Revd Amanda



The Devil is in the Detail.

Derek Barraclough explores a little known Bible passage.

Sunday 26th October's sermon was about reading the bible - that day being bible Sunday - and Amanda asked the congregation to tell her their favourite passage or verse in the bible. It may surprise some people but mine is Ephesians 6:10-20. As many churches use the Lectionary, a three years cycle of readings, this passage is omitted and so is rarely heard or preached on, in our churches.

Indeed, this may be new to a number of you. So I thought that I would let you have some of my observations on the passage. First here is that passage:-

Ephesians 6:10–20

The Armour of God

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armour of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

In these instructions Paul is warning us that our struggles are not only against human opposition but we are also involved in a spiritual battle also. The writer details it's six main components, he is well aware of what a Roman soldier looks like and the equipment that

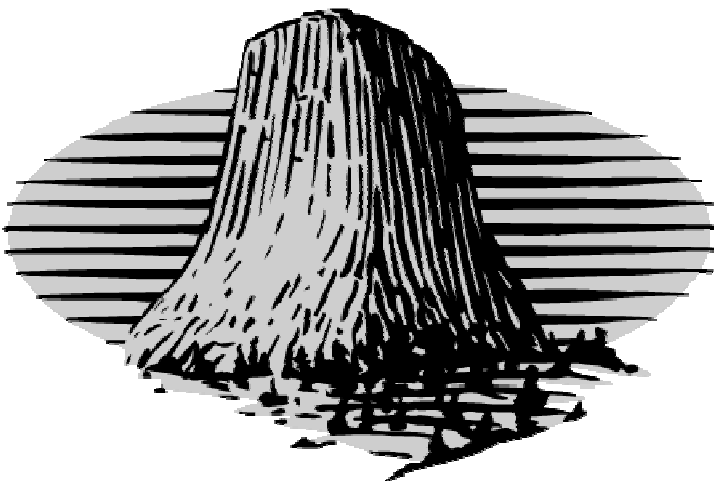
they have, he has seen it up close and personal. It has a spiritual dimension to it that is what prayer is about, being involved in the spiritual aspect of Christian life. If we look first at verse 13 the first word is therefore, I have always been taught that when we see the word therefore in scripture it is a command. It is not if you like, or would you mind, it is command.

For those with a military background you will understand that when a superior officer gives you a command you obey it, without question, otherwise there are consequences. Therefore! Put on the WHOLE armour of God. It is not the parts that we would like to choose, omit the ones that we presume that we don't need, or want to disregard the command. It is the whole armour, why? Because it all links together, you cannot have some parts without compromising your safety if you choose to omit some or all components.

Why do we need to put on this armour, verse 13 shows Paul's concern for his fellow believers, as John Stott puts it is to give "stability to wobbly Christians who have no firm foothold in Christ and are easy prey for the Devil. So it is recognising that we followers of Jesus have an enemy and he is the Devil. Some may dismiss the notion of there being a Devil as fantasy but the bible recognises it, and warns us against it/him.

Next month the first part, The Belt Of Truth.

Derek



The Changing Church...

The work at the back of Church progresses.

The framework is constructed and steps and a ramp added....



Meanwhile, new cupboards and toilets are underway in the Tower..



Will you welcome me in....?

HOST is looking for kind, friendly, hospitable people of all ages whose imaginations are caught by the idea of welcoming an international student at university here, far from his or her own family, to their home, for a day, a weekend or at Christmas.

You don't need to live near a university, as students will travel for the privilege of meeting you, learning about real life in this country, and sharing their own culture. HOST is a voluntary activity which makes ambassadors for international goodwill of us all. Please see www.hostuk.org or call local organiser Anne Ramsden at 01484 654994. Thank you.




HOST_{UK}

THE GREAT CHRISTMAS MAKE OFF



Children's Activity Day

Make, Learn, Play..

Saturday 13th December 2014

10am-1pm

St. Mary's Parish Centre.

Suitable for children aged 4-11.

(Accompanied 3 year olds welcome)

Cost: £3 per child.

Ring Amanda on 01924 472375 to secure your place

Hope Lunch 2014

Barbara Tate explains how the £10's given out earlier this year and converted into much more, were put to best use.

It seems a long time ago that we discussed the Hope 2014 at a PCC meeting. Amanda asked for volunteers to take it forward. Along with Liz, Averille, Dave and Brian we agreed to meet to discuss what we were going to do.

At our first meeting we decided to give a lunch for elderly and lonely people in the Parish. We thought that maybe we could cater for 60. Ten volunteers offered to take £10 and grow it, in the end we had over £800.

Fast forward to 30th October. We had invited 30 guests, a lunch of roast beef, yorkshire puddings, roast potatoes and veg followed by Rhubarb crumble and custard or cream or cheese and biscuits. tea or coffee with mints. We served sherry on arrival and wine or beer with the meal. Liz, fortunately, is a trained chef, so she took charge of the cooking and the rest of us followed orders, we were ably assisted by a contingent from the Guides who did the serving as part of Community service badge along with two young men from Liz's work. Brian kept everybody entertained by playing requests through his computer, we enjoyed Nelson Eddy and Janette MacDonald, Frank Sinatra and Tony Bennett. After lunch Brian organised bingo and a free raffle with lots of prizes. Before leaving each guest was given a handmade (by the Brownies) box containing chocolates.

The feed back we had from our guests was that they had had a wonderful afternoon, so we were happy but exhausted. We were glad that we only catered for 30 and decided that our original 60 would not have worked.

In her welcome, Amanda said that we wanted them to feel like Kings and Queens for the day, so I hope that we succeeded.

Grateful thanks to the 10 who made the money to fund this. There is money left, so watch this space for the next instalment.

Barbara



Some of the helpers who came along for the Hope Meal.

Edmund Brudenell...a life of Restoration.

Patron of St. Mary's, Edmund died October 19th 2014 aged 85.

Edmund Brudenell spent his life restoring Deene Park in Northamptonshire. It had been in the family since 1514, but previous family members had left it in a state of rack and ruin. He inherited it in 1962 on the death of his father, George. It was not his father, though who was primarily responsible for the demise of Deene Park. The 7th Earl of Cardigan, James Brudenell, famed for leading the Charge of the Light Brigade, and his second wife Adeline de Horsey, the Countess of Cardigan, were the prime culprits, both of whom had little regard for thriftiness or investment. Adeline was 27 years younger than James and outlived him by 47 years, becoming ever more 'extravagant, outrageous and eccentric' as the years passed. Adeline's extravagance finally broke the estate and the bailiffs were called to sell her (vast collection of) clothes, carriages and horses.

Respite may have come after her death, but unfortunately the next Brudenell to live at Deene Park for any length of time was also eccentric and destitute, requiring another visit from the bailiffs in 1929. The house became increasingly dilapidated and run down and the distance between the only working bathrooms and kitchen was so large that at one time a bicycle was used to travel between the two.

It is entirely due to the efforts of Edmund, and his wife Marian (who passed away in August last year) that the house today is restored to its full grandeur - from a mediaeval manor around a courtyard into a Tudor and Georgian mansion. The house is open to the public and visitors see many rooms of different periods, providing an impressive yet intimate ambience of the family home of many generations. The house and gardens are immaculately maintained, but transmit the warmth of the family as well as the grandeur of the setting. It took four decades to repair the damage of previous generations, but Edmund has left a legacy that his two twin sons and daughter can rightly be proud of.

David

Brian's Humour Page

To Absent Brothers

An Irishman walks into a bar in Dublin, orders three pints of Guinness and sits in the back of the room, drinking a sip out of each one in turn. When he finished all three, he comes back to the bar and orders three more. The bartender says to him, 'You know, a pint goes flat after I draw it; it would taste better if you bought one at a time.' The Irishman replies, 'Well, you see, I have two brothers. One is in America, the other in Australia, and I'm here in Dublin. When we all left home, we promised that we'd drink this way to remember the days we all drank together.' The bartender admits that this is a nice custom, and leaves it there. The Irishman becomes a regular in the bar and always drinks the same way: he orders three pints and drinks the three pints by taking drinks from each of them in turn. One day, he comes in and orders two pints. All the other regulars in the bar notice and fall silent. When he comes back to the bar for the second round, the bartender says, 'I don't want to intrude on your grief, but I wanted to offer my condolences on your great loss.' The Irishman looks confused for a moment, then a light dawn in his eye and he laughs. 'Oh, no, ' he says, 'Everyone is fine. I've just quit drinking!'

Heavenly Justice

Once, there was a preacher who was an avid golfer. Every chance he could get, he would be on the golf course swinging away. It was an obsession. One Sunday was a picture-perfect day for golfing. The sun was out, no clouds were in the sky, and the temperature was just right. The preacher was in a quandary as to what to do, and shortly, the urge to play golf overcame him. He called an assistant to tell him that he was sick and could not do church, packed the car up, and drove three hours to a golf course where no one would recognize him. Happily, he began to play the course.

An angel up above was watching the preacher and was quite perturbed. He went to God and said, "Look at the preacher. He should be punished for what he is doing."

God nodded in agreement. The preacher teed up on the first hole. He swung at the ball, and it sailed effortlessly through the air and landed right in the cup 250 yards away. A picture-perfect hole-in-one. He was amazed and excited.

The angel was a little shocked. He turned to God and said, "I beg your pardon, but I thought you were going to punish him."

God smiled. "Think about it.....who can he tell?"

Brian

Sandra's Seasonal Suggestions.

December is all about tidying up and preparing for the worst of the winter weather. You might even think about insulating your coldframe if you have any plants in there. Look in your garden for colourful branches, conifer stems, seed heads and cones. With a little florists wire and some imagination you can save money by making your own wreaths and swags.

1. Get on with your winter digging if the ground is not frozen or too water logged.
2. Get hold of some well rotted manure and dig it in. Remove weeds at the same time but don't add lime.
3. Earth up spring cabbages and winter brassicas.
4. Harvest Brussels Sprouts from the bottom up.
5. Dig your Runner Bean trench – leave it open to the elements for now.
6. Dig up the last of your beetroot and carrots before the frost ruins them. Store in boxes of almost dry sand.
7. Prune fruit trees but remember to burn all prunings as they might be infected with disease or aphid eggs.
8. Order seed catalogues.
9. Clean pots and containers. Thorough cleaning will reduce problems with sowing, propagation and germination rate.
10. Check indoor plants for pests.

Sandra

Digging.

Today I think

Only with scents, - scents dead leaves yield
And bracken, and wild carrot's seed
And the square mustard field; Odours that rise
When the spade wounds the root of tree,
Rose, currant, raspberry, or goutweed,
Rhubarb or celery; The smoke's smell, too
Flowing from where a bonfire burns
The dead, the waste, the dangerous,
And all to sweetness turns.
It is enough to smell, to crumble the dark earth,
While the robin sings over again
Sad songs of Autumn mirth.

Edward Thomas (1871-1917)

Sandra has sent this poem as well. She keeps her little crotched Cross.....

The Cross in My Pocket

I carry a cross in my pocket
A simple reminder to me
Of the fact that I am a Christian
No matter where I may be.

This little cross is not magic
Nor is it a good luck charm
It isn't meant to protect me
From every physical harm.

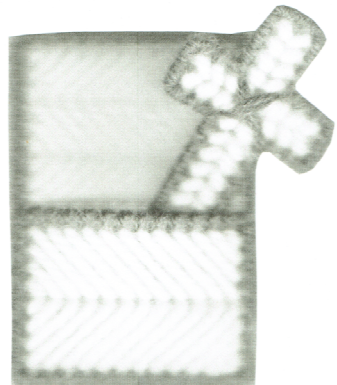
Its not for identification
For all the world to see
It's simply an understanding
Between my Saviour and me.

When I put my hand in my pocket
To bring out a coin or a key
The cross is there to remind me
Of the price He paid for me.

It reminds me to be thankful
For my blessings day by day
And to strive to serve him better
In all that I do or say.

It's also a daily reminder
Of the peace and comfort I share
With all who know my Master
And give themselves to His care.

So I carry a cross in my pocket
Reminding no-one but me
That Jesus Christ is the Lord of my Life
If only I'll let him be.



Author Unknown.

St Mary's Playgroup Update...

Hello everyone

The festive season is here! Our busiest, but favourite, time of year at playgroup; lots to organise, make and enjoy. The children are very busy making cards, calendars and decorations. Our Christmas parties will be during the final week of term, week commencing 15 December, where the children will be joined by Henry Bear. He will be holding a short Christmas service in which the children can participate in.

We will be saying goodbye to some of our children who will be starting school nursery in January. They will be greatly missed but I'm sure they will be ready and eager to start their new adventures. The St Mary's team would like to say Happy Christmas to all the children, parents, grandparents and carers and a big thank you for all the support we continue to receive.

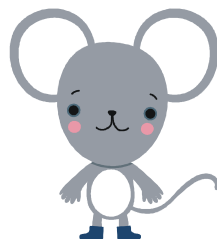
Becky and the team at St Mary's

Church Mouse Tales...

The other day, seated as we were on the upper balcony, gazing across at the new kitchen and swanky pews taking shape I asked my friend Hubert, the Black Canon - innocently, you understand - what he might do on his day off?

'Day off?' he cried, with pained expression, 'I'm a man of God you know, we live a quiet and humble life with meagre food for our bellies - a simple existence of prayer and study.'

'What then', I asked with equal innocence, 'was the possible reason for the picture (below) coming into my recent possession?' 'Well', blustered Hubert agitatedly, 'man does not live by bread alone...'



Misha



15th Morley (Woodkirk St. Mary's) Scout Group.

Beavers Experimenting...

In November the Beavers have had a very busy time, we have now completed our experiment badge. We were also busy making Christmas goodies - also we were lucky to join the Cubs for a film show at Tingley, which we all had great fun at.

We are now getting ready for our Christmas party which will be held on the 12th December. This will be our last meeting of this year. We will also be taking part in the Nativity at Church Parade on the 14th December..

We are collecting new toys unwrapped for the church toy collection. These toys will be given to children less fortunate than our selves so please give generously. If you cannot attend the service on 14th December please bring your toy on Friday 6th December.

If you wish your child to come and join us we do have a waiting list, so it is best if you get your child's name down early. Beavers meet between 5.00pm to 6.15pm.

From the 15th Morley Beavers we wish you all a Very Merry Christmas.

Gail and Joanne

Poetry Corner.

At the request of the Mother's Union, Nancy Stephenson has kindly allowed her poem - written in 1983, and performed at the last MU meeting, to be re-produced for us today. Back then, the world was a troubled place - seems like the troubles continue in some parts, and the poem remains as relevant today as it was then. Many thanks to Nancy for sharing it with us.

Ebenezer Scrooge - All is Forgiven.

I know just how the old chap felt,
- wrapped up in all his woe.
As Christmas fast approaches,
It seems to be all go.

We mustn't forget old Auntie 'C'
- hope the slippers fit alright.
Should we give that booze to brother 'B' ?
He's sure to get too tight!

To park the car we vainly try,
But all are in such a hurry,
With trolleys laden and purses empty,
on their way they scurry.

Was it like this so long ago,
when the blessed babe was born?
They had their priorities right -
on that far off Christmas morn.

Alas some folks have erred and strayed,
The news is full of sorrow.
It makes one chary of finding out,
what will happen on the morrow.

If only we could help each other
not bomb or scar or maim.
How blest would be this world of ours,
with PEACE our Christmas aim.

Nancy

Albert's Christmas Anagrams Quiz

(All answers are things associated with Christmas. If it takes you a long time to solve them, just imagine how long it took me to compile them!)

1. A class 'A' nut? (5, 5)
2. Another tin moon. (2, 4, 2, 3,3)
3. Any vital pity. (8, 4)
4. Bee gathering all. (3, 5, 7)
5. Bleats in a German. (6, 2, 1, 6)
6. Catch solar rims. (9, 5)
7. Crash mock sittings. (9, 8)
8. Dan might miss. (8,4)
9. Dan's an old, merry French king. (4, 12, 3, 5)
10. Drastic charms. (9, 4)
11. EU drink entry. (6, 6)
12. Flighty airs. (5, 6)
13. He meters wine. (5, 4,3)
14. Major Dan's hype. (6, 3, 4)
15. 'M' in pieces. (5, 4)
16. Ration codes. (11)
17. Rich mate's cask. (9, 4)
18. Stamps rich tray. (9, 5)
19. Stole time. (9)
20. Stretch a miser. (9, 4)

HAVE A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

Diary for December 2014.

Sunday 7th December Advent 2.

8am Holy Communion (said)
10.30am Holy Communion (sung)
12.30pm Baptism Service

END OF TOY COLLECTION.

Mon 8th 7:30pm PCC in Vicarage

Wed 10th 10am Morning Praise (and refreshments) – Vicarage

Saturday 13th December

10am-1pm 'The Great Christmas Make Off' Activity morning
(see article)

Sunday 14th December Advent 3.

10.30am All-Age Worship with Nativity
12 noon Holy Communion

Monday 15th December

11.45am 'First Steps' toddler service in Parish Centre
"Henry's Christmas Party" (*repeated 16/12 & 18/12*)

Tuesday 16th December

6pm Carol singing at Lydgate Lodge

Wednesday 17th December

10am Morning Praise (and refreshments) – Vicarage

Thurs 18th December

7pm Westerton School Carol Service

Friday 19th December

9.45am Hill-Top Carol Service

Sunday 21st December Advent 4.

10.30am Holy Communion
4pm Carol Service by candlelight

Tues 23rd Dec

1:30pm Christingle Making

Wed 24th December

3pm Christingle (aimed at younger children)
5pm Christingle (aimed at older children)
11.30pm First Communion of Christmas

Thurs 25th December

10.30am Holy Communion (all-age)

Sunday 28th December

10.30am Holy Communion

JANUARY

Sat 3rd	9.30-11.30am	Church & churchyard clean-up
Sun 4th	8.00am	Holy Communion (said)
EPIPHANY	10.30am	Holy Communion (sung)
SUNDAY	12.30pm	Baptism Service
Wed 7th	10am	Morning Praise (followed by refreshments) – Vicarage
Sun 11th	10.30am	All-Age Service
	12 noon	Holy Communion



St Mary's Registers of Births, Deaths and Marriages.

Baptisms:-

In November we welcomed 3 new members to our church in Baptism;

Olivia Marie Broughton, Daughter of James and Charlotte from Morley.

Alana Mae Hurst, Daughter of Lee and Andrea from Tingley.

And:

Ava Grace Hayes, Daughter of Michael and Jessica from Middleton.

Funerals:-

Alan Cross, sadly missed by all his family and friends.

Andrew Spencer, sadly missed by all his family and friends.

Emma Gibbs, sadly missed by all her family and friends.

Brenda Rhodes, sadly missed by all her family and friends.

QUIZ ANSWERS 1. Santa Claus. 2. No Room at the Inn. 3. Nativity Play. 4. The Angel Gabriel. 5. Manger in a Stable. 6. Christmas Carol. 7. Christmas Stocking. 8. Midnight Mass. 9. Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh. 10. Christmas Card. 11. Turkey Dinner. 12. Fairy Lights. 13. Three Wise Men. 14. Joseph and Mary. 15. Mince Pies. 16. Decorations. 17. Christmas Cake. 18. Christmas Party. 19. Mistletoe. 20. Christmas Tree.

Albert.

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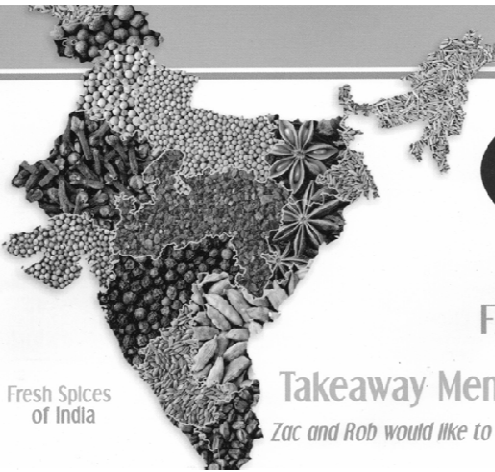
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What's on

Mothers' Union	3 rd Monday in the month 2:00 pm Brenda Dixon 0113 253 4078
Playgroup	Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 9:30am to 12:00pm Becky Schofield 07811 146958
Girl Guides	Tuesday 7:30pm Vikki Springett 07841 513530
Toddler Group	Wednesday 9:15-11:00am Sally Shaw 01924 475048
Rainbows	Thursday 5.30 - 6.30pm Ruth Osenton-Brown 01924 689992
Brownies	Thursday 6.30 - 7.45pm Hannah Tombling 01924 501892
Keep Fit Class	Thursday 8:00pm Margaret Hampshire 01924 476721
Young at Heart	1 st & 3 rd Thursdays 2:00pm Brenda Dixon 0113 253 4078
Beavers	Friday 5:00pm to 6:15 pm Gail Townsend 0113 252 8710
Cubs	Friday 6:30pm to 7:45 pm Marianne Ingham 07778 542302
Scouts	Friday 8:00 pm to 9:30 pm Trevor Holdsworth 0113 253 0927
Explorer Scouts	Friday 7:45 pm to 9:30 pm Chris Ingham 07816 517838

Services

Every Sunday, the main Service is at 10:30am as follows:-

1st Sunday of the month:

- 8:00am Holy Communion (about 1/2 hour, no Hymns)
- 10:30am Holy Communion (with Hymns, 1 hour approx.)
- 12.30pm Baptism Service

2nd Sunday of the month:

- 10:30am All Age (Family) Service. (Fun Service with theme)
- 12:00pm Holy Communion (Fewer Hymns)

3rd Sunday of the month

- 10:30am Holy Communion (with Hymns, 1 hour approx.)

4th Sunday of the month:

- 10:30am Holy Communion (with Hymns, 1 hour approx.)
- 12:30pm Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child

5th Sunday (4 times per year)

- 10:30 All Age Holy Communion

Wednesdays:

- 10:00am Holy Communion (without Hymns)

3rd Thursday:

- 11:00am Holy Communion at Lydgate Lodge

Monday to Friday: 8:45am - 9:00am Morning Prayer.

To arrange for **baptisms, confirmations, funerals, the reading of banns** or any general matter, please contact the Vicar: **Revd. Amanda Barraclough**, St Mary's Vicarage, Dewsbury Road, Woodkirk, WF12 7JL. Tel: 01924 472375
Email: vicar@stmarywoodkirk.org

To **book weddings** please contact the Wedding Coordinator, Gail Townsend (0113 2528710) email: weddings@stmarywoodkirk.org