

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



**St Mary's
News**
March 2012

St Mary's seems to be something of a success story.

15 years ago, the congregation was down to a handful of souls huddled together in the choir stalls and wrapped up against the cold. The building was in a state of disrepair and the heating was broken. The threat of closure was real.

Now it has a buzzing and growing Sunday congregation, a great work in partnership with the school giving rise to an energetic bi-monthly Godzone service and a beautifully renewed building. There is a growing involvement in the village life too; the Pastoral Care Team, the Community Lunch, the Little Ted Play-group and Home Visits are in evidence of a healthy Church at the heart of its Community.

There is a widespread perception of decline in the Church in the UK so why is St Mary's so obstinately proving that 'it ain't necessarily so?' It helps that the heating works now— but there's more to it than that!

St Mary's is a fellowship that is full of love, its worship combines dignity with informality, it's got excellent lay leadership at all levels, is welcoming to newcomers and people tell me they can sense the presence of God in the Church.

I hope you will enjoy finding out more of what the buzz is about in this edition of St Mary's News. There's an Open Door and you are Welcome anytime.

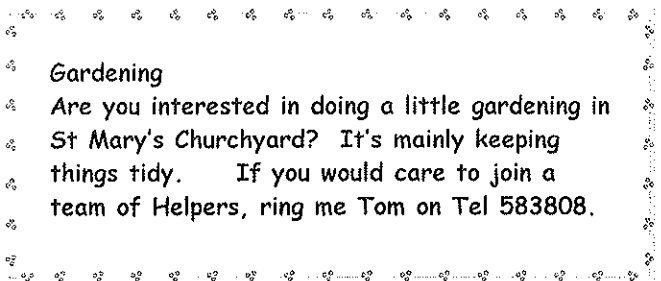
With Best Wishes and Prayers, John

Rev John Lambert



Easter Sunday Service
8th April at 10.30am

A warm welcome is extended to all to join in the Easter Sunday Service at St Mary's. Children of all ages are more than welcome and toys will be provided. We would be delighted if you would like to stay for tea, coffee, cake and a chat after the service.



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.

Weekly Events

Tuesday @ 10 – Informal service in Church.

Thursday at 10.00am Coffee and chat at Wilson Centre.

Regular Sunday service at 10.30am.

Up Coming Dates

Palm Sunday Service 1st April 10.30am.

Maundy Thursday Agape supper/service at 7.30pm on 5th April.

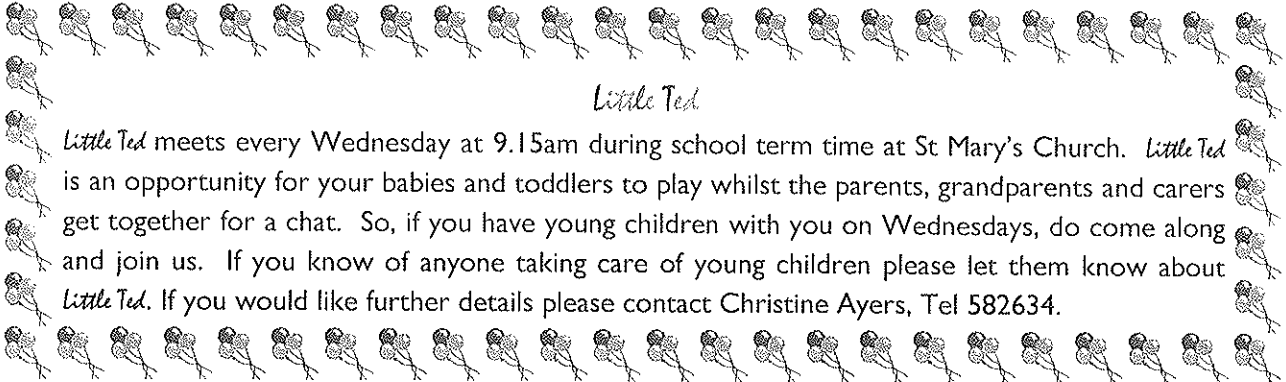
Good Friday Service on 6th April at 2.00pm.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting 19th April at 7.30pm.

Community Lunch at Wilson Centre 10th May at 12.30pm. No booking required.

Ascension Day Service on 17th May at 7.30pm.

Take a look at St Mary's Church Web-site
www.stmaryslongnewton.co.uk



Little Ted

Little Ted meets every Wednesday at 9.15am during school term time at St Mary's Church. *Little Ted* is an opportunity for your babies and toddlers to play whilst the parents, grandparents and carers get together for a chat. So, if you have young children with you on Wednesdays, do come along and join us. If you know of anyone taking care of young children please let them know about *Little Ted*. If you would like further details please contact Christine Ayers, Tel 582634.

THE CHORAL GROUP
The date was sometime in 1980, Lettie Brown had invited a little gathering of people to sing and sing they did for pure pleasure. Such was the modest start of what turned out to be the Choral Group. To start with, the people in the group were only from St Mary's Church and sang only there but others came along from All Saints Preston-on-Tees. Over the years the numbers grew and there are now 24 singers.
We lead sung worship at both St Mary's and All Saints about 6 times per year as well as singing at Weddings and occasionally funeral services. We have even been part of the massed Choirs on Songs of Praise once at Hexham Abbey and once at Sunderland Empire. We have also had the pleasure of leading the singing at a few Women's Institute carol services.
We practice most Friday evenings at St All Saints Church.
If you, dear reader, love both God and singing you will be welcome to join us, we have plenty of room. For more details contact Brian Wake on Tel 782282.
Why 'The Choral Group'? Because no-one could think of a better name!

Godzone
Godzone is an interactive learning experience especially designed for children held in St Mary's Church. The whole school visits the Church and participates in activities. A grandparent said, 'What an amazing and enjoyable afternoon we had on 6th February at St Mary's Church with the children and staff of the school. Once again it was an absolute delight to see the joy in the children's faces as they sing the songs and take part in the various 'zones'. It is a great tribute to Mr Moorfoot (Head teacher), his staff and all those who helped from St Mary's, not forgetting the parents and grandparents who joined in the service. Thank you all. We are all looking forward to the next one'.

Date of next Godzone: 8th May 2012

St Mary's School
Governors and staff of St Mary's School are delighted with the outcome of the recent OFSTED inspection. An inspector was in school on Wednesday 25th and Thursday 26th of January. The school was judged to be good in all categories. The report stated "This is a good school. Parents and carers appreciate the school's family ethos which is securely underpinned by strong Christian values." The inspector noted that pupils' spiritual development is also promoted exceptionally well.

This is the second consecutive inspection to judge the school as "good" and is testament to the hard work the staff and governors put into the education of our young people. The report gives us the platform for further improvement with the goal being to achieve "outstanding" in future inspections. I would like to thank all staff, governors and, of course, the children for their commitment and care that has made this outcome possible.
David Moorfoot
Head teacher

Longnewton Music
Has been presenting musical events in St Mary's for over 5 years.
The next concert will be held on Saturday 21 April 2012 at 7.30pm and will feature Anthony Davison—Classical Guitarist. Ticket hotline Tel 580020.

