

Diocese of Chester



STOCKPORT PARISH CHURCH St Mary's in the Marketplace

Churchgate Stockport SK1 1YG Tel: 0161 480 1815

e-mail: st.marysstockport@gmail.com

www. stmarysinthemarketplace.com

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 Lunchtime Service

Wedding, Baptism, Funeral and other services by arrangement.

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













Celebrating Christmas

The information given on this leaflet was correct at the time of printing but may be subject to amendment. For updated information please refer to our web site.

Sunday, 27 th Nov	First Sunday of Advent – Holy	10.30am	
	Communion with Advent Carols	20.000	
Monday, 28 th Nov		Closed	
Tuesday, 29 th Nov	Holy Communion	10.00am	
,.	Lunch-time Advent Service	12.15pm	
Wednesday, 30 th Nov		Closed	
Thursday, 1 st Dec		Open	
Friday, 2 nd Dec	Stockport Music Service	6.30pm	
	Christmas Concert		
Saturday, 3 rd Dec	St Mary's Christmas Fayre	10.00am-	
	with Christmas treats at the Nave Café	4.00pm	
Sunday, 4 th Dec	Second Sunday of Advent – Holy	10.30am	
	Communion		
	Ex-Services Association Carol Service	3.00pm	
Monday, 5 th Dec		Closed	
Tuesday, 6 th Dec	Holy Communion	10.00am	
	Lunch-time Advent Service	12.15pm	
Wednesday, 7 th Dec		Closed	
Thursday, 8 th Dec		Open	
Friday, 9 th Dec	AGE UK Stockport Carol Service with	1.30pm	
	Warren Wood Primary School and		
	Step Out Stockport Singing Group		
Saturday, 10 th Dec		Open	
Sunday, 11 th Dec	Third Sunday of Advent – Advent	10.30am	
	Morning Prayer & Toy Service		
Monday, 12 th Dec	Beechwood Cancer Care Christmas	7.00pm	
	Carol and Dedication Service with		
	Affinity and Beechwood Choirs		
Tuesday, 13 th Dec	Holy Communion	10.30am	
	Wellspring Carol Service	1.00pm	

Wednesday, 14 th Dec	The Mayor's Carol Service with	12.30pm	
Wednesday, 14 Dec	Romiley Primary School Band	12.30pm	
Thursday, 15 th Dec	Normiey Frimary School Band	Open	
Friday, 16 th Dec	Shopmobility Stockport's Christmas	1.00pm	
rilday, 10 Dec	Celebration	1.00pm	
	Stockport Youth Orchestra - Nine	7.30pm	
	Lessons & Carols	7.30pm	
Saturday, 17 th Dec	Lessons & Carois	Open	
Sunday, 18 th Dec	Fourth Sunday of Advant	10.30am	
Sunday, 18" Dec	Fourth Sunday of Advent -	10.30am	
	Holy Communion		
	(Remembering a Loved One at		
NA L 40th D	Christmas)	Cl. I	
Monday, 19 th Dec		Closed	
Tuesday, 20 th Dec	Holy Communion	10.00am	
	Lunch-time Carol Service with the	12.15pm	
	Tuesday Congregation		
	Banks Lane Junior School Carol Service	7.00pm	
Wednesday, 21 st Dec		Closed	
Thursday, 22 nd Dec	Vernon Park Primary School Carol	2.00pm	
	Concert		
Friday, 23 rd Dec		Open	
Saturday, 24 th Dec	Christmas Eve [please note that there	Open	
	are no services at 12.00noon & 6pm]		
	Holy Communion with Carols	11.30pm	
Sunday, 25 th Dec	Christmas Day - Christmas Service of	10.30am	
	Holy Communion		
Monday, 26 th December	– Saturday 31st December St Mary's will re	emain	
closed [please note no w	vatch night service]		
2017			
Sunday, 1 st January	Sunday after Christmas – Holy	10.30am	
	Communion		
	Saturday 7 th St Mary's will remain closed		
Sunday, 8 th January	The Baptism of Christ 1st after Epiphany	10.30am	
	Morning Prayer		
Monday, 9 th January		Closed	
Tuesday, 10 th January	Holy Communion	10.00am	
4 4	Lunch-time Service	12.15pm	

Winter Warmers at the Nave Café



beef and potato pie, Catriona (below) with a pasta bake. We aim to put something on the menu every day, and hope

The Nave Café is pleased to be able to offer you a "winter warmer" during the cold winter weather – Haley can be seen (left) with a homemade



that you will enjoy our new lunchtime choices.



Our catering team are waiting to serve you – please support us as best you can.

Amy, Simon, Josh and all the others who are with us during the week (and our St Mary's team at weekend) look forward to seeing you and taking your order.

LUNCH HOUR SERVICES - Winter 2016-2017

A new way of living -The Sermon on the Mount

January 10th

Gathered to learn (Matthew 5:1)

January 17th

Truly happy people (Matthew 5: 3-12)

January 24th

Sons and daughters of the King

• How we start (Matthew 5: 6-8)

January 31st

When hunger is good

• How we grow (Matthew 5: 6-8)

February 7th

People in the middle

• How we serve (Matthew 5: 9-12)

February 14th

Question Time

February 21st

People who are different (Matthew 5: 13)

February 28th

People who get noticed (Matthew 5:14-16)

4th December – St Barbara

Saint Barbara, is the patron saint of artillerymen, also traditionally the patron of armourers, military engineers, gunsmiths, tunnellers, miners and anyone working with cannon and explosives.

Why the tower? Well, Barbara was carefully guarded by her father who kept her locked up in a tower in order

to preserve her from the outside world. Before going on a journey, he commanded that a private bath-house be erected for her use near her dwelling, and during his absence, Barbara (having secretly become a Christian) had three windows put in it, as a symbol of the Holy Trinity, instead of the two originally intended. When her father returned, she acknowledged herself to be a Christian; upon this he drew his sword to kill her, but her prayers created an opening in the tower wall and she was miraculously transported to a mountain gorge, where two shepherds watched their flocks. Dioscorus, in pursuit of his daughter, was rebuffed by the first shepherd, but the second betrayed her and was turned to stone and his flock changed to locusts. Dragged before the prefect of the province, Martinianus, who had her cruelly tortured, Barbara held true to her faith. During the night, the dark prison was bathed in light and new miracles occurred. Every morning her wounds were healed. Torches that were to be used to burn her went out as soon as they came near her. Finally she was condemned to death by beheading. Her father himself carried out the death-sentence. However, as punishment for this, he was struck by lightning on the way home and his body was consumed by flame. Barbara was buried by a Christian, and her tomb became the site of miracles. According to the Golden Legend, her martyrdom took place on December 4 "in the reign of emperor Maximianus and Prefect Marcien" (r. 286–305).

The Challenges of Christmas

Christmas is a great time of year, but it's not without its challenges! One household had 250,000 Christmas lights, but could not boil a kettle for fear of blowing the system!

The challenge of over-indulging - We all remember the episode of the Vicar of Dibley, where she had to consume four Christmas dinners! Christmas is a time when we usually eat and drink far too much, the average person gaining 6 pounds in weight. But Christmas is not simply about gaining weight, but losing what weighs us down. 'Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.' (1 Peter 5:7). Whatever your concerns or worries this Christmas, bring them to God.

The challenge of overspending - In the rush to buy Christmas cards, a woman bought a pack of 50 identical cards. Without reading the verse, she hastily signed and sent them off, but for one. A few days later she read the message: 'This card is just to say a little gift is on the way.' Christmas is not about getting into debt, but God getting us out of debt. He spent exactly what was needed on the first Christmas night: 'You are to give Him the name Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins.' (Matthew 1:21).

The challenge of over too quickly - Christmas doesn't last very long, yet the effect of the first Christmas is long-lasting. 'For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.' (John 3:16). Jesus has come to bring us life in all its fullness, both for now and all eternity.

How do we face the challenges of Christmas? 'Yet what I can, I give Him - give my heart'.

*Rev Paul Hardingham.

No Room? On the Contrary.

All over the world, doors are being slammed shut this Christmas. The closure of the Calais Jungle in the Autumn, which dispersed thousands of asylum seekers and would-be immigrants, brought into sharp focus the story of Joseph and the pregnant teenager Mary, for whom there was no room in the Bethlehem Inn. Vast numbers of Christians forced to flee from their ancient homelands in Syria and Iraq today mirror the Holy Family's escape into Egypt. Every time yet another infant dies violently, it will be a reminder of the first century massacre of babies in the Bethlehem region. This year one carol will be sung with particular poignancy. It retells the message of angels, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom His favour rests" and continues:

Yet with the woes of sin and strife, The world has suffered long; Beneath the angel strain have rolled, Two thousand years of wrong; And man, at war with man, hears not, The love song which they bring: O hush the noise, you men of strife, And hear the angels sing.

The angels' goodwill message will persist despite our clamour, for it proclaims God's all embracing and eternal welcome. Heaven's doors are ever-open: it is home for everyone. The final biblical vision is of an all-encompassing city: "On no day will its gates ever be shut... the glory and honour of the nations will be brought into it." Jesus, for whom there had been no room at the inn, taught that God's kingdom is home for every race: "I say to you that many will come from the East and the West, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven." He reassured those anxious about the future: "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms..." No room? Don't you believe it!

THE WAY I SEE IT: The Most Beautiful Story

Earlier this year a well-known atheist was being interviewed on Radio 4. In the course of an enlightening chat he was asked how he spent Christmas, and he said that he went to Midnight Mass at church. 'But you're an atheist', his interviewer protested. 'Yes', he replied, 'but what they celebrate at Christmas is the most beautiful story ever told'.

That 'beautiful story' tells of a Creator who sent His Son to share the life of His creation, to be born as a helpless baby, to grow up as a man of extraordinary wisdom, gentleness and love, who was executed by the authorities for contradicting the traditions of the time. His followers – who today number about two billion people all over the world – believe that He rose from the dead, and that by His death and resurrection He has made possible forgiveness and eternal life for men and women everywhere. That is certainly quite a story, perhaps the greatest story ever told, and yes, beautiful. And that is the story that will be rehearsed again this Christmas, in children's Nativities, in hymns and carols, in Bible readings and sermons all over the country. People who stay away from church all year turn up to hear it, and who can blame them? This is a story of hope, of love and of heaven touching earth.

During 2016 we have all become familiar with probably the best-known statue in the world, Christ the Redeemer, towering over the Olympic city of Rio, His arms outstretched in blessing. Christmas celebrates the birth of that great Redeemer — a tiny baby laid in a feeding trough. His birth changed history, His life transformed our understanding of what it means to be human, His death was at one and the same time a tragedy and a triumph. Yes, 'the most beautiful story ever told'. Enjoy it again this Christmas.

Canon David Winter

The Rural Dean writes:

My Christmas shopping (apart from food) is done! Parish and deanery life gets incredibly busy from the middle of November onwards, so I have to get things finished early. But even if I was retired, I think I would still do my shopping early as I don't like being under pressure - I choose to take time to buy the 'right' gift for someone and also I really don't like crowds!

Some of my friends have been asking me what I would like for Christmas. I tell them 'there is nothing I would like or need, thank you'. Perhaps they think I'm being humble or coy, but the truth is, there's nothing I want - nothing you can buy in a shop anyway.

I already have everything I could want or need. I have a wonderful privileged job. I have my health. I have family and dear friends and of course,

I have my Church Family at St. Saviour's.

I have received some lovely gifts over the years, but now these are just some of the gifts I hope we all would want:

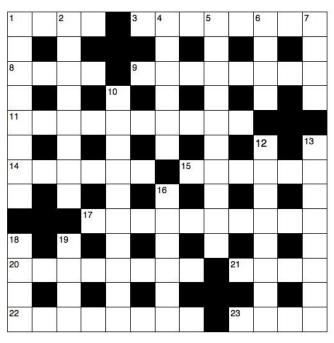
People to be kinder to each other.

Smiles to be given throughout the year, not just at Christmas.

Parents to spend more time with their children.

The elderly to be treated more respectfully and cared for.





Crossword for December 2016

Across

1 'The blind receive sight, the — walk' (Luke 7:22) (4)
3 Got (Philippians 3:12) (8)
8 Leave out (Jeremiah 26:2) (4)
9 Castigated for

using dishonest

scales (Hosea 12:7) (8)

- 11 Weighty (1 John 5:3) (10)
- 14 'Now the serpent was more than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made' (Genesis 3:1) (6)
- 15 'Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot God' (Romans 8:8) (6)
- 17 Because Israel lacked one of these, tools had to be sharpened by the Philistines (1 Samuel 13:19) (10)
- 20 In his vision of the two eagles and the vine, this is how Ezekiel described the latter (Ezekiel 17:8) (8)
- 21 Rite (anag.) (4)
- 22 Nine gigs (anag.) (8)
- 23 'The eye cannot say to the , "I don't need you" (1 Corinthians 12:21) (4)

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God
temple
duty
incense
Jerusalem
rescue
gracious
cousin

Romans
holy
Elizabeth
prayer
childless
pregnant
invaded
Zecharaiah

Mary Israel name burn angel son baby John

Mary's Christmas

As the baby's mother, Mary plays a crucial part in the Christmas story. It all begins with the visit of Gabriel to Mary: 'Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favour with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus.' (Luke 1:30,31).

This conversation between Gabriel and Mary takes us straight to the heart of what Christmas is all about. God was doing something unique, that had never been done before! 'God was beginning, at this divine and human point, the New Creation of all things. The whole soiled and weary universe quivered at this direct injection of essential life.' (CS Lewis). This Child joins heaven and earth in a new way: the eternal enters time and space and pure spirit takes on flesh and blood. God becomes a human being in the baby Jesus. It reminds one of the sci-fi film in which a team of surgeons are shrunk to the size of blood cells and injected into the veins of a patient to perform lifesaving surgery. The Christmas message affirms that God has entered the bloodstream of humanity to put things right with Him.

God chose an unknown, frightened teenage girl to bring about this new beginning for all of us. Her response is the pattern for us, as we welcome God's special gift into our lives this Christmas: "I am the Lord's servant,' Mary answered. 'May your word to me be fulfilled." (Luke 1:38). Mary gave an unqualified Yes to all that God wanted to do in her life. It was a costly decision, which risked both shame and scandal. Yet she was ready to obey God and trust His plans for her life, despite her many questions. Is the same true for us this Christmas? Rev Paul Hardingham

Down

- 1 'Flee for your lives! Don't — , and don't stop anywhere in the plain!' (Genesis 19:17) (4.4)
- 2 Principal thoroughfare (Numbers 20:19) (4,4)
- 4 'The tax collector... beat his and said, "God have mercy on me, a sinner" (Luke 18:13) (6)
- 5 'The zeal of the Lord Almighty will this' (2 Kings 19:31) (10)
- 6 'The day of the Lord is for all nations' (Obadiah 15) (4)
- 7 Specified day (Acts 21:26) (4)
- 10 Deadly epidemic (Deuteronomy 32:24) (10)
- 12 Roman Catholic church which has special ceremonial rights (8)
- 13 Tied up (2 Kings 7:10) (8)
- 16 In his speech to the Sanhedrin, Stephen described Moses as 'powerful in speech and ' (Acts 7:22) (6)
- 18 'Although he did not remove the high places, heart was fully committed to the Lord all his life' (1 Kings 15:14) (4)

19 Tribe (Deuteronomy 29:18) (4)

ACROSS: 1, Lame. 3, Obtained. 8, Omit. 9, Merchant. 11, Burdensome. 14, Crafty. 15, Please. 17, Blacksmith. 20, Splendid. 21, Tier. 22, Singeing. 23, Hand.

DOWN: 1, Look back. 2, Main road. 4, Breast. 5, Accomplish. 6, Near. 7, Date. 10, Pestilence. 12, Basilica. 13, Tethered. 16, Action. 18, Asa's. 19, Clan.

The Stockport Heritage Trust celebrates 30 years.



Run solely by volunteers who are all working to preserve our local heritage.

Stockport Heritage Trust was formed in 1986 and became a registered charity the following year.

The Heritage Centre houses a large local picture collection, the church

shop and offers advice from volunteers (if they can or if they can't they seek to find someone who can). It is without doubt a long-term agree-

ment and offers "brilliant" partnership working between the trust and St Mary's. A large number of visitors come into Church – if just to get to the Heritage Centre – from a wide range of countries across the globe.

The Stockport Heritage Trust provide exhibitions (at various locations as well



as at St Mary's), give talks, walks around the Borough and publish research projects. Many SHT publications are available, including a record of all the



memorials at St. Mary's and our burial records from 1584 to 1913. The present church guide was kindly produced by them and is in great demand. Since the retirement of the Rector, ALL St Mary's church tours have been undertaken by the trust on our behalf.

"Happy Anniversary" - Stockport Heritage Trust.

What sort of a Christmas card person are you?

The time to send and receive Christmas cards has come round again – time for our annual shock at the cost of coloured card and disbelief at what the Post Office wants to send them.

It seems there are three kinds of people when it comes to Christmas cards: the total abstainers, the total givers and the selective givers.

Abstainers write 'Happy Christmas everyone' on Facebook, and consider the job well done. Total givers spend a fortune on cards and stamps and send them to everyone they know. Selective givers try to cut corners, but then cannot remember who sent who what, and as the cards pour through their door, spend time worrying...

However you do it, it is good to stay in yearly touch with your widest circle of friends and family. Proverbs points out that: 'Like cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.'

Prov 25:25. They will enjoy hearing from you!





A Christmas Message from...
Dear friends,

Life is very different in the Cotswolds! The other day I was taking a member of a Bible Study group back to her idyllic cottage, out in the country, and within a mile's drive from where we'd been, in a perfect Cotswold village, full of stone cottages, with roses round

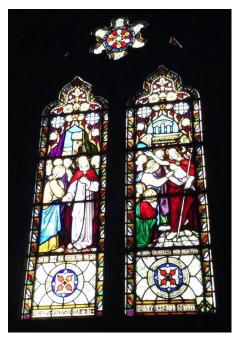
the doors, we saw a Barn Owl, sitting on a post, a fox darting into the hedge, and a little deer running along a wall. And just to add to that, on the way home I saw two more deer, a mother and its faun. I have to tell you that greatest hazard driving in the countryside is not cyclists or motorcars, or tractors; it's pheasants and partridges, who think they own the road!

The splendid gift of a handsome Raleigh Bicycle, from Stockport in May, has been put to very good use during the summer. I have really enjoyed cycling around the country lanes, enjoying the views and the

changing of the seasons of the year since late Spring to winter. The harvest was a spectacular sight, and now the fields are nearly all plough and the hedges are nearly all trimmed, and the grass verges neatly cut. Well, it is the Cotswolds after all!



The Bishop of Gloucester has kindly offered to licence me to officiate in her Diocese, for which I'm grateful. In fact, I'm already very busy, helping the Vicar, by taking services in his five delightful country parish churches, all of them very old. We also have two very active Church of



Thomas Robinson Memorial window

Once again a perfect job performed by Pendle Glass as they have fully restored our seriously damaged stained glass window.

Who was Thomas Robinson?

Thomas Robinson (1837) of Spring Bank was mayor of Stockport in 1820 and a churchwarden at St Mary's. He donated land along with Lady Frances Warren for the building of Stockport Infir-

mary. He was a cotton mill owner and a member of the turnpike committee responsible for building Wellington Road and one of the first Directors of the Bank of Stockport. He purchased Heaton Lane Gas Works in 1836.

The window was erected from his estate and his gravestone is opposite the window under the floor of the north chancel.

If you want to know more of the history of St Mary's – our Visitors Guide (produced for us by the Stockport Heritage Trust) is for sale in the SHC shop – just £2.00.

Experience #JoyToTheWorld this Christmas at one of thousands of Christmas services and events happening in Church of England churches around the country this December.

Visit www.AChristmasNearYou.org to find services happening near you including carols, nativities and mince pies.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

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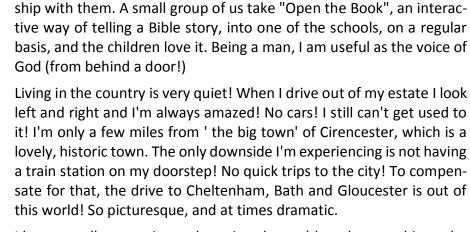
THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

THERE'S A CHRISTMAS SERVICE FOR EVERTONE

AT WWW.ACHRISTMASNEAR YOU ORG

Thank you to everyone who give a shoe box gift or kindly donated items to include in one.



I have a really attractive and spacious home (though not as big as the Rectory of course) which I am gradually making my own. There are still dozens of boxes still to be dealt with. Fortunately I have a large garage, without which life would have been very difficult. I have a perfect little garden, which is full of pants I brought from Stockport. Extraordinarily, one of my precious "wild" Common Spotted Orchids, from the Rectory garden, somehow hitched a lift in a pot, which was a lovely surprise to see!

England Primary schools, and I will hopefully develop a good relation-

This summer I drove to France and Spain to see family and friends, who are neatly scattered around the Continent. I took two tents, and used them both! I had a wonderful week in Taizé, which I thought would be the high point of my holiday. In fact, the most moving and meaningful moment came on the last d ay, when I visited the Thiepval Memorial in the Somme, on a perfect late summer's morning; and I stood beneath that magnificent Monument, in tears, listening to a marvellous service of Remembrance, led by a distinguished looking member of the Royal British Legion, a former Grenadier. To have been able to visit the Somme during the 100th Anniversary of the Battle, was something for which I shall always be thankful

And I shall always be thankful for the nearly 20 years I spent living in Stockport, and serving the church and the community at St .Mary's. I think and talk a lot, about my time with you! Only the other day I met a couple who'd lived in Cheadle!

I will miss the helter-skelter of carol services and concerts at St. Mary's during Advent! But I've joined a choir here! So I will be singing carols in our lovely churches, and in a pub, I believe! It will be very different, very much quieter!

But at my age, one needs to take things a little easier!

Thank you for all your love and support over the years that we have known eachother, and for the Christmasses past, that we have spent together. I will be remembering you in my prayers.

I wish you a Very Happy Christmas and may God bless you with a Peaceful New Year

With love in Christ, born in a stable, for you and for me.

The refugees to find homes and to be allowed to begin a new life.

ISIS to be eradicated and persecution of other faiths to stop.

Peace to come to the Middle East so that Christians can remain in the land of their birth.

For St. Mary's I would like you, the Church Family, to carry on being the lovely people you are and that in the coming months a vision will be realised so that the future of your Church will be secure.

In the meantime, I would like to wish all of you a very happy, peaceful Christmas.

With love in Christ,

Diane

Rev Canon Diane V Cookson Rural Dean – Stockport Deanery

