

Parish News

St Mary's, Woodkirk

Merry Christmas



December 2015



www.stmarywoodkirk.org

This Month:

Mary's Child; BT Blues; 1957;
Just Pray; Fair do's;
War Games and Cuddly Toys.



Who's who at Woodkirk

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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.

**Merry Christmas and a Happy
New Year to all our Readers.**

**St. Mary's Church
Woodkirk**

Mary's Child...

Gail looks at the events leading up to the birth of Jesus.

The traditional Christmas story from the Gospel of Luke begins this way: “In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world” (Luke 2:1). Most of us read those words without giving them a second thought.

Actually, Caesar Augustus was the greatest of the Roman emperors, greater even than his granduncle, Julius Caesar. It was said that when he came to Rome it was a city of brick, and when he left it was a city of marble. Caesar Augustus reigned as emperor for 41 years. During that time he gave to the world the great Roman Peace that spread across the Mediterranean world.

His greatest single act—the one which would have the most lasting effect on world history—was to call for a census of the empire. The census would produce a list of property owners for the purpose of collecting taxes. It was a thoroughly secular decree, the kind of thing governments have been doing since the beginning of time.

The Romans ordinarily enrolled men where they were currently living, but the Jews counted families according to their ancestral hometowns. That would explain why Joseph and Mary had to return to Bethlehem at a most inconvenient time—in the ninth month of Mary’s pregnancy.

This much is certain. Caesar Augustus never met Joseph or Mary and he never knew of a certain Jewish baby born in a village outside of Jerusalem. When Augustus died, they mourned as if a god had died. Little did they know his call for a census had been used by God to bring His Son to the earth.

So, Merry Christmas, Caesar Augustus. You played a part you never knew and paved the way for the birthday of a King.

When the story opens Mary is “pledged” to Joseph. That meant that she had formally agreed to marry him but the “wedding” had not yet taken place. The “pledge” and the “wedding feast” were usually separated by six months to a year. During that period the couple did not live together and did not consummate their marriage physically. Following the custom of that day, Mary would live with her parents and Joseph with his. After the public wedding feast, Mary and Joseph would live together as husband and wife.

Everything in Luke 1-2 happens against that background. Mary is a teenager living with her parents, waiting with happy anticipation for the day of her wedding.

It is right at this point that God breaks in. He is about to ask an unknown teenage girl to take part in something so shocking as to be totally unbelievable. What God asks Mary to do will change her life forever?

Gone are the happy dreams of a beautiful wedding; gone are the days of sweet anticipation; gone are the carefully-thought out plans for the wedding feast; gone are the hopes for “the most beautiful wedding to the most wonderful man who ever lived;” gone are all her girlish hopes of a quiet life in the home she would personally decorate.

She will be married, but not before rumours spread through the countryside. There will be a wedding feast, but not the way she planned. She will have a home and children, but over her family will rest an uneasy cloud of dark suspicion.

It will all happen, but not the way she expected.

In the history of the church Mary has often been portrayed as a kind of misty, other-worldly figure. If you look at some of the great paintings of Mary, they make her look so peaceful and beatific that you almost forget she was a real person. That’s a shame because Luke makes it clear that she was very real, with very real doubts, very real questions and very real faith. Nowhere is this seen with more clarity than in Luke 1:38.

“I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. “May it be to me as you have said.” Then the angel left her.

This is one of the greatest statements of faith in the entire Bible. Perhaps it happened something like this. It’s the middle of the afternoon and her mother tells her go fetch some water. On her way to the well, she encounter a man who turns out to be the angel Gabriel. He tells her that even though she is a virgin, she will conceive and give birth to a child who will be the Son of God. When she asks how,



the angel says, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you" (Luke 1:35).

Mary say Yes. Yes to God, Yes to the impossible, Yes to God's plan.

Did her heart skip a beat when she said Yes? There she is, teen head tilted high, her hands trembling just a bit, wide-eyed, nervous, open-mouthed, questioning but not afraid, wondering but not terrified, unsure but not uncertain. When the angel said, "Nothing is impossible with God" (Luke 1:37), Mary took a deep breath and replied, "May it be to me as you have said."

With those words Christmas came to the world.

Let's not underestimate what it cost Mary to say Yes to God. From that moment on, she faced the incredulity of her friends ("Oh Mary, how could expect us to believe such a bizarre story?"), the scurrilous gossip of the neighbourhood, and the whispers of promiscuity that have lasted 2,000 years.

Mary knew—or would soon realize—that saying Yes to God meant misunderstanding and public shame. Gone was her pure reputation and with it her dreams of a quiet, happy life in Nazareth. In the future her life would many times be happy, but it would never again be quiet.

Since we know the end of the story, we may tend to overlook the possibility of divorce. But Mary had no way of knowing how Joseph would respond to her pregnancy. Would he blow his top and walk out on her? Would he humiliate her publicly? Would he divorce her? As it turned out, Mary had every reason to worry about Joseph. He didn't blow his top or try to humiliate her, but he did intend to divorce her. Only an angel's intervention kept that from happening. That, too, was on Mary's mind. By saying Yes, she risked losing the man she loved. Her whole future was on the line.

All these things were just the beginning. Mary could not know what the future would hold. Before it was all over, she would experience heartache, opposition, slander, confusion, anguish, despair and loneliness. In the end she would face the greatest pain a mother can endure when she watched her son die on the cross (John 19:25).

Mary didn't know the full cost of saying Yes. But having made her decision she never looked back. Those two aspects of her life may be the greatest things we can say about her:

1. She believed God when it seemed to be impossible.
2. She never looked back.

God said, "Are you willing to believe the impossible?"

Mary answered, "Yes I am!"

Without that Yes, there would be no Christmas.

Joseph has been rightly called the forgotten man of Christmas. It is natural that most of our attention should focus on Mary since she gave birth to Jesus.

What words describe a man at a time like this? Anger . . . Confusion . . . Frustration . . . Embarrassment . . . Shame . . . Rage . . . Disappointment.

What did he say to her? What did she say to him? Did she tell him about the angel Gabriel? If she did, can you blame him for not believing her?

Did he say to her, "Mary, how could you? You were pledged to me. We were going to get married. Why, Mary, why? I kept myself for you. Why couldn't you keep yourself for me?"

I think Joseph cried harder that day than he had ever cried in his life. Matthew 1:24-25 are insufficiently celebrated as great Christmas verses. They reveal Joseph's finest qualities:

When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he had no union with her until she had given birth to a son. He gave him the name Jesus. Every step he takes testifies to his greatness:

1. By marrying her quickly he broke Jewish custom, but he protected Mary's reputation. She was pregnant and he wasn't the father but he married her anyway.
2. By keeping her a virgin until Jesus was born, he protected the miracle of Jesus' conception by the Holy Spirit against slander by unbelievers.
3. By naming the baby he exercised a father's prerogative and thus officially took him into his family as his own son.

There is one other line of proof about the kind of man Joseph was. When Jesus grew up and began his ministry, he chose one word above all others to describe what God is like. He called him Father.

The hours passed in the lonely stable. Finally the pains seemed to be as one. The moment had arrived. Mary cried out, straining with all her might, and fell back onto the blanket. It was a boy, a beautiful, healthy, brand-spanking-new baby boy.

Joseph held up the baby for Mary to see. "Let me hold him," she said. There she lay for a moment. Now the sleep she had fought for hours came to her eyes, the stress of the long trip finally catching up with her. She looked for a place to put him. The only place she could find was a feeding trough—carved out of stone, rough-hewn, with bits of food stuck to the bottom. It was perfect. She laid him in the feeding-trough and then lay down to go to sleep. It had been a long, long day.

Joseph didn't sleep just yet. Too much to think about. What a lucky man he was. He looked first at his wife—so tired and yet so beautiful—and then at the baby boy—surely the most beautiful baby in the world.

How strange that it should happen to him—Joseph—just an ordinary carpenter. And to Mary—an innocent teenage girl. Who could figure it all out? Mary, now delivering her first child. "Behold the virgin shall conceive and bear a son" (Isaiah 7:14).

That's the way it was that first Christmas night 2000 years ago. Baby sleeping, mother dreaming, father thinking, and God watching over it all.

Happy Birthday Jesus
Merry Christmas to all

Gail



The Attacks in Paris

- A message from our Bishops

The slaughter in Paris is shocking and horrifying. Cathedrals and churches have been actively using social media to offer their support and bring people together in prayer. Some are opening up and offering a space for local people to come together, to reflect, to show solidarity with the victims, maybe to light a candle and to pray. These are simple ways of opening a space for our neighbourhoods at a time of heightened anxiety.

United with others in grief and hope, we hold onto God's promise that perfect love casts out fear. Standing together, we must work hard to ensure that fear does not drive our communities apart.

We commend this prayer from the Church of England:

Gracious God,

We pray for peace in our communities this day.

We commit to you all who work for peace and an end to tensions,

And those who work to uphold law and justice.

We pray for an end to fear,

For comfort and support to those who suffer.

For calm in our streets and cities,

That people may go about their lives in safety and peace.

In your mercy, hear our prayers, now and always. Amen.

- + Nick, Leeds
- + Toby, Bradford
- + Jonathan, Huddersfield
- + Tony, Wakefield
- + James, Ripon
- + Paul, Richmond

The Children's Society

Thank you for your invaluable support for the Children's Society. Our Box collection this year has raised £856 – I think that is fantastic. We have about 29 Box holders at present and if anyone would like a collecting Box please let me know. Every single penny you have collected in your house Box has helped turn a young life around. So on behalf of Children whose lives have been transformed, a big thank you.

Susan Walshaw

A Winter's Tale...

Barbara goes to infinity and beyond with BT...

A lot of you are aware that I love my holidays and that I usually travel with that well known holiday firm who cater for old folks. I'd like to tell you about my latest Saga trip, no, not to sunny climes or even snowy climes but with an equally well known BT (no not me - the other BT).

A couple of months back they took a sizeable chunk of money from the PCC bank account (for the vicarage phone) - we had no paperwork. After enquiring of my colleagues on the PCC it transpired that no-one had any paperwork and the only person who could access the bill had moved away.

I took my life in my hands and phoned BT. I managed to persuade the young man to send me a copy of the bill - he wanted to charge us £4.50 for it but I managed to talk him out of this. I then told him that we needed to amend the account holder and that we only needed a basic line rental and 1571 package.

I could not believe my ears when he told me that the only way to do this was to apply for a new line for the Vicarage and pay a £65 connection charge. I told him we didn't need a new line and were quite happy with the old one.

However I was assured that this was the only way to proceed, an engineer would come and inspect the line and issue a new phone number, as you can appreciate, I was definitely not happy about this. They then assured me that the new number would only be for a day and that I would be able to change back to the old number without a problem.



So they set up an account in my name, I paid over the £65 and was given an appointment for November 23rd 1pm to 6pm. I did not look forward to sitting on the floor at the Vicarage for 5 hours in the cold. Happily BT emailed me the name of my engineer and his mobile number, so I asked him to give me a call when he was on his way so I could get there to let him in. He was happy to do this and called me at 11.30, fortunately I was at home. He did his checks and then told me that he had to go to the box (I don't know what they call it) and he was ages. I was getting colder and colder, worst case scenario I could get hypothermia, so I re-traced my

steps to the car to try to get warm again. Naturally, as soon as I turned on the engine, he returned. So we were back in the cold and he fitted a new socket and told me to phone BT that afternoon to get the number changed. As I write this, it is the 26th and the number still hasn't been changed, I live in hopes that God will come to my rescue and it will all be OK tomorrow. I've filed a complaint.

Oh, they did manage one thing very speedily, they sent me our first bill, so at least they got that right.

On top of all this, I think I have spent at least 2 hours on the phone or holding on and 1 hour on line trying to chat to somebody. This morning it took half an hour before I could speak to anybody. I sincerely hope that my next Saga trip goes more smoothly.

Barbara

Stop Press: BT texted Barbara twice to tell her someone would call to discuss her complaint. They included a date and time when they would call. So far no-one has. Maybe they rang the vicarage?

Pilgrimage2Paris reaches destination

Inspired by their faith, pilgrims from across the UK have come together to call on world leaders to agree a fair, ambitious and binding climate change deal in Paris.

The Church of England, Christian Aid, CAFOD and Tearfund have come together to organise a Pilgrimage2Paris ahead of the UN talks. The pilgrimage started in London on Friday 13 November with a service at St Martin-in-the-Fields, and arrived in Paris on Friday 27 November.

After fourteen days and over 200 miles of walking forty pilgrims arrived in the French capital as part of the Pilgrimage2Paris ahead of COP21, the UN Climate Change Conference which starts on Monday 30th November. On Saturday the pilgrims took part in an interfaith gathering, followed by a hand-in of campaign petitions to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). For more information, and to read what the pilgrims got up to as they travelled, visit www.pilgrimage2paris.org.uk, or follow @pilgrims2paris on Twitter and Instagram.

Prayerful Thought December 2015

Hello there

Well suddenly prayer became newsworthy over the past few weeks with a media storm about cinema chains declining to show a 1 minute 'advertisement' from the Church of England which saw several people from Archbishop Justin to a young man laying flowers on a grave and others reciting a line from the Lord's Prayer, on the grounds that the advert could cause offence to those of differing faiths or people of no faith.

The resultant tweets, posts on social media, interviews given and articles written would seem to suggest that the cinema chain has perhaps got it wrong.

Now firstly I must say I am somewhat perplexed by the comment of the cinema chains which said "Once we became aware of the religious nature of the proposed content, then we informed the Church of England of our policy and our decision", surely the fact that this 'advertisement' was from the Church of England was a fairly clear indication that the item would be of a 'religious nature'!

I am extremely saddened that it is felt by some that having a 1 minute montage of people praying what is, undoubtedly the most simple and wide reaching prayer as the Lord's Prayer, could possibly cause offence. It is surely more important to just take that 1 minute out of what would be family audiences time, taking time out to be together at a showing of a family film (the new Star Wars movie) to just pause and think about prayer.

We only have to look back at the terrible and tragic events in Paris on the night of the 13th November and the candles lit and prayers said for those killed in the atrocities to see that many many people turned to prayer and "Pray for Paris" was emblazoned over banners and tee shirts.

I was looking for further details of prayer and found out that in the 24 hours following the terror attacks more than 70 million (yes, 70 million) people took to 'Instagram' (a social media site similar to Facebook) to share their support and prayers for Paris, and in total there were 430 million interactions—that's posts, likes and comments—created in these first 24 hours, with people in more than 200 countries participating.

Now excuse me media, but doesn't that just show the power of prayer? Whilst I'm sure many of these 'interactions' would be from people of faith (any faith) I'm sure many were from those who if asked would tell you that they did not have a faith.

There was a great article by our own Bishop Nick Baines in which he said;

"In the Christian tradition, prayer is not about presenting shopping lists of requests to a god whose job it is to make life comfortable, convenient or secure for us. Rather, prayer is that exercise that, bringing us into the presence of God, gradually exposes us to the mind of God towards ourselves and the world where we are.

Inevitably, this then exposes us to the need to change so that we gradually see God, the world and ourselves through God's eyes. Prayer is open for anyone. Prayer invites us to be open and honest with God and one another - to tell the truth about our fears and anxieties as well as about the things that make us scream with joy. It's like being stripped back so that we see as we are seen.

So, why do the cinema people think prayer is so dangerous? And who exactly is going to be offended by a one-minute advert that consists of a pile of people saying a phrase of the Lord's Prayer in sequence?

No propaganda. No coercion. No pressure. Just an encouraging invitation."

I couldn't have put it better!

One of the things I refer to quite frequently in these little articles is how we can find it difficult to pray, some of you, I know because we have chatted about it, are very good and pray very well, but I also know that some of you are like me and don't.

Now the advertisement that all the fuss has been about was actually advertising a new website called www.justpray.uk and I took a moment to log on to the site and have a look.

There are some wonderful prayers there really moving, some very personal asking for healing for people who have undergone operations, or individuals asking for relief from pain, but also many praying for tolerance, peace and for the people of the world.

I loved the advertisement, it was simple and effective and I would struggle to think that anyone could find it offensive in anyway. I don't care whether you are a person of faith or not, if you are you will pray, because you have faith in God, if you are a person of no faith I bet you have 'wished' for things. I don't think that any of that is wrong, surely if you have love in your heart and you care for others then surely everyone will benefit.

The thing is, those of us who pray are given hope through the grace that God gives us, freely, all he asks is for us to let Him into our lives.

Christmas is the perfect time to let God into our lives as we remember the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem all those centuries ago. A timeless story that cannot fail to melt the hardest of hearts. Schools and church youth groups up and down the country will be putting on a Christmas play and in the majority of cases, I would think that they will be some form of nativity play. We are doing one in my Girls' Brigade Company and at the end we have all the children singing Away in a Manger whilst holding their Christingles and let me tell you, it is one of the most wondrous sights when we turn off the lights, you can see the delight in both the children and their parents eyes.

In my Christmas Cards this year I am going to add the www.justpray.uk website so that people may see the advert and the prayers posted there, I just feel if people would like to pray but are unsure how to do so, then this may show them that it is nothing mystical or difficult, it's just sharing our thoughts, our dreams, our hopes our fears, in actual fact our lives, with God.

Will you find room in your heart for God and Jesus this Christmas?
Happy Christmas and God bless you.

Dawn

Here is the press article about 'Just Pray'...

Just Pray, the campaign from the Church of England launched on Sunday 22 November, has been making headlines in the news. Digital Cinema Media (DCM), the company that manages advertising for Odeon, Cineworld and Vue, said they would not show the advert, which was planned for release on December 18 as part of the ad-reel for Star Wars: The Force Awakens.

The three cinema chains, which make up 80% of cinema screens around the country, have been criticised by a range of public figures including Prime Minister David Cameron, Mayor of London Boris Johnson, Richard Dawkins and Stephen Fry for not showing the advert, despite it receiving clearance from both the Cinema Advertising Authority and British Board of Film Classification.

The 60 second advert features Christians from all walks of life praying one line of the Lord's prayer and includes weight lifters, a police officer, a commuter, refugees in a support centre, school children, a mourner at a graveside, a festival goer and the Archbishop of Canterbury.

On YouTube, the advert has been watched over 450,000 and on Facebook, that number jumps to 638,000. This does not take account of a number of unofficial videos posted online, as well as views on television as part of news reporting.

George & Jemima Remember...

At the special November All Age Service we remembered those who have fallen in different ways. This is how George and Jemima did it.

George pops up making gun & bomb noises.

Jemima: What's all this noise about George, your gonna waken the entire neighbourhood!

George: Hi Jemima, I've just got a new game for my play station and it's fantastic. I'm just Copying the gunfire and bombs and stuff, it's great.

Jemima: What's the name of this fantastic game then George?

George: It's called War Games 4

Jemima: War Games 4, you mean there's been another three before this one?

George: Yeh sure, and I've got all of em.

Jemima: Blimey George, how can you have so much fun playing War Games?

George: I just like shooting & bombing things; it's just like the real thing. (Makes more noises)

Jemima: How can you say it's just like the real thing, we are too young to know what it was really like in the war.

George: Aw come on Jemima, play war games with me.

Jemima: No George, war isn't very much fun anymore. My Dad was a soldier once, but that was before I was born. My big sister told me he had to go away once. She said she missed his big bear hugs at bedtime.

George: Yeh I know what you mean Jemima, My Mum says, "Our country should never, ever forget the sacrifice of our veterinarians and their families.

Jemima: I think you mean veterans. Veterinarians are animal doctors.

George: Yeh veterans. The one's who sacrificed themselves for us and country.

Jemima: Yes that's right George and as you're Mum said. We should never forget them. That's what today is all about. It's called remembrance day.

George: Is it today when we should all be wearing a poppy then?

Jemima: Yes George, because the poppy is the symbol of remembrance. And it's not only the soldiers who sacrificed themselves for us.

George: Who else then?

Jemima: Don't you listen in Sunday School George? We talked

about Jesus' death on the cross, and how that was a sacrifice too.

George. Oh yeh! I remember now. We talked about other Bible heroes, like Paul & John the Baptist, who gave their lives so we could be Christians.

Jemima. So George. You know what we can do instead of playing war games?

George. What?

Jemima. We can have a parade.

George. A PARADE?

Jemima. Yes a parade. And we can remember all the sacrifices made for us by the brave veterinarians.

George. Veterans!

Jemima. Sorry, you've got me at it now. I mean veterans and we can also remember Jesus' sacrifice on the cross too.

George. Come on then. Lets have a parade. (Marching back and forth across wall) Hup, two, three, four, hup, two three, four. Can we wave flags too Jemima.

Jemima. Sure George, you can wave flags too.

George. Yipeeeee. Hup, two, three, four, hup, two, three, four.

Jemima. So you see George. Let's not forget the sacrifices others have made for us, so we can live.

George. I don't think I will be playing any more war games from now on.

Jemima. So what are you gonna do?

George. Sell em on Ebay.

Jemima. Before we go George, can I say a little prayer?

George. Yeh go ahead Jemima.

Jemima. Dear God, thank you for reminding us of those who have given their lives on our behalf. We all have friends, neighbours, and relatives who are making sacrifices for our freedom today. And thank you for Jesus, who sacrificed his life for us. In Jesus name, we pray. Amen.

Both say Goodbye.

The All Age service is on the second Sunday of every month. Come and see a different way to meet God.

Christmas Fair Knockout!

This year the Christmas Fair has been a great success, with £1,333 raised and over a hundred visitors – not including kids! Church Warden Brian Gledhill has asked me to extend his thanks to all the team who set up, manned (and womaned) stalls, cooked, cleaned and cleared up afterwards. This year a man named Paul came in for the first time in 50 years – he has the old Parish Centre radiators installed in his home! Rachel made the journey up from London to help clear tables and tidy up afterwards and so many people pulled together to make it a great day all round.

I should also like to give Brian himself a mention for his tireless efforts, not only for organising this event but all the other work – we have Vicar cover right up to the end of March, a new Organist - and a team helping to keep the Churchyard tidy. Brian also covers for any gaps in the Organists calendar, writes the George and Jemima scripts, plays the Guitar at All Age and looks after the church building, with repairs and decorating. If you can help in any way I'm sure Brian, Neal and the team will appreciate it very much. If you can't help in practical ways, a couple of extra quid in the collection will never go amiss! Many thanks.

David



The Centre gets going...



Guess who....



Skip and the team on the Scouts Stall



Audrey and Margaret with the Prize Hamper



Sandra and Gail with Cakes and Cuddly Toys

The Story of Rudyard Kipling...

Kipling was born in Bombay, India, at the end of the year 1865. His father, John Lockwood Kipling, was principal of the Jeejeebhoy School of Art, an architect and artist who had come to the colony, 'to encourage, support, and restore native Indian art against the incursions of British business interests.'

Kipling spent the first years of his life in India, remembering it in later years as almost a paradise. "My first impression," he wrote in his posthumously published autobiography 'Something of Myself for My Friends Known and Unknown', "is of daybreak, light and colour and golden and purple fruits at the level of my shoulder."

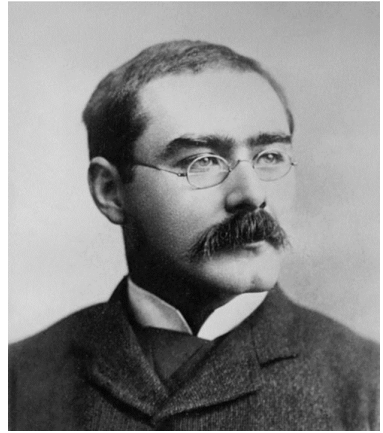
In 1871, however, his parents sent him and his sister Beatrice—called "Trix"—to England, partly to avoid health problems, but also so that the children could begin their schooling. Kipling and his sister were placed with the widow of an old Navy captain named Holloway at a boarding house called Lorne Lodge in Southsea. Kipling and Trix spent the better part of the next six years in that place, which they came to call the "House of Desolation."

The years from 1871 until 1877 became, for Kipling, years of misery. In addition to feelings of bewilderment and abandonment, Kipling had to suffer bullying by the woman of the house and her son. Kipling may have brought some of this treatment on himself—he was a formidably aggressive and pampered child. He once stamped down a quiet country road shouting: "Out of the way, out of the way, there's an angry Ruddy coming!"

At last, Kipling suffered a sort of nervous breakdown. An examination showed that he badly needed glasses—which helped explain his poor performance in school—and his mother returned from India to care for him. "She told me afterwards," Kipling said, "that when she first came up to my room to kiss me good-night, I flung up an arm to guard off the cuff that I had been trained to expect."

Kipling did have some happy times during those years. He and his sister spent each December time with his mother's sister, Lady Burne-Jones, at The Grange, a meeting-place frequented by English artisans such as William Morris.

In 1878, Kipling was sent off to school in Devon, in the west of



England. The institution was the United Services College, a relatively new school intended to educate the sons of army officers, and Kipling was probably sent there because the headmaster was one Cornell Price, "one of my Deputy-Uncles at The Grange ... 'Uncle Crom.' "His order that I should edit the School Paper and have the run of his Library Study.... Heaven forgive me! I thought these privileges were due to my transcendent personal merits."

Since his parents could not afford to send him to one of the major English universities, in 1882 Kipling left the Services College, bound for India to rejoin his family and to begin a career as a journalist. For five years he held the post of assistant editor of the Civil and Military Gazette at Lahore. In March 1889 Kipling left India to return to England, determined to pursue his future as a writer there.

The young writer's reputation soared after he settled in London. His poems and stories, elicited strong reactions of love and hate from the start. Ordinary readers liked the rhythms, the cockney speech, and the imperialist sentiments of his poems and short stories; critics generally damned the works for the same reasons.

Kipling's literary life in London brought him to the attention of many people. One of them was a young American publisher named Wolcott Balestier, who became friends with Kipling and persuaded him to work on a collaborative novel. The result entitled *The Naulahka*, reads more like one of Kipling's travel books than like a novel and seems rather hastily and opportunistically concocted. It was not a success.

The Kiplings lived in America for several years, in a house they built for themselves and called "Naulahka." Kipling developed a close friendship with Theodore Roosevelt, then Under Secretary of the Navy. "My own idea of him was that he was a much bigger man than his people understood or, at that time, knew how to use, and that he and they might have been better off had he been born twenty years later."

Both of Kipling's daughters were born in Vermont—Josephine late in 1892, and Elsie in 1894—as was one of the classic works of juvenile literature: *The Jungle Books*, which are ranked among Kipling's best works. The adventures of Mowgli, the foundling child raised by wolves in the Seeonee Hills of India, are the cornerstones of Kipling's reputation as a children's writer, and still among the most popular of all his works.

Kipling traced the origins of these stories to a book he had read when he was young, about a lion-hunter in South Africa who fell

among lions. Some of these fables go back as early as the fourth century BC and incorporate material of even earlier eras. Some of the beast fables resemble Aesop's, but the Jataka tales are more deliberately brutal. They teach not merely that men should be more tender towards animals, but the equivalence of all life.

The Kiplings left Vermont in 1896 after a fierce quarrel with Beatty Balestier, Kipling's surviving brother-in-law. The writer's retiring nature and unwillingness to be interviewed made him unpopular with the American press. Rather than remain in America, Kipling and his wife returned to England, settling for a time in Rottingdean, Sussex, near the home of Kipling's parents.

In 1902 the Kiplings settled in their permanent home, a seventeenth-century house called "Bateman's" in East Sussex. Kipling for the most part turned away from the types of stories he had written early in his career and explored new subjects and techniques. One example of this experimentation, completed before the Kipling's occupied Bateman's, was the collection called the Just So Stories - perhaps Kipling's best-remembered and best-loved work. The stories, written for his own children and intended to be read aloud, deal with the beginnings of things: "How the Camel Got His Hump," "The Elephant's Child," "The Sing-Song of Old Man Kangaroo," "The Cat That Walked by Himself," and many others.

Kipling loved language (and children) too much to fall into the vulgar error that the resilience and beauty of the English language must be beaten into something dull and uniform to be appropriate for young readers. In no other collection of children's stories, is there such fanciful and playful language.

The area around Bateman's, rich in English history, inspired Kipling's last works for children, Puck of Pook's Hill and its sequel, Rewards and Fairies. The main sources of their inspiration, Kipling explained, came from artefacts discovered in a well they were drilling on the property: Kipling constructed a series of related stories of how Dan and Una come to meet Puck, the last remaining Old Thing in England, and from him learn the history of their land.

Kipling was actively involved in the Boer War in South Africa as a war correspondent, and in 1917 he was assigned the post of 'Honorary Literary Advisor' to the Imperial War Graves Commission—the same year that his son John, who had been missing in action for two years, was confirmed dead. He declined awards offered him by his own government, yet accepted others from foreign nations. He finally succumbed to a painful illness early in 1936. He remains an intriguing personality and writer, for all his limitations, he was a gifted, courageous and honest man.

David

Remembrance Sunday

Due to being at College on the 8th November, I was sadly unable to attend the morning remembrance service in Church, however, despite nearly forgetting (I was a bit tired from a day of theology !) and it was very dark, wet and a bit windy, I was part way home before I remembered the 6pm service.

How glad I was that I remembered.

A good number of folks attended including our friends from the local branch of the Royal British Legion, and Cllrs Judith Elliott and Wyn Kidger. It was also lovely that our visitors were able to take part in the service by undertaking a reading and also reading out the names of those commemorated on our war memorial.

The service was led by Archdeacon Paul Hooper who led a lovely service with Brian doing a sterling job providing music via his laptop, the organ and also his very own nimble fingers, with an impromptu verse of the national anthem.

The last post and reveille were played beautifully by one of our friends from the Royal British Legion as we held our silence.

I had had a long a intense day at college, but can honestly say that this act of worship was perfect. We shared time together remembering those who had died in conflicts long ago, but also remembering the fact that many still die in conflicts right up to the present day and this evening act of remembrance was a fitting tribute.

“At the going down of the sun, and in the morning, we will remember them”.

Dawn

Christmas in 1957 was totally different —or was it?

Hi there

It's amazing what you come across when reading for study!

I was looking at a collection of essays and short pieces written by C S Lewis and came across this one entitled What Christmas means to me.

Can I firstly say, I am not sharing this to offend or upset anyone, I can also state clearly that I do not agree with some of Lewis's points, and that I actually really love Christmas, exchanging cards and gifts with friends and family. But I wanted to share it with you as I thought that the 'commercialisation' of Christmas was a modern phenomenon, yet this was first published in December 1957 (58 years ago). Now if Lewis thought 1957 Christmases were 'a nuisance' I wonder what he would think, were he here today?

Three things go by the name of Christmas. One is a religious festival. This is important and obligatory for Christians; but as it can be of no interest to anyone else I shall naturally say no more about it here. The second (it has complex historical connections with the first, but we needn't go into them) is a popular holiday, an occasion for merry making and hospitality. If it were my business to have a 'view' on this, I should say that I much approve of merry-making. But what I approve of much more is everybody minding his own business. I see no reason why I should volunteer views as to how other people should spend their own money in their own leisure among their own friends. It is highly probable that they want my advice on such matters as little as I want theirs. But the third thing called Christmas is unfortunately everyone's business.

I mean of course the commercial racket. The interchange of presents was a very small ingredient in the older English festivity. Mr Pickwick took a cod with him to Dingley Dell; the reformed Scrooge ordered a turkey for his clerk; lovers sent love gifts; toys and fruit were given to children. But the idea that not only all friends but even all acquaintances should give one another presents, or at least send one another cards, is quite modern and has been forced upon us by the shopkeepers. Neither of these circumstances is in itself reason for condemning it. I condemn it on the following grounds;

It gives on the whole much more pain than pleasure. You have only to stay over Christmas with a family who seriously try to 'keep' it

(in its third, or commercial aspect) in order to see that the thing is a nightmare. Long before 25th December everyone is worn out – physically worn out by weeks of daily struggle in overcrowded shops, mentally worn out by the effort to remember all the right recipients and to think out suitable gifts for them. They are in no trim for merry-making; much less (if they should want to) to take part in a religious act. They look far more as if there had been a long illness in the house.

Most of it is involuntary. The modern rule is that anyone can force you to give him a present by sending you a quite unprovoked present of his own. It is almost blackmail. Who has not heard the wail of despair, and indeed resentment, when, at the last moment, just as everyone hoped that the nuisance was over for one more year, the unwanted gift from Mrs Busy (whom we hardly remember) flops unwelcomed through the letterbox, and back to the dreadful shops one of us has to go?

Things are given as presents which no mortal ever bought for himself – gaudy and useless gadgets, ‘novelties’ because no one was ever fool enough to make their like before. Have we really no better use for materials and for human skill and time than to spend them on all this rubbish?

The nuisance. For after all, during the racket we still have all our ordinary and necessary shopping to do, and the racket trebles the labour of it.

We are told that the whole dreary business must go on because it is good for trade. It is in fact merely one annual symptom of that lunatic condition of our country, and indeed of the whole world, in which everyone lives by persuading everyone else to buy things. I don’t know the way out. But can it really be my duty to buy and receive masses of junk every winter just to help shopkeepers? If the worst comes to the worst I’d sooner give them money for nothing and write it off as charity. For nothing? Why, better for nothing than for a nuisance.

So ‘bah humbug’ to some of you, and Happy Christmas to the rest of you, and let us not get too hung up on the ‘nuisance’ but hopefully enjoy Christmas with all its ‘trimmings’ remembering of course the real reason for Christmas focussing on the love and hope sent down at Christmas with Jesus, the baby in the manger in Bethlehem.

Dawn

Beavers



In November the Beavers have had a very busy time, walking along the old railway line, making spider biscuits and skeleton costumes out of bin liners, toasting marshmallows and enjoying eating them.

On the 20th November we enjoyed a visit to the Dewsbury Fire Station, which was great fun. We also had a sleepover at Tingley Scout Hut where we had an enjoyable evening with the Cubs watching films. Thank you to all who came along and helped.

We are now preparing ourselves for Christmas making fun Christmas goodies, and looking forward to our Christmas party which will be held on the 11th December. This will be our last meeting of this year. We will also be taking part in the Nativity at Church Parade on the 13th December.

We will also be collecting new toys unwrapped for the church toy collection. These toys will be given to children less fortunate than ourselves, so please give generously. We will be collecting these toys from Friday 27th November.

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, Joanne and Skip

CUDDLY TOY APPEAL

At the time of writing (2 days to go!) I have received 120 toys. They are all shapes, colours, sizes and types. Big ones, small ones, none as big as your head (well, maybe some are!) I do hope the stall does well. Any who do not find a new home this year will be fostered safely and be up for adoption again at the Garden Party next year.

I thought I would take this opportunity to thank all who donated their much and well loved friends. Thanks also to the kind lady who knitted some friends and provided Santa's washing lines!

I hope you all have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Sandra

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 cold frame 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. I hope you all have a happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

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. Don't add lime at the same time. Remove weeds at the same time.
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

Poetry Corner.

This Month we have Nancy Stephenson to thank for this little gem from Kipling:

Eddi's Service (A.D. 687)

Eddi, priest of St. Wilfrid
In his chapel at Manhood End,
Ordered a midnight service
For such as cared to attend.

But the Saxons were keeping Christmas,
And the night was stormy as well.
Nobody came to service,
Though Eddi rang the bell.

"Wicked weather for walking,"
Said Eddi of Manhood End.
"But I must go on with the service
For such as care to attend."

The altar-lamps were lighted, --
An old marsh-donkey came,
Bold as a guest invited,
And stared at the guttering flame.

The storm beat on at the windows,
The water splashed on the floor,
And a wet, yoke-weary bullock
Pushed in through the open door.

"How do I know what is greatest,
How do I know what is least?
That is My Father's business,"
Said Eddi, St. Wilfrid's priest.

"But -- three are gathered together --
Listen to me and attend.
I bring good news, my brethren!"
Said Eddi of Manhood End.

Continues.....

And he told the Ox of a Manger
And a Stall in Bethlehem,
And he spoke to the Ass of a Rider,
That rode to Jerusalem.

They steamed and dripped in the chancel,
They listened and never stirred,
While, just as though they were Bishops,
Eddi preached them The World,

Till the gale blew off on the marshes
And the windows showed the day,
And the Ox and the Ass together
Wheeled and clattered away.

And when the Saxons mocked him,
Said Eddi of Manhood End,
"I dare not shut His chapel
On such as care to attend."

Rudyard Kipling.

How To Maintain A Healthy Level Of Insanity In Retirement...

1. At lunch time, sit in your parked car with sunglasses on, point a hair dryer at passing cars, and watch them slow down!
2. On all your cheque stubs, write, 'Cannabis Club'!
3. Skip down the street rather than walk, and see how many looks you get.
4. With a serious face, order a Diet Water whenever you go out to eat.
5. Sing along at The Opera.
6. When the money comes out of the ATM, scream 'I Won! I Won!'
7. When leaving the Zoo, start running towards the car park, yelling, 'Run For Your Lives! They're Loose!'
8. Tell your children over dinner, 'Due to the economy, we are going to have to let one of you go...'
9. Pick up a box of condoms at the pharmacy, go to the counter and ask where the fitting room is.
10. Go to a large Department store's fitting room, drop your drawers to your ankles and yell out, "There's no paper in here!"

Gail

Playgroup November News

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.

Playgroup received an Ofsted inspection on the 5th November 2015. The inspector spoke with parents, staff and committee and observed the children in the setting. We would like to thank all those parents/carers who spoke to the Ofsted inspector directly and spoke so highly of the Playgroup, and thank you to parents who supported the inspection process with good wishes. The report will be published beginning of December 2015.

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.

My friend Hubert, the Black Canon, is in a tizzy. Rumours of a Bishop visiting abound and Hubert doesn't know which way to turn. 'I'm not ready!' he declared the other day. 'There are protocols, systems rules and regulations! I mean has anyone found out where to put the Chair?' He was almost hysterical, poor thing.

'Anyway its Christmas before we need to worry about all that ', I said in my most placatory tone, 'and you know what that means..'

'Yes, yes', he agreed, starting to relax, 'lovely Carol singing, candlelit services and the story of Jesus...'

'Quite so', I agreed, 'but more importantly, it means one very special thing you have failed to mention.'

What's that?' he asked.

'STRAW!.'

Misha



Brian's Humour Page

The Atheist and the Bear

An atheist was taking a walk through the woods. 'What majestic trees! What powerful rivers! What beautiful animals!', he said to himself.

As he continued walking alongside the river he heard a rustling in the bushes. Turning to look, he saw a 7 foot grizzly charging towards him.



He ran as fast as he could up the path. Looking over his shoulder he saw that the bear was closing in on him. His heart was pumping frantically and he tried to run even faster.

He tripped and fell on the ground. He rolled over to pick himself up but saw the bear raising his paw to take a swipe at him.

At that instant the atheist cried out: 'Oh my God!...'

Time stopped.

The bear froze.

The forest was silent.

It was then that a bright light shone upon the man and a voice came out of the sky saying:

'You deny my existence for all of these years, teach others I don't exist and even credit creation to a cosmic accident. Do you expect me to help you out of this predicament? Am I to count you as a believer?'

The atheist looked directly into the light.

'It would be hypocritical of me to suddenly ask you to treat me as a Christian now, but perhaps, could you make the BEAR a Christian?'

'Very well,' said the voice. The light went out, and the sounds of the forest resumed.

And then the bear lowered his paw, bowed his head and spoke: 'Lord, bless this food which I am about to receive and for which I am truly thankful, Amen.'

Brian

Diary for December and Early January 2016.

DECEMBER 2015

Sat 5th	11am	Carol Singing at Country Baskets (to 12:30pm)
	1:30pm	Organ Recital starring George Ford
Sun 6th	10:30am	Holy Communion (sung) With Revd Elizabeth Lee
Wed 9th	10am	Morning Praise with Gail
Sun 13th	10:30am	All-Age Nativity Service
	12 Noon	Holy Communion With Revd Elizabeth Lee

TOY COLLECTION ENDS

Tue 15th	6:00pm	Carol Singing at Lydgate Lodge
Wed 16th	10:00am	Holy Communion with Revd Glenn
Thurs 17th	7:00pm	Westerton School Carol Service
Fri 18th	9:45am	Hilltop Carol Service
Sun 20th	10:30am	Holy Communion with Rev Paul Hooper
	4:00pm	Carols by Candlelight
Wed 23rd	10:00am	No Service
	2:00pm	Making Christingles in Church
Thurs 24th	3:00pm	Christingle Service for Younger Children
	5:00pm	Christingle Service for Older Children
	11:30pm	Midnight Mass with Revd. Chris Johnson
Fri 25th	10:30am	All Age Christmas Service with Revd Rosemary
Sun 27th	10:30am	Holy Communion with Revd Elizabeth Lee
Mon 28th	1:00pm	Wedding
Wed 30th	10:00am	No Service

JANUARY 2016

Sun 3rd	10:30am	Holy Communion with Revd Paul Ainsworth
	12:30pm	Baptisms
Wed 6th	10:00am	Holy Communion with Revd Glenn
Sun 10th	10:30am	All Age Service
	12 Noon	Holy Communion with Revd Graham Green

Albert's 'Christmas and New Year Quiz.

1. In the Christian calendar which period includes the four Sundays before Christmas?
 2. In which Charles Dickens novel does the character Scrooge feature?
 3. In this book what are the names of Bob Cratchit's eldest daughters? Is it...
a) Sally & Molly b) Martha & Belinda
c) Constance & Melody or d) Tiff & Tilly?
 4. Mentioned in the carol 'Good King Wenceslas', on which day is the feast of Stephen?
 5. In which city is Wenceslas square? Is it...
a) Bratislava b) Budapest c) Prague or d) Warsaw?
 6. In which country is Boxing Day not an official holiday?
a) Canada b) Ireland c) New Zealand or d) USA?
 7. In 1993 who broadcast Channel 4's first 'Alternative Christmas Message'? Was it...
a) Dame Edna Everage b) George Galloway c) Johnny Rotten or d) Quentin Crisp
 8. What was broadcast for the first time by the BBC in 1923?
 9. Which group's album 'War' included the song 'New Year's Day'?
 10. By what name is the Christmas carol 'Adeste Fideles' better known?
 11. In 1974 the group 'Pilot' had a number 1 hit with 'January' but in which month?
 12. The euro came into circulation on New Year's Day in which year? a) 1997 b) 1998 c) 1999 or d) 2000?
 13. On what date is Hogmanay celebrated in Scotland?
 14. Which Dr Seuss character stole Christmas?
 15. What is the star sign of someone born on Christmas Day?
 16. Which of Santa's reindeers is named after a Roman god?
 17. Which country was invaded by China on Christmas Day 1950?
 18. Which James Bond film features Dr Christmas Jones?
 19. Who composed 'The Christmas Oratorio'?
 20. In 1932, which king gave the first ever Christmas broadcast?
- Answers on P38. Merry Christmas Everyone.

Albert

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

Baptisms:-

In November we welcomed 1 new member to our church in Baptism;
Emily Carol Lofthouse, Daughter of James and Julia from Tingley.

Weddings:-

Jacqueline Jackson and Ted Tune, from Woodkirk were married at St. Mary's on November 20th. Congratulations from the Church Family.

Funeral:-

Andrew Wilson. Will be sadly missed by his wife Sandra and all his family and friends.

QUIZ ANSWERS:

1. Advent 2. A Christmas Carol 3. Martha & Belinda 4. 26th December
5. Prague 6. USA 7. Quentin Crisp 8. New Year chimes of Big Ben 9.
U2 10. O Come All Ye Faithful 11. February 12. 1999 13. 31st
December 14. The Grinch 15. Capricorn 16. Cupid 17. Tibet 18. The
World Is Not Enough 19. Johann Sebastian Bach 20. George V

Albert.

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Contact: Sally Shaw

01924 475048 for more information.

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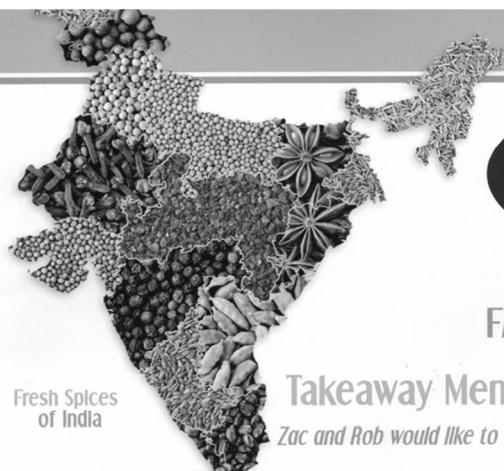
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What's on

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 607393
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:

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

To arrange for **Baptisms** please contact: Gill Mahoney
Tel: 07771 533871

To **book weddings, funerals, or the reading of banns** please
contact our Coordinator, Gail Townsend (0113 2528710) email:
Gail.Townsend12@gmail.com