



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



**St Mary's
News** Issue 12
November 2015

A warm welcome to the 12th issue of St Mary's News, we aim to keep you informed of the events taking place in the Church Community leading up to Christmas. The next issue will be distributed in March giving details of Church events leading up to Easter, with a further issue being delivered in September.

What Better Place?

In the classic comedy *Coming to America*, Eddie Murphy plays a rich African prince who cannot find true love. Every woman in the world seems to want to marry him because of his prestige and fortune. So he flies to New York City and disguises himself as a pauper in the suburbs to find out what people really feel towards him rather than toward what he can do for them. "What better place to find a queen than the city of Queens?" he reasons.

I won't spoil the ending for you in case you haven't seen it, but it is a good film to show at this time of year because it mirrors the Christmas story really well.

The gospel states that Jesus left the majesty and glory of heaven to come to earth as one of us, to live the life we live, to share our humanity and point the way to forgiveness, peace and salvation.

It's good news of great joy. You are welcome, as always, to come and join our celebration. What better place to find a King than in your local parish church this Christmas?

With Best Wishes and Prayers, Rev. John Lambert

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

Weekly Sunday service at 10.30 am

22nd November at 3.30pm	Messy Church
29th November at 4.00pm	Christingle
13th December at 10.30am	Gift Service (more details overleaf)
17th December at 12.00	Christmas Community Lunch, Wilson Centre
20th December 10.30am	Carol Service
24th December at 11.30pm	Holy Communion Service
25th December at 9.00am	Informal Holy Communion Service

Weekly Events

Tuesday - Tuesday@10, informal service in church
 Wednesday - Little Ted in Church at 9.15am
 Thursday - Drop In at Wilson Centre from 10.00am
 Monthly Event - 2nd Thursday, Community lunch in Wilson

Why not take a look at St Mary's Church Website for further details of events and contacts
www.stmaryslongnewton.co.uk

Find us on Facebook



Gift Service on 13th December

“In giving there is no excess” Every year, St Mary’s dedicates one service in December to be its “gift” service to remember the gift we were given through the birth of Jesus. Our gifts help to provide Christmas presents for families staying in local women’s refuges.

We simply bring along wrapped presents, labelled with the age and gender of a suitable recipient. For many on the receiving end of these gifts, they are a highlight in an otherwise bleak time.

Please come along and bring a gift. It really could give a local family a Christmas this year.

Community Lunch

On Thursday mornings (excepting August) the church organises a drop in for coffee, tea and biscuits at the Wilson Centre. Once a month (usually the 2nd Thursday), this is extended to Community Lunch at 12.30. This usually comprises a choice of two soups, followed by dessert, tea or coffee, with a short “Thought for the day” between courses, though for special occasions such as Christmas something more elaborate is offered. For obvious reasons it is mainly retired folk who come, though we do welcome people with young children from time to time. Numbers continue to grow, and we have had to move to a bigger room. No charge is made, but contributions to cover the cost of the food are welcome. For many people, the opportunity to meet and chat is just as important as the food. There is no need to book: just turn up, you are sure of a welcome.

GodZone

GodZone is the twice a term service when the school and friends and relatives come into church in an afternoon for a mixture of worship together and a time for everyone to sample various activity zones around the church. This half term, the theme was harvest, and we began with the children bringing to the front their harvest gifts, adding them to those given by the congregation the day before. John Lambert’s talk was about the miraculous catch of fish described in Luke’s gospel. At the end, all the children received a gift of a drink and a piece of fruit. We had about 20 adults attend: do come along if you would like to try the GodZone experience. It really is something quite different! In the second half term, GodZone becomes our Christingle service on 29 November at 4.00pm. Do come promptly as the church is usually full!

Harvest Festival at St Mary's

A special Traditional Family Harvest Festival Service with the Choral Group was held on the morning of October 4th. The church looked attractive with displays of fruit, vegetables and flowers prepared by members of the congregation. The whole service was one of thanksgiving and celebration to God for all that we receive but was also mindful of the dangers of consumerism and the many that are without the basic necessities of life. The greatest joy at the service was the presence of ten young children who enjoyed decorating fishes for the harvest of the sea display and waving seaweed flags during the final hymn.

Gifts of produce were presented during the service and have been delivered to several charities - The Moses Project and two Women’s Refuge centres. All donations were gratefully received.

Come to Church Sunday

Recently we held a Come to church Sunday. As members of the congregation we were all asked to invite someone to church who wasn't a regular member. I invited my Mum-in-law to come and meet our friends at St Mary's and was very pleased when she accepted (although the promise of a Sunday lunch to follow may have been a deciding factor!) That Sunday our numbers swelled by almost 50% more than usual. Lots of people had happily accepted the invites, some were completely new and others were returning visitors. It was lovely to see them all and the service was warm and joyous. I later received a message from my mum-in-law to say that not only had she enjoyed the service but was made very welcome by all our friends at St Mary's.

I hope that everyone else who accepted invites felt the same way. I attend St Mary's because I accepted an invitation from a friend and the warmth, kindness and spiritual joy I felt on that occasion made me want to be part of it. If you came on that Sunday, thank you for making the effort and I hope you felt something of what I did and perhaps return again to enjoy what St Mary's has to offer, you are always welcome.

Messy Church

Christmas comes but once a year – and this year we are kicking off our Advent period with a Christmas & Advent themed “Messy Church” on Sunday 22nd November at 3.30pm.

We have lots of fun activities, messy tasks and Advent inspired crafts and these will be followed by a short story from Rev. John Lambert and the team then a scrumptious shared tea (we may even stretch to mince pies!).

Come along and join in as we learn all about the birth of Jesus and all the other people involved in the Christmas story.