



St Mary's in the Marketplace

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Rector:

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Service times at St Mary's

Sunday:

10:30am Holy Communion or Morning Prayer

Normally the first and third Sunday is Holy Communion with Morning on the second and fourth.

Tuesday:

10.00am Holy Communion

12.15pm Lunch-time Service

Wedding, Baptism, Funeral and other services by arrangement with the Rector.

St Mary's and the Nave Café is open – Tuesday, Thursday, Friday & Saturday from 9.00am – 3.00pm

Readers contributions to the magazine are always welcome. Editorial discretion with regard to content and space available will apply.

web site: www.stmarysinthemarketplace.com



STOCKPORT PARISH CHURCH **St Mary's in the Marketplace**



A reason to shout Hallelujah!

Royal Mail announced that this year's specially designed Christmas stamps will feature scenes from the nativity story. The stamps represent scenes from the Biblical story of the nativity from the Annunciation and the birth of Christ, beautifully painted by David Holmes in an impressionistic style.

Post those cards on time! Final posting dates are as follows:

- 7th Dec: Far East and Eastern Europe.
 - 8th Dec: The Caribbean.
 - 10th Dec: Australia and New Zealand.
 - 14th Dec: Germany, Italy and Poland.
 - 15th Dec: Canada, Sweden and USA.
 - 16th Dec: Austria, Ireland and Spain.
 - 17th Dec: France.
 - 18th Dec: Belgium, Netherlands, Norway, & Switzerland.
 - 19th Dec – last date for 2nd class UK post
 - 21st Dec – last date for 1st class UK post.
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On the first weekend of December....

Join us for our St Mary's Christmas Fayre on Saturday 5th December from 10.30am onwards.

Then it's "Party Night at the Nave Café" when we will be inviting Pure Innovations to join us for our "Seasons Greetings" evening.

THE MARKET PLACE

Anthony Bardsley, October 2015

The market place, selling rosemary and thyme
Black cobbled stone, rocky grey cement
Tarmac black pavement, icy gravel
Shapely road, selling sandwiches and tea

Young girls with short skirts above the knee
Serving sausage and egg breakfasts
Christmas is coming with winter song
Snow on the pavement

Black haired, thick set women
Walking with people on the pedestrian way
Women with warm gabardine coats
Children with their parents enjoying their day

Young boys playing football with cans
With Stockport County tee shirts on
Seagulls coming inland from the sea
Snow falling on the market place

Presents on sale at every stall
Winter time, snow is falling all around
It is the season of yuletide wonderland
Mistletoe and mulled wine on sale

All stalls are celebrating the winter birth
With special offers and Christmas verse
Buy this, buy that
The market place is there for all

And St Mary's Church Bell chimed
On the special Christmas Time.



Go Crackers

In 1847 the confectioner Tom Smith invented the Christmas cracker. Legend says that he spotted a beautifully wrapped French bon-bon, and had a 'eureka moment'. In effect, he said to himself: "What that bon-bon really needs is a tiny plastic key-ring, a groan-inducing pun on a piece of paper, a tissue paper parody of royal headgear, all wrapped up inside an exploding toilet roll." The rest is history.

How old is your Christmas Tree?

Christmas World's oldest fake tree

Did you know that it is a family in Wiltshire, the Parkers, who claim to own the world's oldest artificial Christmas tree? It was bought in 1886, and is still put up every year. Complete with the original baubles and tinsel, the 14 inch tree has been authenticated as the world's oldest imitation Christmas tree.

Christmas The story of mince pies

Did you know that mince pies have been traditional English Christmas fare since the Middle Ages, when meat was a key ingredient? The addition of spices, suet and alcohol to meat came about because it was an alternative to salting and smoking in order to preserve the food. Mince pies used to be a different shape - cradle-shaped with a pastry baby Jesus on top

From the Rector's i-pad

Dear Reader

A Real Sense of Community!



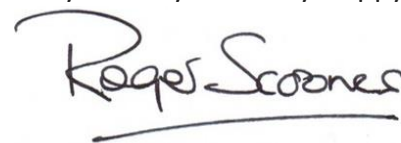
As Christmas approaches, and the pace of life seems to increase, accompanied by endless "seasonal advertisements" on tv and a sudden taste for Christmas carols on the radio, and mince pies on the supermarket shelves, there is a danger that the real meaning of Christmas could be forgotten. You may have heard that said before!

Some years ago I met a woman in Bradford, where I was working at the time, who was dreading Christmas. "I shut myself away and get drunk" she said calmly. And sadly, I have to share with you that there are still many today who feel the same way, even in the church family, though maybe without the intention of using alcohol, to drown their sorrows or to blot out the sound of carols and general bonhomie all around them. The real meaning of Christmas is there, but obviously not yet their's!

One of the long standing Market traders once said to me about St. Mary's, and I've never forgotten it, "St. Mary's is where the community meets". And this is SO true, most especially in the weeks leading up to Christmas. Our community centred Carol services and concerts during December are not only about our preparations for celebrating Christmas, but also about celebrating our community life.

I hope that by joining us at St. Mary's during this very busy and happy and creative month you will enjoy hearing again The Real Meaning of Christmas and also that you will find a Real Sense of Community at the heart of our lovely old Town and Marketplace.

May I wish you a Very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.


Roger Scoones



Ashley Alan Lloyd Clifford

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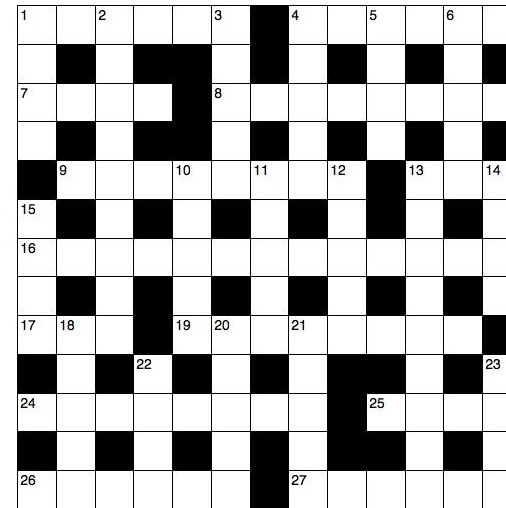
Leanne Waddington

Sunday, 1st November 2015



A day to remember for Ashley and Leanne as they marry at St Mary's on what was a lovely sunny Autumn day. Congratulations and Best Wishes to the happy couple.

This was the last wedding of the year to take place at St Mary's but the first where the "newly weds" were able to sign the marriage registers in the newly refurbished Rector's Vestry. It is wonderful to have completed this stage of the Conservation and Restoration of St Mary's and to have both rooms so beautifully brought back to a useful life.



December Crossword

Across:

- 1 Rely (Psalm 62:7) (6)
 4 'He stretches out the heavens like a — , and spreads them out like a tent to live in' (Isaiah 40:22) (6)
 7 What the dove carried the olive leaf in, when it returned to Noah's ark (Genesis 8:11) (4)
 8 Annoy (1 Samuel 1:6) (8)
 9 Judah's last king, who ended his days as a blind prisoner in Babylon (Jeremiah 52:11) (8)
 13 'They all — and were satisfied' (Luke 9:17) (3)
 16 Eliphaz the Temanite was one; so was Bildad the Shuhite and Zo-

phar the Naamathite (Job 2:11; 16:2) (4,9) / 17 National Association of Evangelicals (of the USA) (1,1,1)

19 Popular song for New Year's Eve, Auld — — (4,4)

24 Able dock (anag.) (8)

25 The number of stones David chose for his confrontation with Goliath (1 Samuel 17:40) (4) / 26 Elgar's best-known 'Variations' (6)

27 Soak (Isaiah 16:9) (6)

Down:

- 1 Money owing (Deuteronomy 15:3) (4) / 2 Conciliatory (Titus 3:2) (9)
 3 'Do this, whenever you — it, in remembrance of me' (1 Corinthians 11:25) (5)
 4 A group assisting in the governance of the Roman Catholic Church (5)
 5 One of the gifts Joseph's brothers took with them on their second journey to Egypt (Genesis 43:11) (4)
 6 'Reach out your hand and — — into my side. Stop doubting and believe' (John 20:27) (3,2)
 10 Be outstandingly good (2 Corinthians 8:7) (5)
 11 'What — — that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?' (Psalm 8:4) (2,3)
 12 Horse's feet (Judges 5:22) (5) / 13 Notice (Deuteronomy 17:4) (9)
 14 Comes between 2 Chronicles and Nehemiah (4)
 15 One of Israel's northern towns conquered by Ben-Hadad (1 Kings 15:20) (4)
 18 Narnia's Lion (5)
 20 One of the two rivers in which Naaman would have preferred to wash (2 Kings 5:12) (5)
 21 Avarice—one of the evils that come from inside people (Mark 7:22) (5)
 22 Knight Grand Cross of St Michael and St George (1,1,1,1)
 23 Jacob's first wife (Genesis 29:23) (4)

Phase 6 (Conservation and Restoration of the Choir Vestry and Rector's Vestry) - Job Completed



Well more or less completed, we still have a few finishing touches to do but we are delighted that these two unique rooms are now fully restored and other than a few “snagging” issues the project (known as Phase 6) is complete.

It was a sad day when our main contractors Lambert Walker Restoration and Conservation Ltd announced that they were to cease trading, particularly (for us) as they were so near to finishing the job. They have done so much work for St Mary's over the years, becoming in many ways “part of the family”! All were “friends of St Mary's” wanting to do their best for us, but when the axe falls.... It was upsetting for them and for us to see so many of our ‘project colleagues’ facing an uncertain future, forced to just walk off site not knowing what the next day would bring.

In many respects it was a worrying time for the project team whilst issues were resolved, but with the support of our Architect, Quantity Surveyor and Structural Engineer (not to mention the various discussions between our Project Director and the Heritage Lottery Fund) it was a great relief to have a newly appointed main contractor and for William Anelay Ltd to come on board. Happier days to have so many familiar faces returning to finish the job and for the work to be completed within an acceptable time-frame. It was a relief to experience the genuine goodwill from sub-contractors (many of which having lost out financially, although through no fault of ours) as they returned on-site, so encouraging for us to have them back to finish the job(s) they started. It was also of great relief to know that those who had faced redundancy and an uncertain future now appear to be settled in employment once again and that they can now look forward with confidence. All's well, that ends well, you may say! We have much to be thankful for.

Musical Evening Autumn Fund Raising Concert

Gorton Community Voice with St Johns Children's Steel Band & Sacred Heart Church Choir



It was an evening to remember thanks to Gorton Community Voice Choir and their guests. The children from the St Johns Children's Steel Band and Sacred Heart Church Choir – we hope all will return to St Mary's again in the near future.



A Christmas quiz

1. According to the 1st chapter of Matthew, 'Immanuel' is interpreted to mean _____.
 2. The Moabite widow, Ruth, is mentioned by name only 12 times in the book named after her, and not again until Matthew 1:5. What makes this woman's life so significant to the birth of Jesus Christ?
 3. An angel of the Lord told Joseph, Mary's betrothed, 'Do not _____ to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.'
 4. What caused Elizabeth's unborn baby to leap for joy in her womb, when she was visited by her relative Mary?
 5. What was the angel's name who visited Mary to tell her she had been chosen to be the Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ?
 6. What does Bethlehem mean?
 7. Why did Mary and Joseph travel to Bethlehem?
 8. What did the angels say to the shepherds?
 9. What did the chief priests tell Herod that worried him so much?
 10. Why was 'a voice heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning?'
-

Bringing the Community into St Mary's

Since our re-ordering of the Church we have partnered with Pure Innovations regarding the running of the Nave Café, joined with Stockport Crafters to form the "Craft & Chat" Group on a Thursday and have started regular projects with Arc (from Textiles to Painting) presently having Friday workshops booked well into 2016 and the next Arc exhibition coming in February.

New for 2016 – a new initiative – this time to dip our toe into helping to deal with loneliness and isolation – something surely we all dread as we grow older, lose close friends and family and in many cases facing "old age" alone.



A lifeline of friendship

Contact the Elderly is the only national charity solely dedicated to tackling loneliness and social isolation amongst older people, through regular face-to-face contact. Once a month, normally on a Sunday afternoon, each older guest is collected from their home by a volunteer driver, and taken to a volunteer host's home, where they join a small group for tea, talk and companionship.

The group is warmly welcomed by a different host each month, but the charity's drivers and older guests remain the same. This means that over the months and years, acquaintances turn into friends and loneliness is replaced by companionship.

St Mary's is an ideal setting for an afternoon out, we have disabled access and all the requisite facilities for the Nave Café to step into action. So you will not be surprised that 'the nettle has been grasped' and St Mary's has offered its support and will host its first Sunday Afternoon "tea party" early in the Spring. Anticipated to be for around 20 – 25 this is well within our capabilities.

Toy Service – 13th December 2015

Most will remember the wonderful display of toys we collected last year and donated to “Stockport Without Abuse”. If you were at the Toy Service in 2014 you will recall Chief Executive, Sarah Murray telling us all about the work of the Charity.



A year on and we have contacted Sarah’s team again and asked if they would like us to support them again this year. They were delighted and very much hope to have a representative with us on the 13th December. When asked if they would like us to provide for a specific age group of children, the answer was clear. Children and young people of all ages need support in what are for them extremely difficult times. If we can each help by just providing a toy – surely that is a wonderful Christmas present to give!



Congratulations are also in order as Stockport Without Abuse has been recognised nationally for providing such a high quality service.

They have been awarded the Women’s Aid National Quality Mark, demonstrating that they provide a high quality service to women and children experiencing domestic violence in Stockport.

The Women’s Aid Quality Standards are national standards which measure the quality of specialist domestic violence services on a number of factors. Stockport Without Abuse were particularly commended for the holistic nature of the support provided to survivors and their children.

Our campaign to collect toys starts here - please drop them off at church before the 13th December or bring them with you to the service. Everything needs to be new of course (no second-hand items please), labelled that it meets the appropriate safety standard and left un-wrapped. Let’s make this a bumper year - thank you.



Thank You – for the wonderful collection of “shoe box” gifts we have been able to send this year.

We will hear from Margaret in the New Year with news as to where all our boxes have gone.



Raclette Evening at the Nave Café



Many thanks to those who supported our Raclette Evening and to Sandra for once again ensuring we had the best possible Swiss cheese, for arranging for the loan of the special raclette oven and for serving the majority of this melted delight over potatoes and various salads. If you love cheese this is an evening not to miss, but we added a soup starter, a glass of chilled white wine and ended with a lemon sweet, coffee/chocolate mints—lovely! The cheese doesn't come "cheap" so you really need a "full house" to make a reasonable profit on the night. We were running at around 71% seating capacity for a full three course meal – giving us a contribution to St Mary's of £127 (including the sale of cheese at the end of the evening). The advantage of lower numbers however – seconds, thirds, fourths and fifths – as much as you can eat...



Bryce, Lorna, Maggie, Roger, Sue, David & Isobel

A St Mary's welcome to Roger's guests (shown sandwiched with Roger between Bryce and Isobel). All shown having a "Wengen" connection of some kind or another!

Supporting the Stockport Youth Orchestra



The SYO will be back with us at St Mary's on the 20th March (Palm Sunday) at 7.00pm and again to celebrate their 60th Anniversary on Sunday 3rd July at 7.30pm but if you can't wait that long to hear them (and offer your support) why not go along to their Christmas Concert on Sunday, 16th December at Stockport Town Hall, starting at 7.00pm.

Crossword Answers:

ACROSS: 1, Depend. 4, Canopy. 7, Beak. 8, Irritate. 9, Zedekiah. 13, Ate. 16, Job's comforter. 17, NAE. 19, Lang Syne. 24, Blockade. 25, Five. 26, Enigma. 27, Drench.

DOWN: 1, Debt. 2, Peaceable. 3, Drink. 4, Curia. 5, Nuts. 6, Put it. 10, Excel. 11, Is man. 12, Hoofs. 13, Attention. 14, Ezra. 15, Ijon. 18, Aslan. 20, Abana. 21, Greed. 22, GCMG. 23, Leah.

Answers to the quiz

1. God with us – Matt 1:23
2. Her child is in Christ's lineage – Matt 1:5
3. 'Be afraid/fear' Matt 1:20
4. Mary's greeting/ the Holy Spirit
5. Gabriel – Luke 1:26
6. The House of Bread. It was the city of David – Luke 2:4
7. To be registered in a Roman census Luke 2:1-5
8. 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy....' Luke 2:10
9. 'But you Bethlehem, in the land of Judea... out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.' Matt 2:6
10. Massacre of the Innocents by Herod – Matt 2:18

Thank You



To those of you who hold collection boxes for The Leprosy Mission – a cheque for £70.00 has now been issued to the Charity following the collection and emptying of boxes thanks to Frank.

In case you are not already aware, The Leprosy Mission is an international Christian development organisation that diagnoses, treats and offers specialist care, including reconstructive surgery, to leprosy patients. Their aim is to transform and empower the lives of people affected by leprosy.

Leprosy is a disease of poverty and as well as providing healthcare, the Leprosy Mission offer rehabilitation, education, vocational training, small business loans, housing and fresh water supplies and sanitation to tens of thousands of people each year. They provide a springboard to restored health, self-sufficiency and renewed hope. Services are provided regardless of religion or ethnicity, promoting equality and social justice. Leprosy is widely believed to be the world's oldest disease, and is also one of the world's most stigmatised. A specialist approach is required to educate, encourage and empower people to stand up for their human rights. Age-old stigma surrounding leprosy sees entire families robbed of their job opportunities, education, marriage prospects and their dreams shattered. Fear and misunderstandings surrounding leprosy, such as the disease being a curse for some alleged misdeed, are widespread. In turn they fuel a vicious circle that begins with those affected hiding the first suspect skin patches in order to avoid being shunned by their families and becoming a social outcast. Donations are always welcome and can be made directly to the Charity “on-line” or we can arranged for a collection box for you. For more information go online at: www.leprosymission.org.uk



Thank you to those who have knitted small hats to fit Smoothie bottles for AGE UK (Stockport). We have handed over a lovely collection of hats many with animal/bird faces. They are all “great” and much appreciated.

Christmas: Thank Dickens for Christmas as you know it!

Ever wonder where many of our Christmas traditions come from? A surprising amount can be traced back to the well-loved story of ‘A Christmas Carol’, by Charles Dickens.

When you read ‘A Christmas Carol’, you discover almost a template of the ‘ideal Christmas’ which we still hold dear today. Dickens seems to have selected the best of the Christmas celebrations of his day (he ignored some of the odd excesses) and packaged them in such a way as to give us traditions that we could accommodate and treasure – more than a century later.

So, for instance, in A Christmas Carol, Christmas is a family day, with a family-centred feast. In a home decorated with holly and candles the characters enjoy a roast turkey, followed by Christmas pudding. They give their loved ones presents. Scrooge even gives donations to charity (!).

And all the while outside, there is snow and frost, while church bells ring, and carol singers sing, and hope for mulled wine. In ‘A Christmas Carol’ there is even a Father Christmas – in the shape of Christmas Present. Only the Christmas tree itself came later, when Prince Albert imported ‘a pretty German toy’ that won the heart of the English court, and hence the rest of Victorian society.

St Mary's Christmas Programme 2015 (subject to further amendment)

Day	Date	Event	Time
Tuesday	1st December	HOLY COMMUNION LUNCHTIME SERVICE	10.00AM 12.15PM
Thursday	3rd December		Church open
Friday	4th December		Church open
Saturday	5th December	St Mary's Christmas Fayre "Seasons Greetings" Nave Café Event	10.30AM 7.30PM
Sunday	6 th December	Second Sunday in Advent Holy Communion Ex-Services Associations Carol Service	10.30AM 3PM
Monday	7th December	Stockport MENCAP Christmas Celebration with Stockport Special Schools	1PM
Tuesday	8 th December	HOLY COMMUNION LUNCHTIME SERVICE	10.00AM 12.15PM
Thursday	10 th December		Church open
Friday	11 th December	AGE UK Stockport Carol Service with Warren Wood Primary School & Bramhall Singing Group	1.30pm
Saturday	12 th December		Church open
Sunday	13 th December	Third Sunday in Advent Toy Service For Stockport Without Abuse	10.30AM
Monday	14 th December	Beechwood Cancer Care "Tree of Light" Service/Dedication	7.00PM
Tuesday	15 ^h December	HOLY COMMUNION LUNCHTIME ADVENT SERVICE	10.00AM 12.15PM
Tuesday	15 th December	Banks Lane Junior School Carol Service	7.00PM
Wednesday	16 th December	Mayor's Carol Service with Romiley Primary School Seasonal Address: Rt Rev Libby Lane Bishop of Stockport	12.30PM
Thursday	17 th December	Vernon Park Primary School Carol Service	2.00PM

Friday	18 th December	Shopmobility Stockport Christmas Celebration with Offerton Methodist Choir	1.00PM
Saturday	19th December	"Sing Christmas" Concert with the Maia Singers & Laurel Lane Singers	7.30PM
Sunday	20th December	Fourth Sunday in Advent Holy Communion "Remembering Christmas in the absence of a loved one"	10.30AM 3.00PM
Monday	21 st December	Wellspring Christmas	1.00PM
Tuesday	22nd December	HOLY COMMUNION LUNCHTIME CAROL SERVICE AT ST MARYS	10.00AM 12.15PM
Wednesday	23 rd December		
Thursday	24 th December CHRISTMAS EVE	CAROLS FOR ALL FAMILY CAROL SERVICE HOLY COMMUNION WITH CAROLS	12.00 noon 6.00PM 11.00PM
Friday	25 th December CHRISTMAS DAY	Festival of Carols	10.00AM
Saturday	26 th December	Closed	
Sunday	27 th December	First Sunday of Christmas Holy Communion	10.30AM
Tuesday	29 th December	(No services)	
Thursday	31 st December NEW YEARS EVE	Watch Night Service	11.30pm
Sunday	3rd January	Second Sunday of Christmas Holy Communion	10.30AM
Saturday	9 th January 2015	Re-open	

Celebrating the Queen's 90th Birthday

In her 2014 Christmas broadcast the Queen said: 'For me, the life of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, whose birth we celebrate today, is an inspiration and an anchor in my life. A role-model of reconciliation and forgiveness, He stretched out his hands in love, acceptance and healing. Christ's example has taught me to seek to respect and value all people of whatever faith or none.' It is the most recent of many references the Queen has made to her Christian faith.

In 2016 people around the county and throughout the Commonwealth will gather in their communities to celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday. Her actual birthday on 21st April will be celebrated with four days of celebrations in Windsor 12th-15th May; a service of thanksgiving at St Paul's Cathedral on Friday 10th June; the traditional Trooping the Colour ceremony - the Queen's birthday parade - on Saturday 11th June on Horse Guards Parade, and a massive street party for 10,000 people on The Mall on Sunday 12th June. The whole country is invited to join the celebrations in our own villages, towns or cities.



HOPE is working in partnership with Bible Society and the London Institute of Contemporary

Christianity to publish a very special book focusing on the Queen's Christian faith. This beautifully produced, illustrated book is much more than a souvenir picture book. It tells the story of the Queen's service to her people as she follows the servant King – Jesus Christ.

Just like the Diamond Jubilee celebrations in 2012, HOPE will be supporting churches with ideas and resources to bring communities together. We can start planning our local events now. We could work with other churches to bring our whole community together. We could use this opportunity to start conversations about what it means to be a follower of Jesus, and join with the Queen in praying for our communities, as she said in 2012, 'that his example and teaching will continue to bring people together to give the best of themselves in the service of others'.