



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



**St Mary's  
News** Issue 10  
March 2015

A warm welcome to the 10th issue of St Mary's News, we aim to keep you informed of the events taking place in the Church Community leading up to Easter. The next issue will be distributed in September giving details of Church events leading up to Harvest, with a further issue being delivered in December.

**Prepare the Way, Make Straight the Path\***

This February we are pleased to be resurfacing the pathway leading up to the church building and round to the garden of remembrance. The path has become increasingly uneven, shabby and with poor drainage so it will be great to bring it up to standard. I know that some of you in the village have very kindly joined church members in raising the £30,000 or so to allow the work to take place and we are very grateful for your generosity.

The upgrade on the path comes at a time when the congregation is undergoing substantial rejuvenation as well. In addition to our Sunday morning services and twice-termly school Godzone celebrations, we have launched a bimonthly new all-age service called 'Messy Church' on Sunday afternoons.

Messy Church is a national sensation. Many hundreds of Messy Churches have sprung up in the UK in the last decade. It includes learning through crafts and games, a lively worship celebration and eating tea together round tables. Look it up on the Internet – it's quite a phenomenon. People cannot remember the last time we had so many children in church on a Sunday - and they all seem to love it, parents and grandparents too.

The next two dates for Messy Church at Saint Mary's are March 22nd and May 17th. It would be great to see you there.

*John Lambert*

\* The title comes from a prophecy in Isaiah 40.3 in the Bible which features in Handel's *Messiah* and the 1970's musical *Godspell*.

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

Sunday 15th March  
Sunday 22nd March

Mothering Sunday  
Messy Church

Prayers in church from 9.00am, Led Prayers at 4.00pm

Easter Sunday Service 5th April

Choral Holy Communion Service at 10.30am

**Weekly Events**  
Tuesday - Tuesday at 10, informal service  
Wednesday - Little Ted in Church at 9.15am  
Thursday - Drop In at Wilson Centre from 10.00am.

Find us on  
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Why not take a look at St Mary's Church Website for further details of events and contacts  
[www.stmaryslongnewton.co.uk](http://www.stmaryslongnewton.co.uk)

**Longnewton Music** From the feedback received, everyone who came to the Longnewton Music concert in February thoroughly enjoyed the performance. Charlotte Potter gave an accomplished performance of a variety of songs, both classical and from the musicals. It was clear that Charlotte is a name to watch in the future. Charlotte was accompanied on the piano by Daniel Ackerley. The harp playing by Sarah Paterson was a revelation. Most of us were unaware of the versatility of this instrument and again Sarah treated us to a variety of styles of music, old and new. The next Longnewton Music event will be in April. Two professional performers are doing a tour of the north-east, and we have been lucky enough to book them for Saturday evening, 11<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30pm. Viv McLean is a fine pianist who performs nationally and internationally, and Susan Porrett is frequently seen on television in such series as Casualty, Holby City, Midsomer Murders and Foyle's War. They have put together a show based on the life and music of George Gershwin which asks *Is it jazz? Is it classical? Does it matter?* To have this calibre of performer come to Longnewton is a real privilege, we hope you'll come too. Tickets cost £10 and are available from 01642 585238.

**Messy Church Report** - Sunday 18th of January was an eventful day, not only because of the snowstorms which were battering the country, but because St. Mary's Church staged its second Messy Church, this time with a theme of 'Creation'.

The day dawned bright and cold and by 10.30am the first flakes of snow were beginning to fall from the slate grey sky. Undeterred, a dedicated team set about turning the church into a haven of fun for families to enjoy. Chairs were stacked or lined along the sides of the church, eagerly awaiting parents and grandparents to come and sit on them whilst their children enjoyed the various activities which had been planned.

Tables were set up with a variety of activities, all of which required some form of gluing, sticking, folding, colouring, icing (in the case of the gingerbread people) and general 'messiness'. Sweets were laid out ready to be eaten; sheets of stickers waited to be peeled and affixed to creations; by the altar sat a huge vat of spaghetti, marking time until children (and adults) plunged their arms into it while searching for words that describe how our God feels about us.

In the Londonderry Chapel a massive plastic sheet was laid out to protect the floor from the paint which was ready to be used, alongside some wax candles, to help create 'secret' prayers and messages and two mirrors stood to attention- their role was to show how God loves us and to 'reflect' our love back to him.

In the kitchen area platters, plates and bowls of cakes, fruit, sandwiches, crisps, crudités and sausage rolls (to name but a few items) were being prepared, ready for the shared meal after the messy fun was done.

At 3.20 a snowstorm began. Families who braved the blizzard were in for a treat. The church was warm and welcoming and the activities were a hit with all the children (as were the sweets!). The dressing up clothes caused a number of laughs as children got messy and had fun, most with an improbable hat perched precariously on their head, or an animal mask obscuring their smiles.

Everyone joined in with the prayers and the action song at the end and the shared tea was delicious, with many families chatting together and children sitting with friends old and new. What better way to celebrate the theme of 'creation' than by creating new friends and a stronger bond with God?

If you missed it then do come and join us on Sunday 22nd March. Our theme will be 'Easter' and planning is already underway. It promises to be a great afternoon with plenty of messy fun. We hope to see you there.

#### **St Mary's School Report—**

This term we have welcomed Sarah Franklin on her second placement with the school as part of Stockton's Initial Teacher training Programme, working with Mr Smith in Year 3/4. Ashlee Barwick is at present at Hareward Primary School as part of the same programme. Children from Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 recently took part in the Yarm Cluster Schools' Cross Country Run, and two girls then ran in the Stockton race where one girl came fifth and will now represent Stockton at County level. Year 3/4 children are entering the "Tony Blair Tennis Challenge" at Egglecliffe Secondary School. The school continues to increase the musical tuition opportunities for our pupils and we now offer whole year violin tuition to year 3 whole class recorder tuition (year 5/6), cornet and trombone tuition, individual violin tuition, singing tuition and keyboard tuition, giving many children the opportunity to learn musical notation and play an instrument. Our recent GodZone Service was on the subject of being special because we are all created different, and preparations are being made for an Easter service with Church Schools from the Durham and York Dioceses which will take place at Holy Trinity School. **John Taylor Chair of Governors**