



A warm welcome to the 9th 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.

A Night at the Pub

Researchers have found that Christmas is one of the most stressful times of the year. Cake to make – *check*. Cards to write and send - *check*. Parties to attend – *check*. Tree and decorations to put up – *check*. Shopping to finish – *check*...

But the first Christmas was possibly the most stressful of all. Matthew's account of the nativity records a personal predicament, a family crisis, a risky journey, danger from a serial killer, bitter tears, homelessness and great uncertainty.

I would love to have been there that night in the packed *Bethlehem Arms*. (Or it might have been the *Bar Mitzvah*?) No doubt there were heated discussions in there about the much-loved politicians who had arranged this ridiculous census. Maybe they were playing darts in the corner (with a picture of Herod stuck to the bulls eye). Perhaps there was a bit of live lyre music in the corner. How unlucky to be a shepherd on the late shift that cold, clear night instead of in that warm tavern? If you had poked your head through the door, only to find it was a bit crowded for your liking, you would have heard the same sounds as you hear in any inn, anywhere on earth.

Strange, isn't it, that as they enjoyed a nice night out in the pub, nobody guessed that the single greatest event in world history - that would divide time between BC and AD and be marked all over the world centuries afterwards - was taking place in the little shed outside.

But God had made his plans early for Christmas that year. Send beloved Son to save the world – *check*.

John Lambert

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

<p>30th November at 4.00pm 11th December at 12.30pm 14th December at 10.30am 21st December at 10.30am 24th December at 11.30pm 25th December at 9.00am</p>	<p>Christingle Service Christmas Community Lunch — Wilson Centre Christmas Gift Service Choral Carol Service Holy Communion Service Christmas Day Holy Communion Service</p>
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Weekly Events

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

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 11th December

Little Ted

This is held in the church every Wednesday morning from 9.15am during term time and all parents/carers are welcome to bring their infants/toddlers along for an opportunity to meet and play in an informal relaxed atmosphere with no charge.

Messy Church

On Sunday 19th October our first 'Messy Church' service took place. For two hours the church was filled with families learning about the Miracles of Jesus; through craft activities, a dramatic reenactment of a Bible story and then a fantastic shared meal.

The crafts ranged from loom-band friendship bracelets (learning about Jesus raising his friend Lazarus) to origami baskets filled with chocolate 'bread and fish' (the feeding of the 5000), with many others besides. The children wrote prayers then made them into boats to 'sail' them across a 'stormy sea' (which was in fact a sizeable paddling pool) and there was not an idle hand, or mind, in the building.

The service was fantastic and everyone who attended gave positive feedback about the experience, with many people asking when the next one will be and some even asking 'Can you do this every week? It was fabulous!'

The next service will be on January 18th. We look forward to welcoming you all!

Longnewton Music

On Saturday 6th December 'The Mississippi Dreamboats' will be performing at St Mary's Church. Tickets cost £10.00 and are available from 01642585238. This is a café style event featuring a New Orleans Style Jazz band playing Spirituals, hymns, old time favourites, and ragtime. Bring some friends and a bottle.

St Mary's Church Pathways Update

On Saturday 18th October an enjoyable light-hearted musical quiz evening was held in St Mary's Church. Kathy Beaumont was creative on the piano and Mike Shaw did a magnificent job as compere. Everyone enjoyed the fun and the delicious supper. A very useful sum of £495 was raised from the sale of tickets and monies from the sale of produce and crafts. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the evening's success.

It is good to be able to announce that sufficient funds have now been raised for the project to go ahead. Currently estimates are being sought with a view to the work starting before Christmas. We are however still a few thousand pounds short of the full amount so any further donations would be most gratefully received.

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



Long Newton Fun Day Saturday 20th September

We could be kind and say that the weather wasn't great, but it didn't deter nearly 400 people from turning up to enjoy the Fun Day provided by St Mary's church on the Green and in The Wilson Centre. It's called "outreach" where St Mary's reaffirms its commitment to Long Newton and all the people living here by providing an event for everyone to enjoy and remind everyone of the important place our church holds in village life. Judging by the number of coconuts and prizes won and the cakes and burgers scoffed, everyone had a great time at the Fun Day.

Thank you to everyone who came along and joined in the fun; it made all the hard work worthwhile.

To mark the Fun Day as a special event we engaged a top illusionist to perform in the marquee and Steve Price provided a terrific finale to the afternoon with his amazing feats. Special thanks are due to Carol who stepped from the audience to be sawn in half with some trepidation but without any lasting effect. Steve built into his repertoire a narrative of what it means to him to be a Christian and to live a Christian life and he certainly proved that does not exclude having a huge amount of fun.

It was our pleasure to see the joy on the children's faces when they were given the balloon animals, played the African Drums, won prizes at the skittles, hooked a duck or won on the tombola and then moved on to devour enormous quantities of cake in the tearoom.

We received generous help from many people within the village but we should give special mention for the help we received from our Iraqi friends based at Stockton Parish Church. These men have fled religious persecution in Iraq where, as in many countries at the moment, being a Christian is met with severe retribution; beatings, imprisonment and often death. Many of them did not know whether they would be allowed to stay here or be returned to an unknown fate but they threw themselves into helping out at the Fun Day and enabled us to set up, run the Fun Day and then clear away afterwards to make the day more enjoyable for everyone.

St. Mary's School

There are currently 95 children on roll from Reception to Y6 with a further 10 in the nursery. Y5 and Y6 have visited the Ryedale folk museum for their history topic and Early Years and Y1 and Y2 saw a performance of "Dusk" at the Arc Theatre. Our GodZone service for harvest on 18th October was about sharing, and we are looking forward to our Christingle service on 30th November. The children are about to start rehearsing their Christmas productions: "The Nativity" for Early Years and KS1, "Aladdin" for KS2. The Friends Group has generously funded an improved sound system for the hall, which will enormously benefit these productions. On the staff side, Mrs Holder is on maternity leave, having had a baby boy Edward James. Our two apprentices, Miss Daley and Miss Lowther are being retained as Curriculum Assistants. The staff are working hard to embed the new curriculum imposed by the government, which is particularly difficult as Y2 and Y6 children remain on the old curriculum for a further year while learning alongside Y1 and Y5 children respectively on the new curriculum.

John Taylor, Chair of Governors