

News & Views From St Mary's Church Ecclesfield



Church Magazine for
December 2015 – January 2016

www.stmarysecclesfield.com

Price 60p

First Words...

- **We have a new Vicar!** It's with great joy that we are able to announce that Revd Dr Tim Gill has been appointed vicar of St Mary's, (see photograph and a copy of Tim's letter to us in this magazine p5). We look forward very much to Tim's ministry amongst us, and to welcoming him and his family to Ecclesfield next summer. Please hold them, and the parish they will be leaving in your prayers.
- **Christmas** - Here at St Mary's the services for Christmas can be found on the opposite page - You are warmly invited to attend any, or all, of these. The services include our Christingle Service on Sunday 20th December at 4.00pm, Crib Service on Christmas Eve at 4.00pm, our traditional Service of Lessons and Carols at 6.30p.m on Christmas Eve and our Christmas Day Communion Service at 10.00am. Also on Saturday the 19th December at 6.00pm a Service of the Longest Night (a short, quiet, thoughtful service, near to the longest night of the year, an opportunity to lay down all that holds us back from sharing in the joy of Christmas. This service will just let you be as you are).
- **We look forward once again** to joining with the various Community Groups to sing Carols around the Christmas tree outside church on Sunday 13th December at 6.00p.m. It's great to gather to sing Carols and also to support those who, throughout the year, do so much for this community of Ecclesfield.
- **Ecclesfield Comprehensive School** will be holding their Concert in church on Thursday the 10th December at 7.00pm. Hope you will be able to come and enjoy an evening of Christmas Music with them.
- **Don't forget the Children's Christmas Crafts** for Primary School children on Sunday 13th December 2.00 to 3.30pm in church.

May you, and all those whom you love and care for, have a very happy and meaningful Christmas, and a peaceful New Year.

Pat Clarke



Christmas Services at St Mary's

Service of the Longest Night

Saturday 19th December 6:00 pm

Christingle Service

Sunday 20th December 4:00 pm

Christmas Eve Services

Please Note: There will be no service of Holy Communion at 9.30 am

Crib Service

Thursday 24th December 4:00 pm

Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols

Thursday 24th December 6:30 pm

Christmas Day Service

Please Note: There will be no service of Holy Communion at 8.30 am

Christmas Day Family Communion

Friday 25th December 10:00 am

A Prayer for the season

Here is a place for you Lord Jesus.
Make our hearts ready to love and welcome you.

Be born again,
not in a manger,
but in us.

Make us your Bethlehem
where God is personal
and all things and all people are made new.

Amen

Thought for the month

Sometimes it seems that the gap between Christmas and the rest of the year is getting shorter. This eagerness to get a head start on holiday cheer is purely practical from a retailer's point of view: Shops typically make more than half of their yearly sales during these few short weeks, and shopping has become a pretty substantial part of the Christmas tradition.

So I don't know why I was so surprised by what I saw when popping into one of our large supermarkets at the beginning of October. Promoting Halloween was in full swing with all the usual scary stuff on sale, and there in the middle of scream eggs and scary cakes was a display of Christmas chocolates and stocking fillers. Sadly the season of Advent, the 4 weeks leading up to Christmas, can be so easily lost in chocolate calendars, endless advertisements encouraging us to buy the latest in Christmas decorations, the very trendiest gifts, and this year's most fashionable food and drink...

Advent Sunday the beginning of a season of waiting, a season of hope and expectation, a time to ponder, a time to celebrate light in the midst of darkness, a time of preparation for the coming of Jesus, his birth into the world, and his promised return in glory. It's so easy to miss all that this precious season has to give us because we spend our time thinking beyond Advent to Christmas.

Yet both Advent and Christmas should be so much more than what we buy. Gifts are fun, both to give and receive, but they are only symbolic of a much greater gift: The Christmas story brings hope and peace to troubled and anxious lives, but it also brings love. "God so loved the world", we are told, "that he gave his one and only son." The heart of the Christmas-story is God's generosity. The baby born in Bethlehem is our window into the heart of God, which burns with love for each one of us.

Christmas is about true celebration and real joy. Christmas is about giving thanks for Jesus. It's about knowing that God is not remote from us, but that God has experienced our humanity. How wonderful it would be if we could all find a little time in the midst of the rush, the shopping, baking, gift wrapping, and card writing, to think about that, and to respond by coming to a Christmas service to say thank you to God for all he has given us. No doubt we will write thank you letters to friends and relatives, but how are we going to thank God for Jesus the most precious Christmas gift of all?

May the peace, love and joy of Christmas be with all of us, and may the New Year bring many blessings and new opportunities to serve God and those around us.

Pat Clarke

Hello from the Gill Family

Getting a new Vicar is a bit like an arranged marriage! You must be wondering who we are and wanting to know a little bit about us.

We are the Gill family:

Tim, apart from being a vicar for well over 20 years, I have a passion for music (but no ability), I love going to rock concerts with the children.

I also love science fiction and walking - with or without out 10 year old black Labrador Tara;



From left to right
Tim, Emily, Mandy, Kadan and Thomas

I am married to **Mandy** who works full time for the NHS as an audiologist. She shares my love of the outdoors but not rock music!

Our three children are **Thomas** (studying electronic engineering at Leeds University), **Emily** (studying for her A levels) and **Kadan** (in his first year at high school).

We are all born and bred in Yorkshire and very excited about moving to Ecclesfield and looking forward getting to know you next year.

I believe that God has called me to St Mary's; I don't come with a plan for the parish but with a commitment to work with you in seeking God's vision.

Please keep us in your prayers during our last months in Liverpool as we prepare to move to Ecclesfield and St Mary's. We will be praying for you.

God bless,

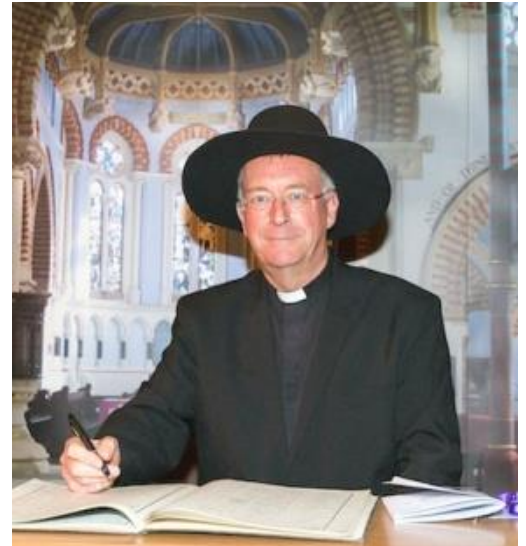
Tim, Mandy, Thomas, Emily & Kadan.



The Revd. Dr. Timothy Gill - A brief biography: Tim has been the Vicar of St. Bartholomew's, in Roby, Liverpool, since 2008. Since serving his curacy in Hull in the 1990s, he has also served as Priest in Charge in Hull and incumbent in York and Leeds prior to Liverpool. Tim studied theology at Westcott House, Cambridge, and has a BA degree from Newcastle University, an M.Phil. from Jesus College, Cambridge and a Ph.D. from Leeds University.

Some sad and momentous news this month:

After ten years and seven months in the job, the Rev Dr Gary Bowness has reluctantly decided that it is time for Uncle Eustace to 'bow out'. All good things must come to an end sometime, and thus Uncle Eustace retires this month. We will miss him! We thank Gary for all the pleasure the letters of Uncle Eustace has provided for us down the years.



Rev Dr Gary Bowness

Farewell from Uncle Eustace

The Rectory
St. James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

And so, at the beginning of the New Year, you finally go to your own first parish and I am to move to a home for retired clergy. Let me give you some final words of advice.

Curates, you will have noticed, are forgiven everything. I hope you have appreciated this period of grace, because come 1st January, all that will change. You will then become responsible for everything that goes wrong in your church. You must be able to mend leaking taps, arrange flowers, mow the churchyard and run jumble sales. You will be expected to know the moment someone falls ill – preferably the day before. In addition, they will expect you to preach profound sermons - in seven minutes flat, and to lead a life of prayerful solitude while being the life and soul of the parish. From the day your predecessor left, he will have turned into a saint. You will be their new disappointment. Be assured that whatever you do, you will always disappoint someone.

Be prepared for phone-calls at 3am telling you that someone has left a light on in church, and shouldn't you go turn it off. You will be asked about car parking arrangements for the October Harvest Service by mid-January, while hymns for the 9 Lessons and Carols will be required by early summer.

I suggest you buy in extra pullovers, overcoats and scarves for life in your vicarage. A good number of mousetraps may well come in useful too.

Welcome to your new life of an incumbent.

I, on the other hand, greatly relish the thought of no longer having the care of parishioners. Instead, I shall become one myself – and am already planning my revenge. In fact, this afternoon, inspired by a large glass of sherry, I have begun a list of things I can complain about. The church is too cold, I don't know any of the hymns, the vicar can't preach, he never visits, and things are not as good as they used to be. True, I haven't actually chosen my new church yet, but no matter, I will complain when I get there.

Of course, I will not be in church on Sunday mornings if it is raining, or on Sunday evenings if something good is on the television. Most of all, I look forward to sitting as far back in church as is possible, and starting a campaign to stop 'passing the peace'.

My new life as a parishioner will be richly rewarding. 50 years after ordination, I can hardly wait.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace

Editor: Just as history has a habit of repeating its self so it may be with Uncle Eustace – a good story is always worth the re-telling!

For anyone who would like a 'souvenir' of Uncle Eustace, you may like to purchase a copy of the published booklet of Uncle Eustace's letters, please email Parish Pump Ltd at: enquiries@parishpump.co.uk

Priced at just £4.95, 'The Letters of Uncle Eustace' was written by the Rev Dr Gary Bowness and illustrated by the Rev Canon Taffy Davies. It was launched at the Christian Resources Exhibition North in 2005



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Bishop's Letter - Seven reasons to ban the Lord's Prayer

Posted by Bishop Steven Croft on 22nd November 2015

Britain woke up this morning to the news that the Lord's Prayer has been banned from cinemas.

The Church of England has produced a sixty second commercial. The only words are the words of the Lord's Prayer, said by children, the bereaved, people at work and so on. It's a beautiful film, Certificate U. The ad is to promote a new website, Just Pray.uk.



The plan was (and is) to show the film before Christmas at screenings of the new Star Wars film to help everyone think about prayer and to pray. What could be more simple?

The distributors have declared the Lord's Prayer unsuitable for screening. They believe it carries the risk of upsetting or offending audiences.

Cue indignation from the press, fury from the Archbishop (according to the Mail anyway) debates about free speech, a possible challenge in the courts and a storm on social media.

But wait just a moment. Suppose the cinema chains got this one right?

I disagree with their decision and I disagree with the reasons they have given. I hope it's reversed. I don't believe the film will offend or upset audiences, in the way they mean, and I don't believe it creates a new precedent.

But from the point of view of global corporations and consumer culture, from the perspective of the gods and spirits of the age, there are very good reasons indeed to ban the Lord's Prayer from cinemas and from culture and from public life.

This is a prayer said by billions of people every day in every language on the planet. In every single moment in time, someone is praying these words. They are the first words of prayer we learn as children and the last words we say at the moment of death.

The Lord's Prayer is powerful for a reason. These words shape lives and families and communities and whole societies.

There are real reasons why the Lord's Prayer has been banned by the demigods of consumer culture, in the boardrooms of the cinema chains. Here are seven, one for every line.

First, this prayer gives to those who pray it an identity and a place in the world and a countercultural community. "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name". It opposes the myth that we are random specks of matter floating through space and time. It opposes the myth that our lives do not matter. It opposes the myth of fragmented humanity.

Continues over page

Seven reasons to ban the Lord's Prayer continued

We are created and loved and called into friendship with God who is our father and into community with our fellow human beings who are therefore our sisters and brothers. Only someone who has found this new identity can stand against the advertising culture which night and day seduces us to define who we are by what we spend.

Second this prayer gives us the courage to live in an imperfect world. "Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven".

The world is not as it was meant to be. It is distorted from its true purpose. But God is at work to redeem and transform this world, to establish his kingdom. The Lord's Prayer invites us not to retreat from the world in fear and pain, to anaesthetise or indulge ourselves. The Lord's Prayer invites us to join the struggle to see justice and peace prevail.

Third, and most powerfully, the Lord's Prayer teaches us to live with just enough. This is the most dangerous reason why it cannot be shown with the adverts at the cinema. It teaches us not to want more. It teaches contentment, the most subversive virtue of them all.

"Give us this day our daily bread". This is not a prayer for more. This is a prayer only for what we need. Every other advert in the cinema is there to encourage us to spend money in pursuit of happiness. This one restrains our greed.

Fourth, the Lord's Prayer teaches me to live with my imperfections and the imperfections of others. There is a way to deal with the rubbish in our lives. "Forgive us our sins".

Consumer culture holds before us the image of perfection. We cannot be happy until we look like this person, live like that one. Each image is a lie.

The Lord's Prayer acknowledges human imperfection and sin, daily. The Lord's Prayer offers a pathway to forgiveness, daily. The way of forgiveness cannot be bought. It is a gift. Grace. Grace subverts the whole culture of advertising.

Fifth the Lord's Prayer offers a way of reconciliation. "Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us". We are not meant to feud or live in hostility or rivalry. We are meant to forgive and be forgiven, to be reconciled to each other. That reconciliation happens without expensive presents, without going into debt, without credit. People are not made happy by more things, another consumer lie. The greatest happiness comes from relationships. The key to great relationships is reconciliation and forgiveness.

Sixth, the Lord's Prayer builds resilience in the human spirit. When you say this prayer each day you are prepared for the bad days. "Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil."

When we say this prayer we remind ourselves that we are not living in a Disney fairy tale, a saccharine creation of film makers where every story has a happy ending.

We are living in a real world of cancer and violence and difficulty, where we are tested, where bad things happen for no clear reason. We live in that world confident in God's love

and goodness and help even in the midst of the most challenging moments of our lives. Faith is for the deep valleys as much as the green pastures. We may not have the answers but we know that God dwells with us and in us.

And seventh the Lord's Prayer tells us how the story ends, how this life is to be lived and lived well. "For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen".

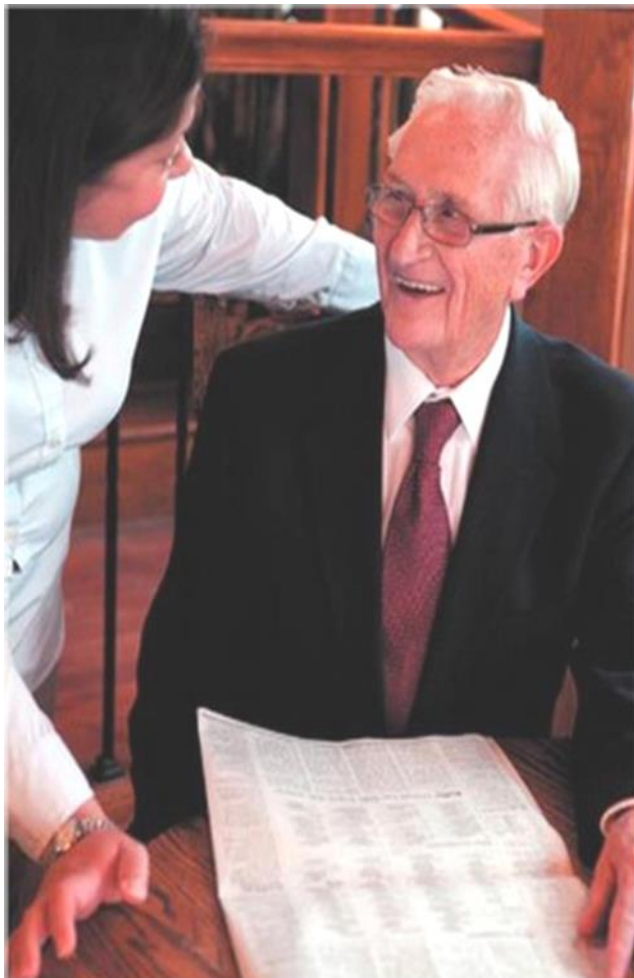
The prayer returns as it begins to the praise and glory of the living God. Our hearts return to their origin and source, the one who created us. Life is to be lived to God's praise and glory, not to satisfy our own small desires. We are beings with a higher calling and a greater purpose.

There are only 63 words in the Lord's Prayer. It takes less than a minute to say them.

Yet these words shape our identity, give purpose to our lives, check our greed, remind us of our imperfections, offer a way of reconciliation, build resilience in our spirits and call us to live to the glory of our creator.

No wonder they have been banned in the boardrooms of consumer culture.

+Steven



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Will You Remember Them – Asia Bibi

Pakistan: Asia Bibi ‘Healthy and Safe’

Asia Bibi is ‘healthy and safe’ according to her defence lawyer Saiful Malook, who recently visited the detainee in prison with her husband. Malook asked Asia Bibi directly whether she had suffered from any serious illnesses: ‘Asia has totally denied she ever suffered any serious illness since 2009 in prison,’ her lawyer explained he and Asia’s husband visited her in the Multan Women’s prison on 21st October in order to investigate reports that she was seriously unwell. Asia Bibi, who is on death row for blasphemy in Pakistan, was thought to have become seriously ill after reports of her condition surfaced some time ago. She was described as suffering from internal bleeding and her health was believed to be deteriorating.

Conditions on Pakistan’s Death Row

“Inmates on death row are separated and locked into an 8 by 10 feet chamber called a death cell,” Malook explained. “There are three death cells in this prison and Asia is the only death convict, so two cells are empty. She has been given one servant who sits outside the lockup for any help.” The deputy-superintendent of police was present during the meeting with Asia’s lawyer. There are no men in the prison, and one extra female police officer is deployed outside her chamber so that her security could be ensured.

What next for Asia?

Asia Bibi’s final appeal against her death sentence is currently pending before Pakistan’s top court. The Supreme Court hearing of her case should begin sometime in January or February, according to Malook. He remains “quite hopeful that she would be acquitted and released due to insufficient evidence against her.” The mother of five has been in prison since the summer of 2009. Twelve months ago the Lahore High Court turned down her appeal on the death sentence due to technical grounds.

Please Pray

- For god to watch over Asia Bibi as she awaits the outcome of her appeal
- That justice be done for Asia.
- For Asia’s lawyer and her family - that they be protected despite threats from extremists.

JD

Mothers Union Meeting 4th November

The meeting opened with Maureen reading the notices and then a short service was led by Margaret,

Our Speaker was Sheila Wood the Diocesan President until January 2016. Sheila firstly read us a poem called 'What is Love' which was lovely and then went on to tell us about her life and then how she became a Mothers Union member.

Sheila was born on her father and mothers farm in Kent the youngest of 3 girls. The girls had some great times on the farm and enjoyed their childhood. They attended a small school which Sheila loved consisting of two classes and two teachers. Sheila then passed to go on to Grammar school at Dover which she hated and can sympathise with those who say they don't like school. After leaving school Sheila thought she would love to work on the farm but her dad had other ideas. So Sheila decided to train for Nursery work.

At 17 she went to work for the Children's Society looking after children with childhood difficulties including having been abused etc. She then went on to be a Nanny looking after small children in London. In 1971 Sheila married her Husband who is a Yorkshireman; they wed in the small church next to her parent's farm. They then moved to Monk Bretton, Barnsley in 1973 which Sheila found very different and had difficulty with the dialect. They moved to Harley where they now live and in 1988 Sheila went to work at Parson Cross College teaching 16/19 year olds until she retired. Sheila's Mother was a Mothers Union member and would take Sheila along as a child.

After Sheila and her Husband had moved to Harley the Mothers Union started in 2000 as a Wentworth/Harley branch and Sheila became branch leader, she has now been Diocesan President for three years and has enjoyed visiting other branches and all the services and the World Wide Council meetings. Sheila also attended the Maundy Service in Sheffield Cathedral. Sheila has enjoyed visiting all the events and her time as Diocesan President.

Lastly Sheila talked about how we should talk to others about the work of the Mothers Union, be united in prayer and encouraging others to join the World Wide Mothers Union.

Thank you Sheila.

HR

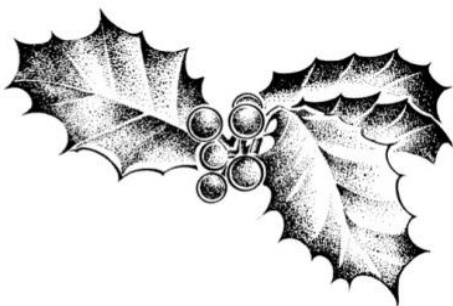


HOLLY

We sing about the 'Holly and the Ivy' and prickly green leaves and red berries are everywhere in Christmas decorations.

In Scandinavian countries the holly is even known as the 'Christ-thorn' and it seems that the name of the holly actually came from the word 'holy'.

The holly reminds us of the death of Jesus – the sharp prickles on the leaves are like the crown on thorns that Jesus was forced to wear on the cross. The red berries remind us of the drops of blood that came where the thorns hurt his head.



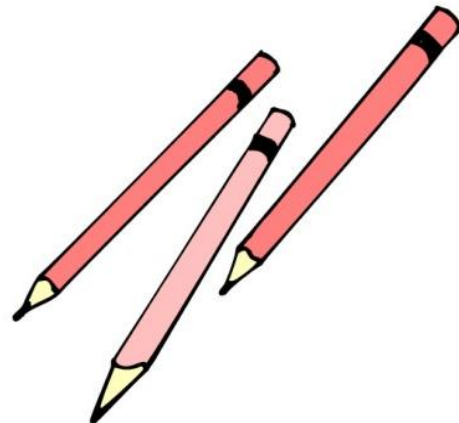
Holly is an evergreen, which means that it does not lose its leaves in the autumn, but keeps them all year round. And because its leaves are always green it is a symbol of eternal life.

SHARP PRESENTS

A quick way to make little presents for all your class and friends.

You will need nice pencils, glue (spray glue is best) and Christmas wrapping paper with a small pattern on it. Choose round pencils rather than the hexagonal type.

Cut a strip of wrapping paper wide enough to wrap around the pencil and as long as the pencil. Put glue on the back of the paper and wrap it around the pencil. When the glue has dried; trim away any excess paper with small scissors.



**What did the werewolf write
on his Christmas cards?**
Best vicious of the season.

**What do
elves sing to
Santa?**
Freeze a Jolly
Good Fellow!



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St Mary's - Weekly Services

8.30 am Holy Communion (BCP) - On 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month

10.00 am Services

1st Sunday of the month - Parish Communion with organ and choir

2nd Sunday of the month - Service of the Word with music group

3rd Sunday of the month - Parish Communion with organ, choir and music group

4th Sunday of the month - Parish Communion with organ, choir and music group

5th Sunday of the month - Sunday Celebration Services

12:00 pm Baptism Service

Baptism Service 1st Sunday of the month – (Except: August no baptisms)

4.00 pm Living Stones Service

An interactive service for children and families 3rd Sunday of the month

6.30 pm Evening Service

Except: 2nd Sunday of the month Holy Communion and 4th Sunday of the month
Prayer and Praise

Midweek Holy Communion – Thursdays at 9.30 am

Eva Ratcliffe Service - Wednesday at 10.30 am

St Mary's - Activities & Groups

Church Office Opening times

Tuesday 9:30 am to 11:30 am

Wednesday 9:30 am to 11:30 am

Thursday 9.00 am to 12.00 pm

Coffee Shop

Tuesday 10.00 am to 12.30 pm

Friday 10.00 am to 12.30 pm

Bell Ringers

Tuesday 7.30 pm Bell ringing practice

Friday 7.30 pm Silent Bell ringing practice

Choir Practice

Friday 7.30 pm Choir practice in choir vestry

Music Group Practice

Thursday 7:30 pm Music group practice in church

Wedding Bookings

Thursday 7.15 pm to 8.45 pm Wedding booking evening

From the Registers - November

Baptisms

1 st November	Woody Gregory
1 st November	Francesca Hill
1 st November	Emily Johnson

*May they know the love of God in their lives and may all things
of the Spirit live and grow in them.*

Weddings

5 th November	Thomas Benton & Kim Lauren Lunn
14 th November	Thomas Avery & Jennifer Thompson

*May each be to the other strength in need a comfort in sorrow
and a companion in joy.*

Funeral

28 th October	Kenneth Rowland	64
2 nd November	Christopher Robinson	64
16 th November	Dorothy Holmes	99
17 th November	Patricia Newton	69
30 th November	June Slater	82

Grant them, O Lord, refreshment, light and peace.

Flower Rota December 2015

6 th	Advent 2 – No Flowers
13 th	Advent 3 – No Flowers
20 th	Advent 4 – No Flowers
23 rd , 24 th	Christmas Flowers
27 th	Vacant

Flower Rota January 2016

3 rd	D & J Banham
10 th	J Bailey & M Roberts
17 th	V. Grey
24 th	A. Hackett
31 st	S. Dale & P. Blackburn

Quotes - With the true meaning of Christmas in mind...

Our God contracted to a span - Incomprehensibly made man. - *Charles Wesley*

The Christian story is precisely the story of one grand miracle. - *C S Lewis*

He that made man was made man. - *C H Spurgeon*

Christmas is the day that holds all time together. - *Alexander Smith*

Filling the world he lies in a manger! - *Augustine*

Peace is a free gift and flows from the pure mercy of God. - *John Calvin*

We rob ourselves of much joy if we forget the loving and caring presence all round about us of the angels of God. - *Maurice Roberts*

Whatever we hold to ourselves is loss. Whatever we give to God is gain. - *Gilbert Shaw*

Diary Items to Note for December 2015

Day and Date	Time	Item
Saturday, December 5	10:00 am	Visiting Bell ringers
Monday, December 7	7:30 pm	PCC Meeting
Wednesday, December 9	9:00 am	School Visit - Rick Stordy
	7:30 pm	Baptism Preparation
Thursday, December 10	6:00 pm	School Concert
Sunday, December 13	12:00 pm	Rotherham Bell Peal
	2:00 pm	Christmas Crafts for Children
	6:00 pm	Carols round the Tree
Tuesday, December 15	7.30 pm	Prayer Meeting
Saturday, December 19	8:30 am	Wardens and Ministry Team meeting
	10:00 am	Carols at the Co-op
	4:30 pm	Renewal of Vows
	6:00 pm	Service of the Longest Night
Sunday, December 20	4:00 pm	Christingle Service
Monday, December 21	7:30 pm	Outreach Team
Thursday, December 24	9.30 am	No Service of Holy communion
	4:00 pm	Crib Service
	6:30 pm	Christmas Eve - Lessons and Carols
Friday, December 25	8:30 am	No Service of Holy communion
	10:00 am	Christmas Day Family Communion
Monday, December 28	7:30 pm	No Ignatian Prayer this month

Diary Items to Note for January 2016

Day and Date	Time	Item
Friday, January 1		No Coffee Shop
Monday, January 4	7:30 pm	PCC Meeting
Thursday, January 7	10.30 am	Prayer Meeting
	7:30 pm	Finance Team Meeting
Wednesday, January 13	7:30 pm	Baptism preparation
Monday, January 18	7:30 pm	Mission Team Meeting
Wednesday, January 20	7:30 pm	Baptism Preparation
Monday, January 25	7:30 pm	Ignatian Prayer

Ecclesfield Handbell Ringers

Present their

Christmas Carol Concert

Come along and sing your favourite carols

Saturday 12th December at 7.00pm

In the Gatty Hall, Ecclesfield

With guests

Deepcar Brass Band

Tickets: £5.00



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The Gardening Year – December/January 2015

A Summary of the Month's Work

Plant growth is at its lowest ebb this month, due to the brief hours of daylight. It is a mistake to try to make plants grow more rapidly by raising the temperature as the resulting growth will be too soft and sappy. Within reasonable limits temperature must be related to light conditions – a minimum night temperature of 7° (45°F) is adequate for plants in the average greenhouse.

House Plants – continue to keep your plants on the dry side and give them as much light as possible. Yellowing and dropping of leaves can signify either over or under watering, so watch your plants carefully over-watering is the most common fault and is the case of most problems that arise with house plants.

Herbs – the dormant period of winter is the ideal time to plan your herb garden. Small herb borders sufficient to provide flavouring may be treated as an integral part of the vegetable garden. On a larger scale the herb border can virtually be an herbaceous border and may include many perennial herbs. Herbaceous herb gardens need careful planning to give the most pleasing effect to the eye and a natural or contrasting grouping of plants.

Fruits – inspect stored fruit and discard any that has rotted. Continue spraying fruit trees and bushes with an insecticide in January and with a fungicide in February. About the middle of February feed fruit trees grown in grass with a nitrogen fertiliser. Feed apple, pear, plum and fruit bushes with fertiliser such as Growmore or fish blood and bone. Mice can be extremely annoying just now burrowing under cloches to steal autumn sown peas and active in greenhouses and frames or among fruits and vegetables in store. Watch for them among planting of small bulbs they are partial to crocuses and prefer the choicer species at the first sign of damage or mouse droppings set mouse traps or put down warfarin, put seed trays over the traps so that birds cannot be caught in them.

Vegetables – plant rhubarb roots 3ft apart in well manured soil. Set the roots so that their tops are about 1in. below soil level. If you have compost or manure to spare place a 3in. layer over each station after planting covering this with a sprinkling of soil to prevent birds scratching it away, do not gather rhubarb during the first season.

And finally may I wish all our readers, and all at St Mary's a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. *Colin Williams*



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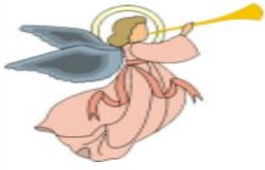
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Christmas Crafts



For Children

(Ages 5 - 11)



At St. Mary's - Ecclesfield

Sunday 13th December 2015

2.00 pm – 3.30 pm

Cost - £2.00 per child

Registration slips available on the day.



www.stmarysecclesfield.com



Welcome to St Mary's Parish Church, Ecclesfield

Carol Singing Around The Christmas Tree

Sunday 13th December
6 pm to 7 pm

Refreshments available in the Church
Wrap up warm + Bring a torch

If weather inclement, the Carol singing will take place in Church



A community event organised by: -
Revitalising Ecclesfield Park and Pavilion Group and St Mary's Church



Welcome to St Mary's Parish Church, Ecclesfield



Ian Smith ATT Anne Smith BA (Hons)

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Annual Christmas Carol Concert

With Special Guests, Oughtibridge Brass Band

Monday 7th December 2015, 7.15pm at Grenoside Community Centre

Entrance £5

Tickets from Choir members or payable at the door

There will be a raffle and refreshments will be available



Crossword Puzzle - Solution is here

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

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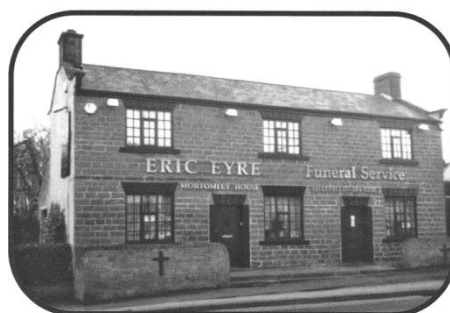
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Saint of the Month - On the Feast of Stephen

On the Feast of Stephen - by David Winter

Everyone knows that it was on the feast of Stephen that 'good king Wenceslas looked on'. After all, it's in a Christmas carol - but why? There's nothing about Christmas in it: a splendid young page who rustled up some flesh, wine and logs, an old man out in the snow ('deep and crisp and even') and a kindly monarch. But Christmas?

The clue is in 'the feast of Stephen', which falls on 26th December, or 'Boxing Day', as we know it. That, too, has nothing to do with Christmas, beyond the fact that in the past people put a contribution in tradesmen's boxes as a kind of Christmas present for their services during the year.

The Stephen whose feast day falls on the day after Christmas was the first Christian martyr. (You can read his story in the book of Acts). He was a member of the church in Jerusalem in its very early days, and found himself involved with six others in administering the allocation of food to those in need. The apostles, who were the leaders of the church, felt that it wasn't appropriate for them to abandon preaching and 'serve tables', so they selected these seven to do the job for them. Stephen, however, quickly revealed hidden gifts as an eloquent spokesman for the Christian cause.

The Temple authorities, who had already had trouble with the apostles, were soon alerted to this new and hitherto unknown evangelist. They decided to make an example of him, thus firing a warning shot, as it were, across the bows of the apostles themselves. So they arrested Stephen and accused him of speaking against the two central elements of their religion - the 'holy place' (the Temple) and 'the customs Moses handed down to us' (the Law). It's always dangerous to criticise a monument or a custom!

Given the right to defend himself, Stephen instead launched into an eloquent and at times biting account of Jewish history, culminating in the accusation that they had committed the worst possible sin by killing the Messiah. Inflamed by his words, his hearers abandoned any pretence of legal impartiality, rushing towards him and dragging him out of the city to a place where they began to stone him to death. Stephen, the rank and file Christian, died under a hail of rocks for claiming that Mary's Son was the promised Messiah.

That, I suspect, is the reason why the first martyr is honoured on the day after we celebrate the birth of the Saviour. It's a bit like the myrrh in the gifts of the Wise Men - a reminder, as we celebrate, that the bitter shadow of a cross is never far away from this story.

E.P.P.i.C Theatre – Newsletter

The Craft Sale made a welcome £ 263.00 the items will still be on sale at the Coffee Mornings up to the 12th December the Christmas Coffee Morning from 10.00am to 12.00 noon with Carols, Sherry and Mince pies. This will be followed by Lunch at Wortley Hall for Members and Friends.

The Lighting Project is Complete with just a small amount of work still to be done.

The New Seats should be here by December. The names off the old seats will be reinstalled somewhere else in the Theatre at a later date, they are part of the Theatre History.

We are hoping to start Craft Sessions again in the New Year

The next production in March is “The Anniversary”
Watch this space!

Best Wishes to everyone for the forthcoming Festive Season *LW*

Ecclesfield Library Forthcoming Events

December 2015 and January 2016

Children’s Craft Events

5th December 2015 2.00 to 4.00pm for 5-11years old

21st December 2015 10.00am to 12 noon for 5-11years old

Places limited – please contact Library to book for both events.

16th January 2016 - “New Year – Better Health”
In the Library 1.30pm to 4.00pm

With Speakers from various Heath Organisations
Refreshments including healthy snacks

Yorke Salon

Ladies and Gents Hair Salon

And Now

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Coffee Shop *at St Mary's Church*



Every Tuesday and Friday 10.00 am to 12.30 pm

Luscious Cakes, Tea / Coffee

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Crossword Puzzle (Solution is on page 21)

Clues Across

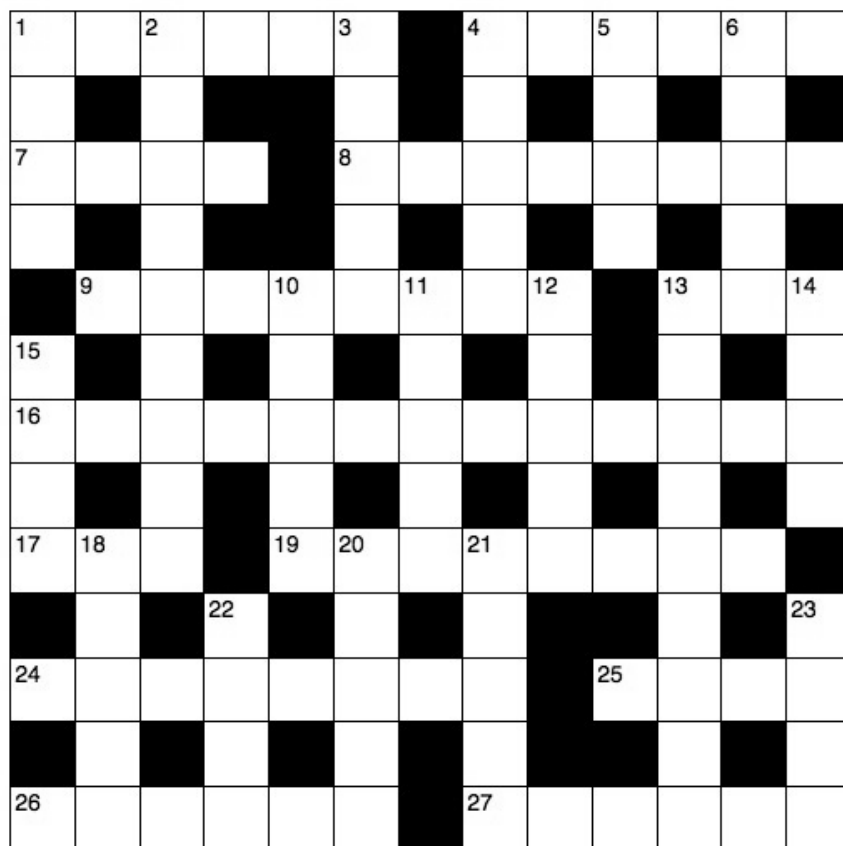
- 1 Rely (Psalm 62:7) (6)
- 4 'He stretches out the heavens like a — , and spreads them out like a tent to live in' (Isaiah 40:22) (6)
- 7 What the dove carried the olive leaf in, when it returned to Noah's ark (Genesis 8:11) (4)
- 8 Annoy (1 Samuel 1:6) (8)
- 9 Judah's last king, who ended his days 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 Zophar 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)

Clues 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)

Solution is on Page 25



Now the ‘science bit’

Higgs Boson and the Pope

A Higgs Boson particle barged into the Vatican at Midnight on Christmas Eve. The Pope was in the middle of his sermon, and annoyed. He looked up from his notes and said: ‘You can’t burst in here like that.’ Higgs Boson retorted: “Oh yes I can, you know you can’t have mass without me!’

Prayers and Poems Page

Welcome

Welcome, Jesus baby
To a world that is waiting,
Welcome, Jesus baby
To a world needing joy,
Thank you for the presents
That you bring us on your birth day,
Peace, love and hope
Wrapped in one baby boy.

By Daphne Kitching

Editor: Nigel Beeton imagines an angel with vertigo...

Vertigo!

“Glory to God in the Highest!”
Sang all the angels of light
Save only one, and that was me
The one that’s frightened of height!

“Unto you is born a baby
“Born in David’s Town this day!”
I think they’ve heard – can we go home?
The ground is a long way away!

“You’ll find him in a manger there
“To Beth’lem men! And be quick!”
OK Gabe, we’ve done our bit
I’m feeling rather sick!

They plucked their harps and sang their
songs
Their haloes were aglow!
To be an angel’s not much fun
When you have vertigo!

By Nigel Beeton

Christmas Trees

Norway sent a Christmas tree
It marks the Saviour’s birth,
The incarnation manifest
As God came down to earth

A babe born to a virgin
Would grow up as a man,
Yet still divine, such mystery,
To implement God’s plan.

Another tree was put in place
A sacrifice was made,
As on that cross He gave His life
That all men could be saved.

So celebrate that wondrous day
When Jesus left His home,
To bring salvation down to man,
And claim us as His own.

By Megan Carter

Christmas Prayer 2015

Loving, giving Father,
Thank you for Jesus, Emmanuel. Thank you
that he came at Christmas and is alive and
just as relevant today as he was all those
years ago, and will be forever.
As many of us celebrate your coming to us,
with our families, in warm, safe homes, in a
democratic country, we pray for everyone
who has left their homeland because of
persecution, for everyone who is without
shelter, or food, or family. Give us
compassionate hearts, like yours, Lord. Help
us, as Christ’s body here on earth, to love and
serve and make room for each other this
Christmas.
In Jesus’ name. Amen

By Daphne Kitching

The First Christian Intellectual - St Paul – 25th January

This month, on 25th January, the Church celebrates probably the most famous conversion of all. At least, what happened to a young man called Saul on the road to Damascus has become a byword for all instant conversions - what is known as a 'damascene' moment. Saul was a devout Jew, a Pharisee, a student of Gamaliel and a fierce critic of the followers of Jesus, then a very new sect on the religious scene.

On his way to Damascus to organise a purge of Christians in that city, he was blinded by a bright light and heard a voice saying, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?' He asked the identity of the voice, and it replied, 'Jesus, whom you are persecuting'. Stunned by the experience, he followed further instructions which led him to a Christian man in Damascus, who prayed with him. As he did, Saul's sight was restored.

The experience convinced him that Jesus - crucified in Jerusalem four or five years earlier - was in fact the Messiah and had risen from the dead. After a period of instruction, Saul was baptised and took the name by which history has recognised him, Paul. At first, some Christians were wary about the reality of his conversion, but over a period of time he was accepted and indeed eventually recognised as an 'apostle', a 'special messenger' of Jesus Christ.

His intellectual stature and leadership gifts quickly marked him out, and within a few years he became a leading figure in the emerging Christian Church, preaching and founding churches all over the Middle East, largely of Gentile converts. He was eventually martyred in Rome, probably in 65AD.

Paul was the first intellectual of the Christian Church, the man who was able to set the events of the life and teaching of Jesus, and especially his death and resurrection, into a coherent theology, with its roots very clearly in the Jewish faith of his own upbringing. He's not always easy to follow. Even the New Testament admits that: 'there are some things (in his letters) hard to understand' (2 Peter 3:16). But at the same time he gave the new faith a foundation and credibility which have stood it well down the centuries.

Many people think of Paul as a rather negative, narrow misogynist, but even a quick reading of his letters actually reveals a person of great warmth, who evoked enormous affection and devotion from others. 'You would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me!' he writes to the Christians at Galatia. He was, of course, a man of his time and culture, in days when women were disregarded in terms of status and leadership. But read his letters, and see how large a role women play in them and how much scope he gave them to lead and teach in the Church. In terms of the first century, St Paul was a dangerous liberal!

I think the amazing Paul of Tarsus deserves a bit of celebrating on 25th January.

By Canon David Winter

Contact Numbers for Local Groups ☎

Ecclesfield Rainbows

Gatty Hall
Tuesday 4.45 pm to 6.00 pm
Leader - Mrs B Travis
Tel: TBA

Ecclesfield Brownies

Gatty Hall
Monday 5.30 pm to 6.45 pm
Leader - Mrs J Hutchinson
Tel: 0114 257 8609

Ecclesfield Brownies

Gatty Hall
Tuesday 6.15 pm to 7.45 pm
Leader - Mrs A. Kendall
Tel: 0114 246 8866

Ecclesfield Guides

Gatty Hall
Thursday 6.30 pm to 8.30 pm
Leader - Mrs C Topham
Tel: 0114 246 1289

Ecclesfield Priory Players

EPPIC Theatre
Monday 7.30 pm to 10.00 pm
Wednesday 7.30 pm to 10.00 pm
Secretary –Carol Travis
Theatre Tel No. 0114 240 2624

Ecclesfield Community Garden

Ecclesfield Park - Located between
Ladycroft bridge/stream and Bowling
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10 am to 12 noon
Tel : Angela 0114 2461095

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email: ecclesfieldlib@gmail.com

Ecclesfield Cubs

Scout Hut (off Yew lane)
Wednesday 4:45 pm to 6:15 pm
2nd Pack 6.30 pm to 8.0 pm
Leader - Mrs A Hancock
Tel: 0114 245 2780

Ecclesfield Beavers

Scout Hut (off Yew lane)
Monday 6.00 pm to 7.15 pm
Leader - Mrs J Steel
0114 246 0218
Thursday 6.00 -7.15 pm
Rachael Otter 0114 246 1752

Ecclesfield Scouts

Scout Hut (off Yew Lane)
Tuesday 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm
Leader - Bryony Hemming
Tel. 07983 719155
Group Scout Leader
John Otter Tel. 0114 246 1752

The Grenoside Singers

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Mrs P Blackburn ☎ 0114 246 8453



Useful Contacts



Vicar Vacancy – we are currently in Interregnum'

<u>Churchwardens:</u>	Katharine Lonsborough	286 4332
	Irene Proctor	246 0373
	Andrew Robinson	246 3646
	Michael Waldron	246 3091
<u>Readers:</u>	Pat Clarke	257 7191
	Stephanie Dale	245 2392

<u>Pastoral Workers:</u>	Pat Wood	246 5086
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Church Office:

Tuesday - Wednesday 9:30 am to 11:30 am

Thursday 9.00 am to 12.00 pm 245 0106

Church Choir Practice in Church

Friday 7:30 pm - Contact: Don Knott 246 8430

Music Group Practice in Church

Thursday 7:30 pm - Contact: Andrea Whittaker 246 0746

Mother's Union in Gatty Hall

1st Wednesday of month 1:00 pm

Contact: Maureen Lambert 246 9690

Ecclesfield Ladies Group in Gatty Hall

Thursday 7.30 pm - Contact: Anne Rostron 245 5492

Bell Ringers meet in Church Belfry

Tuesday 7:30 pm Contact: Phil Hirst 286 2766

Gatty Hall Bookings,

Contact: Margaret Roberts 246 3993

Baptisms: Contact – Pat Clarke 257 7191

Weddings: Contact – The Church Office 245 0106

“ Or email: ecclesfield.weddings@gmail.com

Office e-mail office.stmarys.ecclesfield@googlemail.com

Magazine e-mail magazine.stmarys.ecclesfield@googlemail.com



Too Many children have
nowhere to turn

Will you help us to be
there for them?

For the Children's Society its Christingle time again, here you see Mia, granddaughter of Lynda and Michael Waldron, holding her orange at last years' Service in Ecclesfield Church. This year you have helped with fund raising by saving your money in our Charity Boxes, and by attending our Coffee Morning in September.

In 2014 our giving amounted to £1,537.00 which was a wonderful effort from everyone.

On December 20th at 4.00 pm we will be holding our Christingle Service in Ecclesfield Church this year and we invite everyone to come and join us on this lovely occasion.

'For over 130 years. The Children's Society has been supporting children in the greatest need. Whether facing the disadvantages of poverty, the trauma of exploitation, or the burden of caring for a loved one, we're there to support children in life's most desperate moments.'

Pat Blackburn

Editor: During the 1990s The Children's Society began focusing on social justice, lobbying to change legislation and welfare provision, and encouraging young people to speak and act for themselves. The charity's direct practice continues to target vulnerable children and young people, including young refugees, children at risk on the streets, children in trouble with the law, and disabled children and young people. Its research, policy and campaigning work is informed by its direct practice, and by the findings of The Good Childhood Inquiry. The Children's Society was rebranded in 2014 by London based design practice SomeOne from a logo depicting a purple figure reaching for a star to the current black & white identity. The new look reflects the charity's belief of confronting 'hard truths'.

