



Diocese of Chester

STOCKPORT PARISH CHURCH

St Mary's in the Marketplace

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 Stockport Parish Church - St Mary's

*Wishing all our readers a very
Happy Christmas
and a Peaceful New Year*

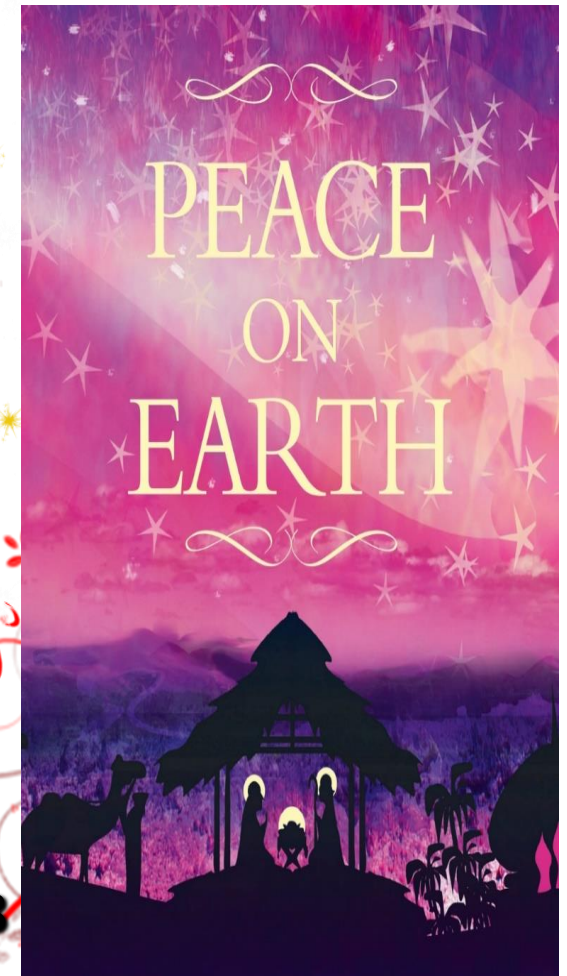
**St Mary's and the Nave Café is open – Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
& Saturday from 9.00am – 3.00pm**

*This magazine is written (and other submissions edited as deemed necessary) by S M Heap with
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STOCKPORT PARISH CHURCH
[St Mary's in the Marketplace]

Parish Magazine



December 2018

Christmas Programme 2018 [subject to amendment]

Saturday, 1 December

St Mary's Christmas Fayre - 10.00

Sunday, 2nd December

Holy Communion with Advent Carols - 10.30

~~Ex-Services Association Carol Service - 15.00~~

Tuesday, 4th December

Holy Communion - 10.00

Lunchtime Advent Service - 12.15

Friday, 7th December

Cafe Worship - 10.45

BARRATT - CONCERT - in aid of the Wellspring - 19.00

Saturday, 8th December

Stockport Youth Orchestra Christmas Concert - 19.00

Sunday, 9th December

Advent Morning Prayer [Stockport Homes Gift Service] - 10.30

Zeal Church - 15.30

Ex-Services Carol Service (time to be confirmed)

Monday, 10th December

Beechwood Cancer Care Christmas Carol & Dedication Service - 19.00

Tuesday, 11th December

Holy Communion - 10.00

Lunchtime Service - 12.15

Wednesday, 12th December

The Mayor's Carol Service with Romiley Primary School - 12.30



Fizz Fashion Show

Thank you to everyone who supported our November fashion show.

With the raffle (£96), ticket sales (£345) and commission on the sale of clothing etc. we made on the night near enough £600 towards church funds.





Christmas, 1918

Poem by Edgar Albert Guest

They give their all, this Christmastide, that peace on earth shall reign;
 Upon the snows of Flanders now, brave blood has left its stain;
 With ribbons red we deck our gifts; theirs bear the red of pain.

They give their lives that joy shall live and little children play;
 They pass that all that makes for peace shall not be swept away;
 They die that children yet unborn shall have their Christmas Day.

Come! deck the home with holly wreaths and make this Christmas glow,
 And let Old Glory wave above the bough of mistletoe!
 Come! keep alive the faith of them who sleep 'neath Flanders snow.

Ye brave of heart who dwell at home, make merry now a-while;
 The world has need of Christmas cheer its sorrows to beguile;
 And blest is he whose love can light grief's corners with a smile.

Ring out once more, sweet Christmas bells, your message to the sky,
 Proclaim in golden tones again to every passer-by
 That peace shall rule the lands of earth, and only war shall die.

Let love's sweet tenderness relieve war's cruel crimson clutch,
 Send forth the Christmas spirit, every troubled heart to touch;
 Blest will be all we do for them who do for us so much.



THERE BUT NOT THERE

Friday, 14th December

Cafe Worship - 10.45
 AGE UK Stockport Carol Service - 13.00
 with Warren Wood Primary School & Sunrise (Bramhall) Singing Group

Sunday, 16th December

Holy Communion [Remembering a Loved One at Christmas] - 10.30
 Zeal Church – Christmas Special - 15.30

Monday, 17th December

Vernon Park Primary School Carol Concert - 14.15

Tuesday, 18th December

Holy Communion - 10.00
 Lunch-time Service- - 12.15
 Wellspring Carol Service - 13.30
 Banks Lane Junior School - 19.00

Friday, 21st December

Shopmobilty Stockport with
 Offerton Methodist Church Choir - 13.00

Sunday, 23rd December

Morning Prayer - 10.30

Monday, 24th December

CHRISTMAS EVE:
 Midnight Service of Holy Communion & Carols - 22.30

Tuesday, 25 December

CHRISTMAS DAY- A Christmas Celebration for all the family - 10.00

Sunday, 30th December

Holy Communion - 10.30

Merry Christmas and a happy New Year

The end of a year, the end of an era....

Technically speaking an era lasts a long time, hundreds or thousands of years maybe, but St Mary's is reaching the end of a substantial chunk of its life - as we know it today - as we look forward to opening the next chapter in the life of our beautiful church located in the heart of Stockport.

You will have seen the notices displayed during November giving the full details – “the benefice of Stockport (known locally as Stockport Saint Mary), the benefice of Stockport, St Thomas, and the benefice of Saint Luke, Brinnington with Saint Paul, Portwood in the diocese of Chester shall be united to create a new benefice which shall be named The Benefice of Stockport and Brinnington...”.

Leaving the legalities aside (at least for now) our thoughts turn to the advertisement for the post of Rector, and our hope that a successful appointment can be made this month.



If you are looking for something different for your children this Christmas, you could try a new film from Bible Society called 'The Mystery of the New Noisy Neighbour'. It places a mouse detective at the heart of the action – in the stable at Bethlehem, where he slowly discovers who Jesus really is... Emmanuel, Rescuer and King. You can download the full film for free at <https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/christmas/2018/the-mystery-of-the-new-noisy-neighbour/>

Expensive Christmas cracker

If you are looking to splash around a vast amount of money this Christmas, why not contact The Royal Mint? It has just launched Britain's most expensive ever Christmas crackers – which include a solid gold bar and gold diamond necklace.

A pack of six of the crackers will set you back £5000, but at least they also include a traditional hat and joke. Fortnum and Mason has previously sold sets for about £500.

There is a large demand for the £5000 crackers, which form the Mint's first gift range in its 1100 year history. And if for any reason you don't want to spend £5000 on six Christmas crackers, the other gifts on offer range from a sixpence spoon set to a gold teddy bear.

Go to: <https://www.royalmint.com/gifts/>

God's Special Gift

The Rev Paul Hardingham considers the unthinkable.

For those of us about to spend Christmas with a new child or grandchild, we will know how very special the arrival of a baby is! This Christmas we celebrate again God's gift of Jesus: *'Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!'* (2 Corinthians 9:15). What can we say about this baby?

He is God Himself: The unthinkable has happened: God has become a human being! The eternal, creator God enters the world of time and space, both fully human and fully divine. This divine baby can bring hope to our messy world, because He has fully become part of it. He doesn't stand apart, but demonstrates a commitment to be with us and on our side in the midst of sin and suffering.

He is human like us: Jesus fully engaged with the jungle of human experience. By His cross and resurrection, He can release us from the power of wrong, hurt and shame to secure for us a life of love, peace and forgiveness. Remember, the crib and cross are made of the same wood!

He is one with us: In the coming of Jesus, God doesn't draw us simply into a cosmic event, but into a relationship. Just as you or I can hold and hug our children and grandchildren, so we have a God who wants to be intimately involved in our lives. As Emmanuel, *'God is with us'* (Matt 1:23). Therefore, the question is: *Are we with Him? Are we ready to make space for Him at the centre of our Christmas Celebrations this year?*

'At Christmas time, when we receive presents we don't really need, God offers us a gift we cannot do without.' (J John).

Christmas throughout the Christian world

For nearly four weeks leading up to Christmas Christians recognise a period called Advent. It means 'coming'. It is a time of spiritual preparation. 'Coming' refers to Jesus' first coming as a baby, but it also looks forward to a day when Jesus is expected to return in triumph at his 'second coming' to establish perfect justice and a new order of peace.

Originally Christians marked Advent as a time when they refrained from excessive eating and drinking. Then Christmas Day reintroduced them to the joys of feasting. Christmas celebrations lasted for twelve days, with gifts exchanged as a climax at Epiphany (6 January). Today, however, Advent is more likely to be associated with accelerating festivity, with the days following Christmas something of an anti-climax until 'twelfth night', on which decorations are removed. Many Christians worldwide are trying to revive the spirit of Advent by setting aside time to pray and address global poverty.

Christmas Day is celebrated as the anniversary of Jesus' birth, although the actual date is not known. Most Christians celebrate it on 25th December. However, the Orthodox Church (the ancient churches in Eastern Europe and parts of Asia) follows a different calendar and celebrates on 7th January. Christians make a point of taking communion on Christmas Day. Many make it the first thing they do as the clock strikes midnight.

On 6th January the Christmas festival continues with a celebration of Epiphany, which means 'the appearance'. Christians remember the visit of wise men (magi) to Jesus, bringing gifts of gold, frankin-

cense and myrrh. The Christmas tradition of exchanging gifts originally honoured these men, who were the first non-Jews (Gentiles) to worship Jesus. It forms a reminder that in Jesus God was giving Himself for the benefit of the entire world.

Orthodox Christians use this day to recall the baptism of Jesus as a grown man. The significance of Jesus being baptised was that He identified Himself with human beings in all their need. They mark the day by praying for God's blessing on rivers, wells and water sources.

Christmas has never been just an escapist festival for Christians. Those who treat it seriously recognise that not all the world is able to face the days with frivolity or joy. The day after Christmas, Boxing Day, was historically marked as the feast of St Stephen. He was the first man to be put to death rather than give up his belief that Jesus was God. And two days later a day remembering the Massacre of the Innocents recalls Herod's attempt to destroy Jesus by killing all male babies in Bethlehem. Although not so widely marked as Christmas Day, it gives Christians the opportunity to pray for children in today's world who suffer as a result of the actions of adults. *This is from:* https://christianity.org.uk/christmas-throughout-the-christian-world/#.W9LI_xNKhsM



Peaceful Praise on a silent night

Canon David Winter

200 years ago this Christmas Eve a parish priest near Salzburg in Austria and his organist wrote a new carol for the midnight mass. The priest, Fr Joseph Mohr, provided the words in a poem he had recently written. The organist was Franz Xavier Gruber who created a tune of haunting beauty. The carol, *Stille Nacht*, was duly sung at the service.

We don't know what the congregation thought of it, though I bet someone said, 'I can't stand all these new tunes!' But the simple words and wistful melody were to become one of the world's favourite carols, translated into hundreds of languages, 'Silent Night' as we know it.

My father told me of his experience in the First World War, when on Christmas Day the British troops heard the sound of German soldiers singing *Stille Nacht*. They responded with Silent Night, and the sacred words echoed across the blood-stained no man's land. It is a carol that breathes peace, quite unlike the traditional ones that stir us to action – 'O come all ye faithful', 'Hark the herald angels sing'. This German song is about the infinite peace of nativity – Mary pondering her heart all that was happening and the shepherds returning to their fields. The birth of this royal baby went largely unnoticed. There were no crowds, no cheering, no processions. But for two centuries people have sung this precious song of peace to recall that silent and holy night.

Knitted Nativity



Lynda France is a member of the Craft 'n' Chat group meeting every Thursday at St Mary's Church from 11am to 2pm. She has recently completed this beautifully knitted Nativity tableau.

Lynda says "The pattern was donated to the Neighbourhood Charity Crafters and Joseph and the donkey were knitted but not made up. I have finished and sewn together all the figures which are up to 30cm tall."

Lynda is also a member of the Neighbourhood Charity Crafters group which meets monthly at St Matthew's Church, Grenville Street. This stunning creation will be used at St Matthew's to tell children the Christmas story.

Come and join St Mary's Craft & Chat..... New members are always welcome! Do come along and bring your knitting or crochet or anything else you're working on. Friendly advice and support on hand and of course a chance to chat. The Nave Cafe is open for refreshments and light lunches.

Christmas Eve

How do you celebrate Christmas Eve?

It has its own customs, the most popular of which is going to Midnight Mass, or the Christ-Mas. This is the only Mass of the year that is allowed to start after sunset. In Catholic countries such as Spain, Italy and Poland, Midnight Mass is in fact the most important church service of the entire Christmas season, and many people traditionally fast beforehand. In other countries, such as Belgium and Denmark, people dine during the evening, and then go on to the Midnight Service.

The British are behind some countries when it comes to exchanging presents: in Germany, Sweden and Portugal the custom is to exchange on Christmas Eve. But the British are ahead of Serbia and Slovakia, where the Christmas tree is not even brought into the house and decorated until Christmas Eve.

Yule logs are not so popular since the decline of the fireplace, but traditionally it was lit on Christmas Eve from a bit of the previous year's log, and then would be burned non-stop until 12th Night (6th January). Tradition also decreed that any greenery such as holly, ivy or mistletoe must wait until Christmas Eve until being brought into the house.





In partnership with Stockport Homes we are this year entering in to a new project and changing the format of our “toy service” to include other gift items suitable for infants from a few weeks old to young adults 18 years of age.

Our aim is to provide Christmas gifts to young people who may - for example - be from a low income family, find themselves in temporary accommodation or even homeless.

Gift items may be left at St Mary’s at any time through to Saturday, 8th December in preparation for our special “Gift Service” on Sunday, 9th December. Late items will however be accepted for a further week up until the 16th December, giving Stockport Homes time to sort out and distribute appropriately. Donations may also be given towards purchasing gift items.

**St Mary’s Gift Service
10.30am Sunday, 9th December**

Please bring a gift or make a donation and help someone in need of our love this Christmas

He gave us eyes to see them’ – a Catalan artist’s nativity in Barcelona



In December cribs will be set up in churches, homes, villages and town centres.

It is a tradition that goes back to the nativity scene in a cave outside

Greccio in Italy on Christmas Eve, 1223. St Francis of Assisi invited all the people to a service there to remind them of a truth they had either forgotten or neglected: that Love came down at Christmas. We are told that as they looked inside the cave and saw the crib with the ox and ass, St Francis prayed and took up the infant Christ in his arms. Christ was ‘the peaceful, tender and loving brother,’ a vulnerable baby needing affection and care.

The simplicity and the beauty of that nativity scene is portrayed in this 12th century painting by an anonymous Catalan artist in a museum in Barcelona.

Cribs were often very elaborate and ornate creations, bejewelled and decorated with episodes from our Lord’s life. Here the scene is ordinary with few details. The haloes around the heads of Mary and the Christ-Child may look a little odd, but the artist and St Francis are at one in proclaiming a sign of life and love in this birth.

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.

Learn a poem by heart this Christmas – and stay sharp

So here is a challenge for you: learn a poem, by heart, by Christmas. That is the challenge that Gyles Brandreth, actor and broadcaster has set his grandchildren this year.

Memorising poetry is good for everyone. Brandreth cites scientific research to say that memorising poetry can help keep your brain fit and well.

The Duchess of Cornwall, who recently took over from the Queen as patron of The Royal Society of Literature, admits to reciting poems to herself as she goes to sleep. Dame Judi Dench can still recite the whole of *Twelfth Night* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.



Christingle: a generous present from the Moravians

It is the Moravians whom we have to thank for bringing us the Christingle. Especially one Moravian clergyman: John de Watteville.

On 20th December, 1747, John de Watteville was taking a children's service in his Moravian church in Marienborn, Germany. He led the children in some hymns, and read out verses which the children themselves had written to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Then he explained to the children that true happiness only comes through knowing Jesus. Jesus, said John de Watteville, "has kindled in each little heart a flame which keeps burning to their joy and our happiness".

John de Watteville then went on to illustrate that 'flame'. He gave each child a little lighted wax candle, tied around with a red ribbon. He ended his service with a little prayer: "*Lord Jesus, kindle a flame in these children's hearts, that theirs like Thine become*".

The visual aid was a great success with the children; for the Marienborn Diary for that day concludes: "hereupon the children went full of joy with their lighted candles to their rooms and so went glad and happy to bed".

The candle and red ribbon were remembered the following year, and the following after that.... The years came and went, and as the Moravians began to travel beyond Germany, so they took the custom with them: to Labrador, to Pennsylvania, to Tibet and Suriname, to the Caribbean and South Africa. In each country the Christians adapted it for their own use.

Continued

No one knows for certain when the word 'Christingle' was first used with regard to the custom. No one even knows where the word 'Christingle' comes from. Some people say it is from the old Saxon word 'ingle' (fire), meaning 'Christ-fire or light'. Another theory is that it derives from the German 'engel' (angel), meaning 'Christ-angel'.

In any event, the symbolism of Christingle gradually developed, until today the Moravians in the British Province use an orange, representing the world, with a lighted candle to represent Christ, the Light of the World. Nuts, raisins and sweets on cocktail sticks around the candle represent God's bounty and goodness in providing the fruits of the earth. Red paper, forming a frill around the base of the candle, reminds us of the blood of Christ shed for all people on the cross at Calvary.

In Moravian churches, the Christingle Service is usually held on the Sunday before Christmas or on Christmas Eve. The website for the Moravian Church says: "We are glad that the Moravian Church has been able to make this contribution to the wider Christian world."



Why does Christmas begin at midnight?

The hour was first chosen at Rome in the fifth century to symbolise the idea that Christ was born at midnight – a mystical idea in no way hindered by historical evidence! No one knows the hour of His birth.

Certainly in recent times, Holy Communion at midnight on Christmas morning has proved popular with modern families. One British writer pointed out its "domestic convenience" in 1947: "for where there are children and no servants, husband and wife may be unable to communicate at any other time." (So things don't change, then!)

Thank You for your donations through the collection boxes:



Paid to The Children's Society the sum of £225.00



& The Leprosy Mission £90.00



How to survive Christmas

- *Remember the reason for the season.* It's Jesus' birthday, not yours!
- *Plan ahead.* How much can you realistically afford? Don't just head for the shops with your credit card.
- *Don't do the last-minute buying frenzy.* Shop early, when you can think clearly.
- *Christmas is an expensive time of year for everyone.* With some close friends and adults in the family you may be able to make a 'no presents' pact.
- *Try shopping with cash only* – that way you can't spend more than your budget.
- *Don't let children talk you into buying expensive items you can't afford.*
- *Don't go overdrawn* without telling your bank in advance. The penalties are high!
- *Don't go mad in the January sales,* and avoid the temptation of the numerous 'buy now pay later' offers.
- *Help other people whenever you can.* After all, it is the season of goodwill!
- *Be tolerant of visiting relatives.* They want to enjoy Christmas as much as you do, honestly. They don't mean to be quite *that*
- *Be grateful for your presents.* Even when they are hideous. Somebody, somewhere, will like them in the New Year.
- *Forget all of your worries for one day of the year.* Whatever they are, just relax and enjoy celebrating the birth of Christ!
- *Finally, if you do run into debt problems,* don't ignore them. Get advice as early as possible. Contact Christians Against Poverty or your nearest Citizens Advice Bureau for free, confidential, independent advice.



**SHOPMOBILITY
STOCKPORT**

**Shopmobility Stockport Christmas Carol Concert
(with Offerton Methodist Choir)
Friday, 21st December 2018 at 1pm.**

The advertisement features a dark blue background with a white and red banner at the top containing the text 'SHOPMOBILITY STOCKPORT'. Below this, the event details are written in white text on a black background, flanked by holly leaves and berries.

Maritime Christian Ministries.

Thank you for all your knitted hats /neck & chest warmers donated for use by seafarers. We have received a lovely acknowledgement from the charity thanking us for our gifts .



Emmanuel means 'God with us' *The Rev Tony Horsfall reflects on the nearness of God, to each one of us*

A friend of mine was diagnosed recently with breast cancer. A bright, vivacious lady in her fifties, she took the devastating diagnosis really well, but when the time came for her mastectomy, she understandably began to feel very nervous. Sitting with her husband in the hospital cubicle awaiting the operation she experienced for the first time ever a panic attack. She breathed slowly in and out to reduce her fear and offered the only prayer that came to her mind: 'God is with us, God is with us.' She repeated the words under her breath, asking that God would give her a sign of His presence to reassure her. Just at that moment there was some noise from the next cubicle. A doctor had arrived to see the patient. He introduced himself like this. 'Hello, my name is Doctor Emanuel and my name means 'God is with us'.' My friend turned to her husband, amazed, and asked him, 'Did you hear that?' He said he did and was also amazed at the wonderful reassurance from God. When the nurse came in to attend to her, my friend asked, 'Who was the doctor just now in the next cubicle?' The nurse replied, 'I've no idea, I've never seen him on this ward before.' This only added to their sense of wonder at the intervention of God. The sign of His presence continues to encourage her – and others – throughout her long treatment. Christmas reminds us that God stepped into our world, and became a human being, born as a baby at Bethlehem. In Jesus, God is with us, and He continues to come to us in our times of need, bringing us peace and reassurance. Remember, whatever situation you find yourself in, you are never alone. Jesus, our Emmanuel, is always with us. He will never leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5).

An on-going Story *Lester Amann on the Christmas story.*

We all like a good story. When God wanted to grab our attention, He gave us a book of stories. The Bible is full of God's encounters with people. At Christmas, we remember the story of Jesus born in Bethlehem. But this story begins back in Genesis and as we go through the Old Testament books, there are many pointers to Him. Some prophets announced His coming, stating where He would be born, what He would be like and what He would do. They prepared the way for the arrival of the Holy Child. Perhaps, Mary, on seeing her old cousin Elizabeth pregnant, reminded her of the amazing conceptions and births which God had given to Sarah, Rachel and Hannah. And now the angel Gabriel had announced that she, of all women, would bear the Messiah. No wonder Mary praised God with all her heart. The Christmas story is so attractive, with memorable ingredients: angels; poignant dreams; a pregnant mum on a long and tough journey; the lack of a clean room at an inn and a stable for a birth. The story has a wealth of characters: an innocent young girl, a kindly older man, bright angels, rough shepherds, wealthy men from the East and a tyrannical ruler out to kill the baby. And over all hangs that mysterious lone star that marked the place where Jesus lay! But the story of Jesus doesn't end here. He grew up. Jesus became the teacher and miracle worker – He became the Messiah. It culminated with His death, resurrection and ascension. This is a story of sacrificial love. A Saviour who died on a cross to remove our sin and give us eternal life. And the story hasn't finished, as WE are its final part! Our response to the Christmas story determines our future. Are we living in the light of Christ, in service, worship and prayer? We are now part of God's continuing story and the last chapter has still to be played out. We are involved in it. Now, that is something to celebrate!

A prayer for the new parish

of Stockport and Brinnington by The Rt Rev Libby Lane – Bishop of Stockport

God of grace,
who alone brings life and growth to your Church,
send your Holy Spirit to bind us together during the vacancy
and prepare us for our shared future.

Bring vision to our planning,
wisdom to our actions, faith to our lives,
hope to our communities,
and love to our hearts.

We thank you for your faithfulness to us.
We pray your continuing blessing on homes and schools,
businesses and places of leisure, communities and meeting places,
and for all those who live, work, play and worship in our parishes.

We pray for those tasked to choose our new rector,
and ask that you bring someone who will work alongside us,
to proclaim afresh, in our time and place,
the Good News of your overflowing love for everyone,
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.



Stockport Remembers - Many thanks to everyone who supported our Remembrance weekend on the 10th & 11th November.



Our Saturday morning “Coffee Morning” raised £71.00 which will be paid to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal in addition to donations given for poppies available in church and sales of lapel pins.



We were delighted at the lovely comments made following our 10.30am service of “Praise and Thanksgiving” and after our 5pm “Service Commemorating the ending of WW1”.

Thank You to everyone who attended and supported us on this special day



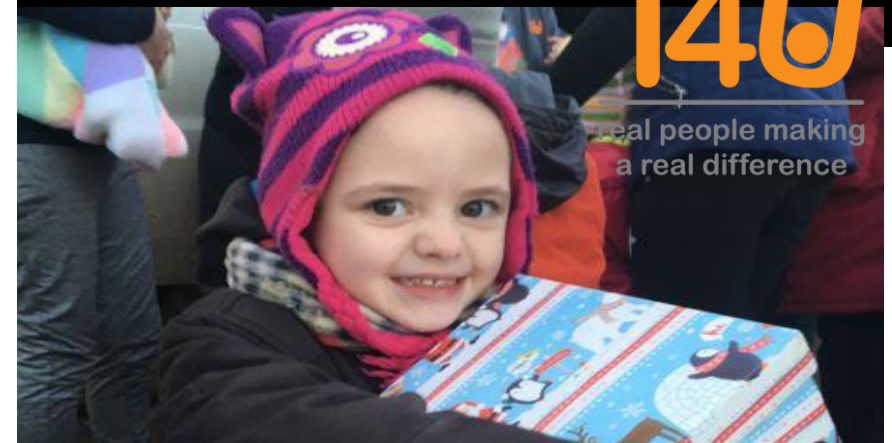
“Stockport Remembers” was a massive project undertaken by Stockport Council and had, as you would imagine, taken months of planning. It was a pleasure to be asked to play a part in those arrangements and to hold the civic service at St Mary’s.



From our point of view it is with special thanks to: The Rt Rev Libby Lane (Bishop of Stockport), Rev Mike Newman, those Standard Bearers who kindly agreed to attend our service after an already busy day, Peter Williamson (organist), Roy Bowden and the “Voices InAccord” choir along with their guest drummer. To the Mayor and Mayoress of Stockport (Cllr Walter Brett & Mrs Francesca Entwistle), Pam Smith (Chief Executive) and Cllr Alex Ganotis (Leader of the Council). Also attending Deputy Mayor (Cllr Wendy Meike) and Deputy Mayoress (Claire Meikle).

Our thanks to the management/project team for “Stockport Remembers” from Stockport Council for making this remembrance season such a great success. A big “internal” thank you to members of “Team St Mary’s” for looking after our guests and doing everything that needed to be done. Thanks also to Clive Calton and our guest bell ringers.

Thank you for the many show box gifts we have collected together for the charity Teams4U



It’s always quite exciting to see the pile of boxes grow as we approach our closing date from dropping off shoe box gifts before they leave on their journey from St Mary’s.

Your shoebox will be given to a vulnerable child, or family, through schools, nurseries, hospitals and orphanages.

The shoeboxes this year are going to deprived children/vulnerable adults/families in Romania, Belarus, Bosnia and the Ukraine.

In addition to completed show box gifts, many thanks for those of you who have contributed items to be included in boxes, as well as cash to assist with distribution costs. Our appreciation to Margaret Forster for making all the necessary arrangements to make this project possible

Wordsearch

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

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Luke chapter 2 verses 1-7

The Roman Empire charged the countries
it had invaded taxes, based on the
number of people and what they earned.

Emperor Augustus gave orders that all people in the Empire were to be registered so they could be taxed.

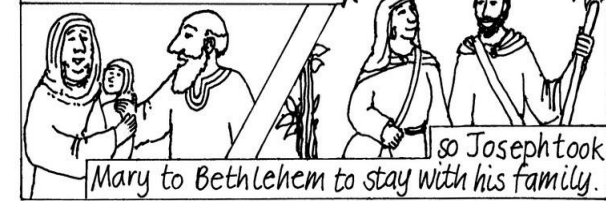


This census was before Quirinius became Governor of Syria* (*whose own census started riots - Acts 5:37)



When the order came, Mary and Joseph were living in Nazareth.

But Joseph was descended from King David, who had been born in Bethlehem...



Come and meet everyone!



A normal home in Bethlehem.



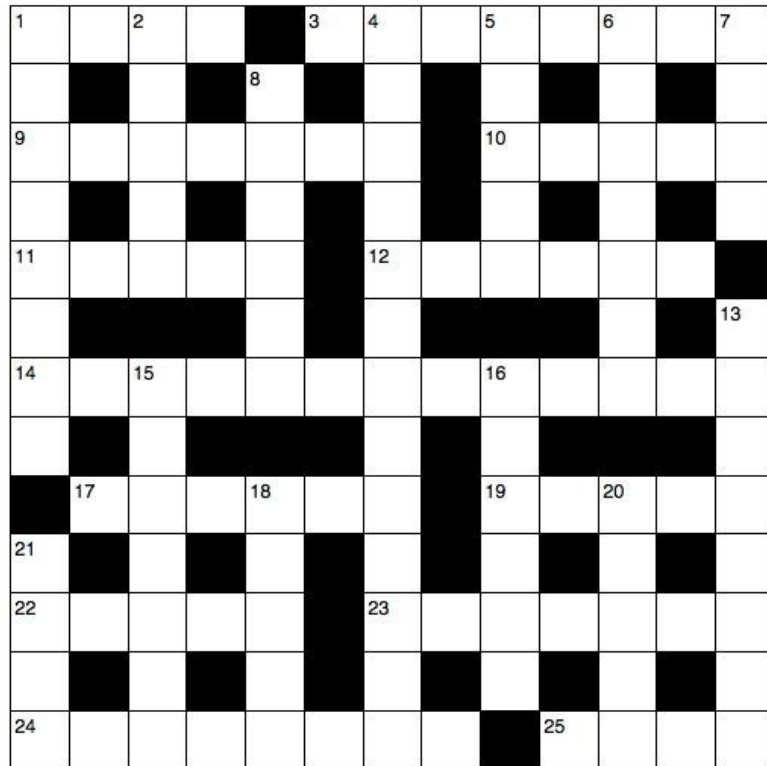
While they were staying there, Mary's baby was born.



So they made a snug bed for Jesus in one of the mangers.



Crossword



Across

- 1 'How long will you — your face from me?' (Psalm 13:1) (4)
 3 'Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the — he bore'(Hebrews 13:13) (8)
 9 Posh sin (anag.) (Romans 8:15) (7)
 10 Solemn pledges (Matthew 5:33) (5)
 11 Italian term for full orchestra (5)
 12 'For he who avenges blood remembers; he does not — the cry of the afflicted' (Psalm 9:12) (6)
 14 Prescience (1 Peter 1:2) (13)
 17 Where a Hindu holy man lives (6)

- 19 'If he found any... who belonged to the Way, whether — — women, he might take them as prisoners' (Acts 9:3) (3,2)
 22 Fragrance (2 Corinthians 2:15) (5)
 23 Vine hen (anag.) (Jonah 1:2) (7)
 24 Precious stone decorating the twelfth foundation of the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:20) (8)
 25 'Will you keep to the old path that evil men have — ?' (Job 22:15) (4)

Down

- 1 'Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with — — ' (Numbers 20:11) (3,5)
 2 'You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, " — — murder"' (Matthew 5:21) (2,3)
 4 One of Paul's many hardships endured as a servant of God (2 Corinthians 6:5) (13)
 5 'We ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, — inwardly' (Romans 8:23) (5)
 6 Changed (Daniel 6:8) (7)
 7 'My yoke is — and my burden is light' (Matthew 11:30) (4)
 8 Recoil (Revelation 12:11) (6)
 13 'O Lord, you have — me and you know me' (Psalm 139:1) (8)
 15 ' — to me the joy of your salvation' (Psalm 51:12) (7)
 16 Express sorrow (Isaiah 16:7) (6)
 18 'Then he said to Thomas, " — out your hand and put it into my side"' (John 20:27) (5)
 20 'God has said, " — will I leave you; — will I forsake you"' (Hebrews 13:5) (5)
 21 Son of Onam and brother of Shammai (1 Chronicles 2:28) (4)

