



**ST. MARY'S
CHURCH**
LONG NEWTON



**St Mary's
News** Issue 4
March 2013

Welcome to the 4th issue of St Mary's News, we aim to keep you informed of the events taking place in the Church Community. The next issue will be distributed in September giving details of Church events leading up to the Harvest Festival service, with a further issue being delivered in December.

About 250 years ago, two atheist lawyers from Oxford named George Lyttleton and Gilbert West made an agreement to disprove the Christian faith by each writing a book. Lyttleton set out to demonstrate that the conversion of Saint Paul was a myth and West determined to debunk the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Each spent a year in painstaking research to establish his case beyond reasonable doubt. When they had finished their work they met up. Lyttleton confessed "As I have studied the evidence from a legal standpoint, I have become convinced that Saul of Tarsus was converted just the way described in Acts." West, having sifted the evidence for the resurrection, became satisfied that Jesus did indeed rise from the dead at the first Easter as the Gospels claim. Both became Christians in the course of their research. West's book *Observations on the History and Evidences of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ* printed a quotation from Ecclesiastes 11.7 on the flyleaf: "Do not find fault before you investigate."

Saint Mary's is running an Alpha course after Easter in the Wilson Centre. It's a series of evenings starting with a meal in a relaxed, friendly atmosphere. After a presentation on a given subject, anyone can ask any question they want. Alpha has become hugely popular. Approximately 18 million people worldwide have attended an Alpha course. It's received favourable coverage in the media too. The Guardian: "What Alpha offers, and what is attracting thousands of people, is permission, rare in secular culture, to discuss the big questions life and death and their meaning." The Times: "What distinguishes Alpha from other initiatives is the easy-going, relaxed feel of the proceedings – that, and its astonishing success."

Why don't you sign up? I hope to meet you there.
Happy Easter! *John Lambert*

There are some exciting times ahead for St Mary's with the following event taking place:

The **St Mary's Fellowship Weekend** is being organised by Kath Snowdon and will take place at Brockley Hall in Saltburn on 15/16th June. We will be welcoming the Bishop of Jarrow, Bishop Mark, who will be joining us on Sunday morning. Further details to follow.

Forthcoming Dates and Events in St Mary's Church - all welcome to join in any of these events.

9th March, 2.30pm	Sing 'n' Scoff— meet, eat & learn new songs
14th March, 12.30pm	Community Lunch, Wilson Centre
20th March, 2.30pm	GodZone Service
23rd March, 9.30am	Church Spring clean and Churchyard tidy up
24th March, 10.30am	Palm Sunday & Choral Service
25th March, 6.30pm	Prayer walk around the village meet at the church
26th March, 6.30pm	Evening Prayers (modern)
27th March, 6.30pm	Evensong Prayers (traditional)
28th March, 6.30pm	Maundy Thursday Agape Meal and service
29th March, 2.30pm	Good Friday, Edited parts of Pasolini's Passion Film (1hr)
31st March, 10.30am	Easter Sunday Service with Holy Communion

Weekly Events

Tuesday @ 10 – Informal service in Church at 10.00am
Wednesday - Little Ted in Church at 9.15am
Thursday - Coffee and chat at Wilson Centre from 10.00am.

Why not take a look at St Mary's Church Website for further details of events and contacts?

www.stmaryslongnewton.co.uk

Community Lunch — served monthly in the Wilson Centre at 12.30pm, usually 2nd Thursday of each month. An opportunity to meet friends old and new.
Date for your diary: Thursday 14th March



Longnewton Music

The next concert from Tees Valley Youth Choir will be held on Sunday 10th March at 3.00pm in St Mary's Church. Tickets £10. Ticket hotline Tel. 585238.

EVENING PRAYER

Morning prayer (Mattins) and Evening Prayer (Evensong) are two of the oldest services of the Anglican Church. In each is included confession, a psalm, two bible readings (appropriate to the day), a creed, and prayers appropriate to the day. Evening Prayer has a particularly quiet and contemplative feel to it.

We will have services of Evening Prayer during Holy Week at **6.30 pm on March 26th and 27th** in the Londonderry Chapel. The one on the 26th will use modern language, that on the 27th the original 17th century language. Do come along to one or both and share in gentle but meaningful worship for Holy Week.

Good Friday

I first saw the Marxist Pasolini's brilliant film "The Gospel according to St. Matthew" over 40 years ago, and I've never forgotten it. It's visually arresting in black and white, made on location around Assisi with amateur actors and with brilliant music. Although in Italian with subtitles, the words are all from the gospel, and easy to follow. We'll be showing about an hour of it at St. Mary's on Good Friday, from the mid point until the closing of Jesus' tomb. Well worth seeing!
John Taylor

Gardening

Are you interested in doing a little gardening in St Mary's Churchyard? It's mainly keeping things tidy. If you would care to join a team of Helpers, ring me Tom on Tel 583808. Please join us on 23rd March for 9.30am for a Spring tidy up.

Carol Service

We knew it would be a special event as soon as we walked through the door and saw the most amazing Christmas tree which drew admiring comments from everyone. They would have been most impressed at the feats of engineering to get the star on the top of the tree – we could have sold tickets for that!

The service lived up to all expectations. It was a delight not only to have a full house but to see so many old and new faces enjoying the whole event, with the church floral decorations adding to the magnificence of the occasion. The choral group led the service with panache and evident enjoyment which was reciprocated by the hearty singing of the congregation.

Special thanks to all those who took part in the service and organised behind the scenes, especially the providers of the cakes and mince pies that were enjoyed by so many after the service.

I am sure we will have even more people attending next year if we can fit them in but if you want a bit more space, try the regular weekly services - just as much fun without the crush.

Church Path

You may have heard that the possibility of upgrading the church path is being investigated. It may surprise you to learn that such a project is not straightforward. There are many agencies to be consulted such as the Diocesan Advisory Committee, English Heritage, Stockton Borough Council and Tees Archaeology. These consultations are time-consuming but they will ensure that the church grounds are properly protected, for instance with respect to human remains, and that the proposals are properly designed. Hopefully, the outcome of these deliberations will become clear later this year.

St Mary's School Report

Firstly may I take this opportunity to wish all readers of the St Mary's News a belated Happy New Year!

There has been a lot of activity in school since my last article. There have been very successful Christmas performances – the younger children performed a delightful Nativity based story called "The Sleepy Shepherd" and the older children successfully staged "Jack and the Beanstalk" Pantomime. I am proud to announce that every child had a part to play in one or the other of these productions – no mean feat for the teachers with 99 children on roll.

The children also enjoyed "Sleeping Beauty" performed by a travelling theatre company that visited the school in January.

All the Key Stage 2 children had the opportunity to run in the Yarm Schools Cross Country Race held on the Allens West field. As a result of this five children went on to represent Yarm Schools in the Stockton Schools Cross Country Race held at Preston Park. They all did our school proud, battling through a very, very muddy course.

As I write this the children are celebrating Shrove Tuesday with the smell of pancakes wafting through the school. This is part of our run up to Easter. We will be holding an Easter Service in St Mary's Church, Long Newton on Thursday 28th March. The service commences at 9.30 and all parishioners are welcome to join us. We look forward to seeing you.

D Moorfoot, Head teacher