

# All Saints Magazine



December 2014

Free

## **Letter from our Vicar**

Dear Friends

As Christmas approaches we think of presents, and if you ask any child about Christmas, presents feature heavily on any list of what Christmas is about. And yet the best presents of all are those which don't cost, the greatest gifts we can receive are Love, Hope, Peace, Understanding, Kindness and Grace. We cannot wrap them, we cannot place them under the tree, we cannot play with them but we can give them and receive them and share them.

The Christmas story gives us all these gifts in the incarnation of God as Jesus Christ, a newborn baby who as the carol says will be "king of all the world".

What a difference we can make to the world around us if we share these gifts with all whom we meet in the next month and beyond.

We can bite our tongue when someone upsets us, or says something sharp; we cannot get cross with those who are jumping the queue, or push past us unnoticed; we can smile at people whom we meet, we can help carry things, or move things for those around us, we can ease the loneliness and pain by being there, listening caring being loving and kind. We can take time to do those chores which no one likes, taking the bins out, washing up, ironing, weeding, cleaning the car. We can quietly help those around us in any way we can and do so joyfully and not in expectation of reward or praise.

So this Christmas as we do our shopping why not remember those who would benefit from something other than a physical present, why not give something to your favourite charity, or give a little extra to our church, or give some time to the foodbank, or the NSPCC.

Let's share God's gifts where we can and in the best way we can

Happy Christmas

**Annette**

### **Advent Readings**

As we approach Advent we remember God's Promise to the world, His message to Mary and His Love for us as his promise comes true.

Read the following passages.

Isaiah 9 vs 6-7 for God's Promise

Luke 1 vs 26-38 for God's Message

John 3 vs 16 for God's Love

Luke 2 vs 1-20 For the Saviour

O love that casts out fear  
O love that casts out sin  
Tarry no more without  
But come and dwell within  
H Bonar

## **Delivering hope this Christmas**

At Christmas we celebrate the safe arrival of God's promised Saviour and Son, Jesus Christ. As we remember Mary's arduous and life-threatening journey to Bethlehem, we sigh with relief that it is so different for us today. But sadly, for thousands of women in Kenya, the dangers and struggles experienced by the young mother of our Saviour are all too real.

### **What if Mary hadn't made it to Bethlehem?**

In Kenya, when hospitals are far away, and transport is too expensive or non-existent, women are forced to give birth in precarious places.

Heavily pregnant, exhausted and alone, 27-year-old Susan Nani began the long and arduous walk to hospital to give birth. But it was just too far to make it in time.

Susan's baby couldn't wait any longer. She had no choice but to give birth on the side of the road, with no support or help. Susan's baby daughter entered the world in dangerous and dirty conditions.

### **A helping hand**

Thankfully, Susan's community health worker, Magdalene, who has been trained by our partners, found her and arranged for Susan to urgently visit a nurse by motorbike.

But complications arose with her placenta, so she was quickly referred to hospital by car.

Susan and her daughter received life-saving care in time; many others aren't so lucky.

Women in Kenya are 40 times more likely to die in childbirth than mums in the UK, leaving their babies to face life without them.

### **"Losing babies is a part of life here."**

Emily Mutai, Head Nurse at Lolgorian Sub-District hospital, has seen her fair share of loss. Although over an hour by car from many of the Maasai communities it serves – the majority of whom will have to walk the journey – Lolgorian is still the closest health facility.

This Christmas we're supporting Christian Aid and their dedicated partners as they work to reach women and to support nurses like Emily. Through locally-based groups like TRDP, part of the Anglican Church of Kenya, they're providing mobile health clinics to ensure that families in some of the most remote parts of Kenya can access life-saving healthcare. Working closely with a community, TRDP sets up and supports mother-to-mother and father-to-father groups, providing safe environments for people to share concerns and get advice. And through its training and support of community health workers, women are encouraged to deliver in hospital, where complications can be spotted and treated. The uncertainty and danger that Mary faced 2000 years ago should be history.

**Emily provides life-saving healthcare. But it is not enough.**

This Christmas, we can save more lives in childbirth, now and for years to come. Our church is joining with thousands of others to pray for women across the world and raise money for the Christian Aid Christmas Appeal.

**Good news!**

The UK Government will match every pound we raise, meaning double the difference for people living in poverty. Be part of the transformation this Christmas.

## **Why Is Jesus Better Than Santa Claus?**

Santa lives at the North Pole.

Jesus is everywhere.

Santa comes but once a year.

Jesus is ever present.

Santa fills your stocking with goodies.

Jesus supplies all our needs.

Santa comes down your chimney uninvited.

Jesus stands at your door and knocks and then enters your heart when invited.

You have to wait in line to see Santa.

Jesus is as close as the mention of his name.

Santa lets you sit on his lap.

Jesus lets you rest in his arms.

Santa doesn't know your name,

All he can say is "Hello little boy (or girl). What's your name?"

Jesus knew our name before we were born, not only does he know our name he knows our address too, he knows our history and future and he even knows how many hairs are on our head.

All Santa can Offer us is Ho Ho Ho.

Jesus offers health and hope.

Santa's little helpers make toys.

Jesus makes new life and mends broken hearts.

While Santa puts gifts under your tree.

Jesus became our gift and died for us on a tree.

We need to put Christ back in Christmas

## **Diary Dates for December 2014**

Tuesday 2nd	2.15 pm	CTNE Meeting at Vicarage
Wednesday 3rd	7.00 pm	MAP meeting at Vicarage
Thursday 4th	11.30 am	Funeral George Peacock
Saturday 6th	11.00 am	Parish Office
Sunday 7th	10.00 am	Holy Communion
Wednesday 10th	10.30-12.00	Fair trade café
Thursday 11th	11.00 am	Holy Communion
Friday 12th	9.30 am	Rehearsal St Olave's
Sunday 14th	10.00 am	Holy Communion & Sunday School
Monday 15th	9.30-12.00	Wyborne Rehearsal
Tuesday 16th	9.30-12.00	Rehearsal St Olave's
	1.30 pm	Service Wyborne School
	7.00 pm	St Olave's Service
Wednesday 17th	9.30 am	Service Dulverton School
Thursday 18th	11.00 am	Holy Communion
Sunday 21st	10.00 am	Nativity Service
	12.00 pm	Holy Communion Said
	6.30 pm	CTNE Carol Service at New Eltham Methodist Church
Wednesday 24th	<b>CHRISTMAS EVE</b>	
	4.00 pm	Crib service bring your sheep
	11.30 pm	Midnight Mass
Thursday 25th	<b>CHRISTMAS DAY</b>	
	10.00 am	Family Communion
Sunday 28th	10.00 am	Holy Communion followed by mince pies & Sherry at the vicarage

Please check the weekly news sheet for any changes.

## **Parish Pump**

### **The 100 Club**

The 100 club was won by Julie Price

### **Baptisms**

23rd November Dexter Edward Gibbs

### **Funerals**

21st November Lilian O'Conner

25th November Dorothy Keirle

4th December George Peacock

We are sad to report the deaths of three members of the congregation within the last two weeks. Many of us will remember Dorothy Withers, a very active member of All Saints and a PCC secretary for many years. A few years ago she decided to move to Edenbridge to live with her brother but still kept in touch with her friends at All Saints.

We also say good bye to Dorothy Keirle, who was unable to attend services due to ill health over the last few years.

Our third goodbye is to George Peacock long term gardener, Churchwarden and handyman at All Saints. We always said that if George couldn't do something himself he knew someone who could. He gave us the chairs in the choir vestry and various other bits and pieces, he always helped out where he could.

Dorothy, Dorothy and George will be sadly missed.

All Saints' Day service and lunch went really well. We thank all who brought food for us to share and also special thanks to Tony Crowe who preached for us.

Remembrance too went really well and it was good to remember all who have made sacrifices for us. It was good to be joined by the Methodists, and by members of the community around us.

### **Future Events**

In the spring (date TBA) we hope to have a Nearly New Sale. We will give further details after Christmas but if you might be interested in buying a table please speak to Sheila Cooper, Carole Whybrow or Barbara Avery.

## **Christmas quotes**

“My idea of Christmas, whether old-fashioned or modern, is very simple: Loving others. Come to think of it, why do we wait for Christmas to do that?”

*Bob Hope.*

“A good conscience is a continual Christmas”

*Benjamin Franklin.*

“I will honour Christmas in my heart and try to keep it all the year”

*Charles Dickens.*

“From home to home, and heart to heart, from one place to another- the warmth of Christmas brings us closer to each other”

*Emily Matthews.*

“Christmas is a day of meaning and traditions, a special day spent in the warm circle of family and friends”

*Margaret Thatcher.*

“Unless we make Christmas an occasion to share our blessings, all the snow in Alaska won't make it white!”

*Bing Crosby.*



## **Smile Lines**

Thora Hird told this story on the BBC1 programme 'Praise Be' about a little girl saying her prayers.

'God bless Mummy, God bless Daddy, God bless my little brother Tommy, God bless granny – and God look after yourself, 'cos if anything happens to you we've had it'

A very earnest member of the local church was praising the obvious spiritual gifts of the new vicar, adding, 'we never knew anything about sin until he came'

A Somerset parish magazine told how ministers from the Welsh valleys were distressing older members of the Chapel by the length of their sermons. On one occasion an elderly man greeted the minister: 'and what is the subject of your sermon this morning?' 'The milk of human kindness' replied the minister  
"Ah" the old man mused for a moment "Condensed I Hope?"

## **Traditions and Customs – December.**

December begins the four Sundays of Advent when the Church prepares for Christmas.

December is dominated by the joys of Christmas and for many a high point is the Festival of Carols and Lessons from King's College Chapel, Cambridge, on Christmas Eve.

Carol singers make their rounds and Christmas lights can be seen in shopping streets leading up to Christmas Eve and Midnight Mass, followed by Christmas Day celebrations.

Feasting and present giving are very old customs, but some of the 'traditional' features are later innovations, roast turkey and the candle-lit tree, were introduced by the Victorians.

If you kiss someone under the mistletoe tradition says you should pick a berry off the sprig, when all the berries have gone there should be no more kissing!

St Nicholas's Day, the 6th December a boy bishop used to be chosen, wearing robes and a mitre and carrying a crook; he presided over services, perfectly seriously, until his term of office ended on the 28th December. Some churches have revived this custom in recent years.

St Nicholas was born in modern day Turkey in 270-343 AD.

In 1644 it was illegal for mince pies to be eaten on Christmas Day, as 25<sup>th</sup> December that year fell on a legally-mandated day of fasting.

On 24th December 1818, in St Nicholas Church, Oberdorf, Germany, a new carol was sung with the lyrics-'Stille nacht, heilige nacht' - 'Silent night, holy night' and is still a favourite today.

The Christmas cracker is 167 years old and was invented by Tom Smith in 1847.

On Christmas Eve 1914, during WW1, the Royal Flying Corps flew across the lines of trenches and dropped a well-padded Christmas pudding on a German airfield, they responded by dropping an equally well-padded bottle of rum on the British airfield.

In 1932 King George V made the first Christmas radio broadcast to the British people and the first televised broadcast was made by Queen Elizabeth II in 1957.

Since 1946 the Christmas tree in Trafalgar Square has been the gift to Britain from the people of Oslo, Norway.

December 27th Boxing Day - St Stephens Day. In the country there was often a meet of the local fox and hounds hunt, this is no longer a countrywide event.

December 31st sees the Old Year out with feasting and drinking, especially in Scotland where Hogmanay is a much loved festival. The first foot, or first person to cross the threshold after midnight, brings the coming years luck with him.

"What is Christmas? It is tenderness for the past, courage for the present, hope for the future. It is a fervent wish that every cup may overflow with blessings, rich and eternal, and that every path may lead to peace".

**Agnes Pharo.**

**From the Archives – snippets from the December magazine of 1934, price twopence.**

ELECTORAL ROLL

It is more important than ever this year that all who worship at All Saints should see that their names are on the Electoral Roll. There are many new residents especially in the new area we are taking in from the Diocese of Rochester who are not yet on the Roll.

A small committee of the Church Council is at work on this matter. Please help by taking a form from church and returning it early so as to avoid unnecessary work. It is very important that the Roll should be kept up to date.

Make sure you are on the Roll and come to the Annual Meeting which will be about the end of January or early in February. Look out for the date and come and take your share in parochial affairs and management.

Don't grouse when it is too late.—Do it now!

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Our Christmas Services, as last year, will begin with the Midnight Eucharist.

May I therefore remind those who intend to make their Communion at the Midnight Eucharist of the rule about Fasting Communion? No one should come straight from Christmas Eve shopping or jollifications and communicate. It is much more fitting that they should do so at 7 or 8 a.m. on Christmas Day as this allows them some time for quiet, and enables them to come fasting.

*The "Church Logbook" for December 1974 records:-*

Norman Holland commissioned as Reader.

St. Aidan's closed finally 31<sup>st</sup> December.

*Historical Notes:—*The "new area" ceded by Rochester Diocese expanded All Saints south east parish boundary from Chartwell Close nearly to Harland Avenue.

*We hope to provide "snippets" from the relevant month of 80 and 40 years ago.*