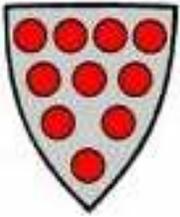


Welcome to
The on-line version of
St Mary's Old Swinford
Parish Magazine



ST MARY'S OLD SWINFORD



Parish Church Magazine



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DECEMBER 2010

40p

SUNDAYS AT ST MARY'S

| | |
|----------|--|
| 8.00 am | Holy Communion |
| 10.00 am | Parish Communion and Children Together |
| 6.30 pm | Evensong |
| 10.00 am | (second Sunday) Worship Together |

WEEKDAYS AT ST MARY'S

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Daily: | 9.00 am - Morning Prayer (except Fridays and Saturdays) Morning Prayer on Thursdays will alternate between St Mary's and St Thomas' |
| Daily: | 5.00 pm - Evening Prayer (except Fridays) |
| Wednesday: | 1.30 pm - Noah's Ark at St Mary's (term time) parents & toddlers |
| Thursday: | 10.30 am - Holy Communion in Lady Chapel |
| Thursday: | 7.30 pm - Bell ringing Practice |
| Friday: | Choir Practice and Youth Groups (in term time) |
| Saturday: | 10.00—12.00 am - Open Church –refreshments available |
| Rector's and Curate's Day Off: | Friday |

OTHER REGULAR EVENTS

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Bible Study Groups: | Tuesday, last in month at 2.30 pm | (Tel: 379972) |
| Mothers' Union: | Second Tuesday at 2.15 pm | (Tel: 422677) |
| Outreach Group: | Occasional meetings | (Tel: 01562 851491) |
| Music Group Practice: | Second Saturday at 10.00 am | (Tel: 441003) |
| St Mary's Walking Group: | Last Saturday of the month. | Depart 9.30 am |

Reader Emeritus and

| | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| Parish Publicity Officer: | Mr Roy Peacock | 379972 |
| Reader: | Mrs Kanthi Ariaraj | 395115 |
| Church Wardens: | Mr Edward Haden | 378104 |
| | Mrs Marjorie Ferguson | 393454 |
| Organist / Choirmaster: | Mr Robin Walker | 01905 353939 |
| Treasurer: | Mr Richard Harris | 395760 |
| PCC Secretary: | Miss Katey Fletcher | 378182 |
| Magazine Editors: | Miss Gemma Sutton | 07968 586285 |
| | Mr Antony Tatford | 822661 |

Church Hall and

| | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--------|
| Coach House: - Bookings | Parish Office | 441003 |
| Parish Administrator: | Mr John Sutton | 441003 |
| Parish Office: | Open 9.00 am -12.00 noon Monday to Friday | 441003 |
| Church Website Address: | www.stmaryschurchholdswinford.org.uk E-mail: st.mary.os@btinternet.com | |
| Magazine e-mail address | stmary.parishmagazine@hotmail.co.uk | |

ENQUIRIES ABOUT WEDDINGS, BANNES OF MARRIAGE, BAPTISMS.

Please come to the Church on Saturday morning between 10.00 and 11.00 for Vestry Hour. You will be warmly welcomed. Tea and coffee will be available.

DIARY FOR DECEMBER 2010

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Wednesday 1 | 7.30 pm Deanery Communion for Eucharistic Ministers |
| Thursday 2 | 10.30 am Holy Communion |
| Saturday 4 | 10.00 am Christmas Market |
| SUNDAY 5 | THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT |
| Tuesday 7 | First Tuesday Fellowship at the Rectory |
| Thursday 9 | 10.30 am Holy Communion |
| Friday 10 | 2.30 pm Old Swinford Hospital Carol Service |
| Saturday 11 | 10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour |
| SUNDAY 12 | THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT |
| | 10.00 am Toy Service |
| Monday 13 | 11.30 am Age Concern Christmas Communion |
| Tuesday 14 | 11.30 am Communion at Hollycroft Nursing Home 6.30 pm Ham Dingle School Carol Concert |
| Wednesday 15 | 7.00 pm Old Swinford Primary School Carol Service |
| Thursday 16 | 10.30 am Holy Communion 2.15 pm Coach House Carol Service |
| Saturday 18 | 9.00 am Church Decoration 10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour 12.00 noon Wedding |
| SUNDAY 19 | THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT |
| | 3.00 pm Christingle 6.30 pm Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols |
| Wednesday 22 | 11.30 am Holy Communion at Holly Lodge |
| Thursday 23 | 10.30 am Mothers' Union Corporate Communion |
| Friday 24 | CHRISTMAS EVE |
| | 6.00 pm Crib Service 10.00 pm "The Midnight" First Communion of Christmas |
| Saturday 25 | CHRISTMAS DAY |
| | 8.00 am Holy Communion 10.00 am Family Communion with Carols |
| SUNDAY 26 | ST STEPHEN |
| | 10.00 am Holy Communion.** |
| | ** Please note this is the only service today |
| Thursday 30 | There is no midweek Communion today |

QUOTE FOR THE MONTH

Let not our souls be busy inns that have no room for Thee and Thine,
but quiet homes of prayer and praise where Thou mayest find fit company;
where the needful cares of life are wisely ordered and put away;
and wide sweet spaces kept for Thee, where holy thoughts pass up and down,
and fervent longings watch and wait Thy coming.

Prayer from the Lucknow Diocese, North India

FROM THE RECTORY



Dear Friends,

As you read this we will be celebrating Advent Sunday when four members of our choir will have been confirmed. Please pray for them as they take this important step in their journey of faith. Advent is a time of preparation for the coming of Christ and there is much about it that is special and magical. At my first Christmas at St Mary's I think it was the crib service and Old Swinford Primary School's Carol Service that most touched me. I'm not sure about 'no room at the inn' but there was nearly no room for the curate to sit down at the latter. It was lovely on both occasions to welcome so many visitors into church and in particular to share the joy and wonder of the children. Please remember that for many Christmas is a time of stress and loneliness and consider how you can bring some of the Christmas Spirit to those in need, whether it is a visit, a gift, encouragement or a safe place to weep. I hope that the following may help you to reflect on the Christmas message.

Les Santons

On my first visit to Marseille I was fascinated by the terracotta figures available for sale in many of the shop windows. 'Oh they are Les Santons' I was told, 'the little saints, all the people who worship the Christ child'. The figures are made of terracotta clay, some are miniatures, others are larger and are dressed in appropriate Provencal costume.

The tradition began around the time of the French Revolution when the people were banned from going to church, especially on feast days, and the local craft makers called santonniers began to make the figures so that the people could worship within their own homes. Setting up of the crib scene is still an important part of the Christmas traditions for many families in Provence.

In some ways this is very similar to the nativity scenes that we have in England but there are some notable differences. The nativity scene itself will consist of the same characters that we have although, traditionally one of the shepherds is dressed in typical Provencal clothing. Rather than the stable being positioned in a village in rural Israel it is based on a Provencal village, in some cases it may be a copy of the village where the scene is set. There are also many other characters in the scene, each one is dressed in Provencal costume and each one bears a gift for the Christ child. One will carry a duck, one a basket of eggs, another a bundle of sticks and another a posy of flowers. Each will bring something according to their gifting and trade. Great attention is paid to detail and each is made with equal care whether it is a model of a wealthy merchant or an old lady with her bundle of sticks. The local priest will be there carrying a red umbrella, apparently a mark of respect at the time. One character has nothing to bring so he carries a lantern to light the way for the other pilgrims. No one is excluded from the scene whether male or female, able bodied or disabled or rich or poor; each one is made with equal care. The elderly are well represented. When I asked why there were so many I was told that their faces are much more interesting to work with.

In some villages there will be a large crib set in the church and the santons in the scene will belong to village members and brought to the church each Christmas. Often the face on the figure will be carved in the image of a relative who has died. I remember one elderly gentleman in his 90's who proudly showed me the figure of his wife that he had made after her death.

I love the inclusiveness of the santons where each comes to worship bringing what they have and whoever they are. May God bless each of you this coming Christmas.

With my prayers and best wishes,



SERVICES IN DECEMBER 2010

| | | | | |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 5 December Second Sunday of Advent | 8.00 am Holy Communion | | | |
| | 10.00 am Parish Communion | Isaiah 11. 1 - 10 | Romans 15. 4 - 13 | Matthew 3. 1 - 12 |
| | 6.30 pm Evensong | 1 Kings 18 17 - 39 | John 1. 19 - 28 | |
| 12 December Third Sunday of Advent | 8.00 am Holy Communion | | | |
| | 10.00 am | Worship Together—Toy Service | | |
| | 6.30 pm Evensong | Isaiah 5. 8 - end | John 5. 31 - 40 | |
| 19 December Fourth Sunday of Advent | 8.00 am Holy Communion | | | |
| | 10.00 am Parish Communion | Isaiah 7. 10 - 16 | Romans 1. 1 - 7 | Matthew 1. 18 - end |
| | 3.00 pm | Christingle Service | | |
| | 6.30 pm Evensong | Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols | | |
| 24 December Christmas Eve | 6.00 pm | Crib Service | | |
| | 10.00 pm The First Communion of Christmas | Isaiah 52. 7 - 10 | Hebrews 1. 1 - 4, 5 - 12 | John 1. 1 - 14 |
| 25 December Christmas Day | 8.00 am Holy Communion | | | |
| | 10.00 am Family Communion with Carols | | Titus 2. 11 - 14 | Luke 2. 1 - 14, 15-20 |
| 26 December St Stephen's | 10.00 am Parish Communion | Acts 7. 51 - end | | Matthew 10. 17 - 22 |

BACK TO THE FUTURE.....

.....having experienced, through the scrapbooks on view in the Narthex over the past couple of weeks, the joy of a pictorial record of the years that Wendy has led Sunday School. Beginning before I was born, right up to the most recent weeks of our new combined group, 'Children Together' now takes the education of children in the Christian Faith into the future, with Wendy still very much involved.

Flicking through the pages I saw a very varied snapshot history of Sunday School. There were photographs of Christingle Services, in which I recognised quite a few of my own children's friends from around the 1980s; annual prize giving celebrations which went back a lot further in time, not only showing the children receiving their prizes but their proud parents too; Nativity Plays (was that you, John Sutton, playing Joseph 'all those years ago', sporting a very fetching tea towel?!) and some of the supporting Sunday School teachers from across the years. One photo included images of the very youthful Margaret Woodall and Beatrice Gale, both instantly recognisable, I have to say..... looking just as they do today!

There was a newspaper cutting that had me fooled for a few seconds. The accompanying photograph showed a smiling Wendy with a debonair Revd Owain Bell.... and for a moment my brain was completely confused..... what was Owain doing presenting Wendy with a gift? Where was Greville? Had I missed something?Then I realised that the event that was being reported was the 50th anniversary celebration of Wendy's leadership of Sunday School *all of sixteen years ago*. Phew.... time flies.

Having enjoyed looking through this potted history and smiling whilst remembering a small part of it myself, it's definitely Back to The Future, wishing 'Children Together' and all the Leaders involved, present and future, as many happy years of teaching the Christian Faith to children as have gone before.

Jane Jukes

FROM THE MAGAZINE COMMITTEE

With regret, as from the January 2011 issue, the price of the magazine will rise to 50p. We hope this will not cause any reader hardship but advise that the rise is necessary in order to meet the increased costs of production.

The Magazine committee would like to take this opportunity to express its thanks to all those who have contributed articles, helped with the printing and distribution and supported the magazine in any way during the past year. We wish all our readers, sponsors and supporters a Joyous Christmas and a Peaceful 2011.



A MAGAZINE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

With a new year and a new price comes a revolutionary new upgrade for St Mary's Church Magazine. For all you computer-minded worshippers and parishioners out there, we will now be able to offer you the chance to view your magazine online as a pdf file. This could be saved and transferred onto any computer device including an i-pod or phone.

Since John Sutton took over as webmaster of the church website, he has been looking at various ways of utilising the opportunities that publishing a website can offer. It is now possible to request to view your magazine online, instead of or as well as having a paper copy through your door. This also means that you will be able to go back and view past copies of the magazine in case you missed any. Older copies of the magazine will be made freely available whilst other more recent copies will have restricted access behind a user name and password. You will obviously still need to subscribe to the magazine to access your copy but even if only 10 people choose to view the magazine in this way then that's 50 sheets of paper and toner ink saved!

To request a user name and password you will need to e-mail the parish office or go to the magazine area of the Church website (see address on Page 2) and submit your e-mail address. Our Parish Administrator will then send you your login details. It is felt that this might broaden the range of people being able to access the magazine and also save costs particularly when posting copies out to people who live further afield. We hope that many people will see the benefits of using the possibilities of our modern technology and will try out this new feature.

The Editors

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West Midlands Federation of Townswomen's Guilds

invite you to join them at their Carol Service on
11th December 2010 at 2.15 pm

In St Thomas's Church, Market Street, Stourbridge
Tea and mince pies will be served after the service

.....

ST MARY'S FLOWER GUILD

Members of the St Mary's Flower guild will be decorating the church for Christmas on Saturday 18 December beginning at 9.00 am. It will be necessary to begin early and for the church to be cleared in time for a mid-day wedding service.

Anyone who wishes is welcome to join us to help.

If you would like to do a particular flower arrangement please sign the list at the back of church.

Sally Frost.

CHRISTMAS MARKET

Saturday, 4th December
10am - Noon
in the Church Hall

Come and join us at this year's Market!

Huge variety of Stalls selling all sorts such as Plants, Cakes, Groceries, Books. Jewellery, Gifts and , of course, the White Elephant Stall.

Lots of games, Giant Raffle and the Tombola.

Father Christmas will be visiting his Oldswinford Grotto.

When you need to catch your breath, do so with

Coffee and a Homemade Mince Pie.

All help and contributions are very welcome.

Groceries, Home made Preserves and Cakes—Please bring to the Church Hall on the Friday evening or early on Saturday morning to enable stallholders to have the time to price items sensibly

Katey Fletcher
Tel. 01384 378182

CHRISTINGLE 2010



We shall be holding our Christingle Service on Sunday 19 December at 3.00 pm.

Christingle services bring together communities and families and friends of all ages.

Please come and join us, and give hope to disadvantaged young people. Together we can shine a light into darkness for thousands of children.

Christingle is The Children's Society's largest fundraising appeal, raising key funds (£1.2 million last year) to help support its work with vulnerable children.

Christingle was established by the Moravian Church in 1747 as a symbol of Christ's light and love. The Children's Society introduced it to the Church of England in 1968 and it has since become a popular family and community event. The first Christingle at St Mary's was in 1969. During the celebration children receive a Christingle which is made of an orange, a lighted candle, a red ribbon and sweets on cocktail sticks, each part acting as a symbol of the Christian faith.

On your own or with your family and friends you are warmly invited to join us at this popular and meaningful service and to show your support for the work of this important organisation.

Wendy Tranter

COACH HOUSE NEWS



This autumn has seen exciting developments and new activities in the Coach House with the introduction of the Clover Leaf Community Group's programme of courses for people with special needs. Clover Leaf has been formed by an enterprising partnership of carers following the closure of some of Dudley MBC's social care day centres. The Coach House provides an ideal base for their project and their activities complement the initiatives offered by Sounding Board and No Limits Community Project. The Clover Leaf programme includes arts and crafts sessions on Mondays and Fridays and social days with games, music and basic cooking on Thursdays. It is pleasing to see the Coach House resources in regular full daily use in its original mission of services to socially isolated people while retaining the additional range of varied community activities. It also continues to provide a pleasant environment for monthly meetings of church groups including Mothers' Union and The Anchor bereavement care group.

Autumn Coffee Morning

The autumn coffee morning is now established as a regular October half-term fixture which attracts continuing support from visitors old and new. This year's event was as popular as ever; its enjoyment was enhanced by the feel-good factor of the recent Coach House achievements and a lovely autumn morning. Visitors were able to admire some of the contributions from the Clover Leaf group including a splendid mosaic / collage picture of the Coach House, new furnishings and greatly improved gardens. The event included the usual stalls of bring and buy, cakes and preserves and a raffle which collectively raised over £570 for the Coach House funds.

Alec Beevers

.....

A CAROL SERVICE INVITATION

The members of the Masonic Province of Worcestershire are delighted to hold our Carol Service at St Mary's this year by kind permission of the Rector and PCC. The Service will be at 3.00 pm on Sunday 12 December.

Their Provincial Grand Master, Richard Goddard, thanks everyone for their welcome and hopes to see many members of St. Mary's Church joining us for this traditional service with six lessons.

John Yeates

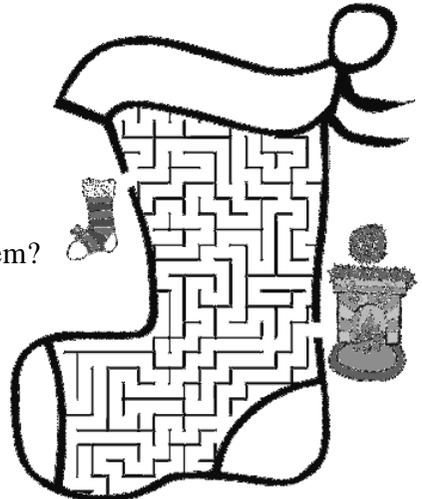
The cover illustration features part of an annual display of santons at the Chateau de Lavardens, Gers en Gascogne, France.

FOR ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

A CHILD IS BORN

Can you choose the correct answer and get 10 out of 10 in our Christmas Quiz?

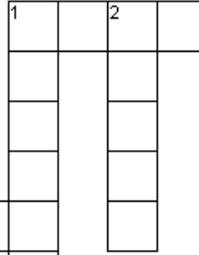
1. The name of the mother of Jesus was?
Martha/Mary/Eve/Deborah
2. Jesus was born in what town?
Jerusalem/Nazareth/Bethlehem/New York
3. Joseph was a?
Carpenter/Doctor/Engineer/Fisherman
4. Why didn't Joseph and Mary stay at the inn?
It was too expensive/There was no inn
/There was no room
5. How did Joseph and Mary get to Bethlehem?
Colt/Mary rode a donkey and Joseph walked/we are not told
6. After being born, Jesus was placed in a?
Basket/Manger/Pile of hay/on the back of a donkey
7. What is frankincense?
A form of gold/incense from a tree/
a jewel/none of these
8. How many wise men came to see Jesus?
One/Two/Three/The Bible doesn't say
9. Who told Joseph and Mary to go to Bethlehem?
An angel/Caesar Augustus/
Herod/Joseph was told in a dream
10. In which books do we find the story of
Jesus' birth?
Matthew/Mark/Luke/John



Birth of Christ

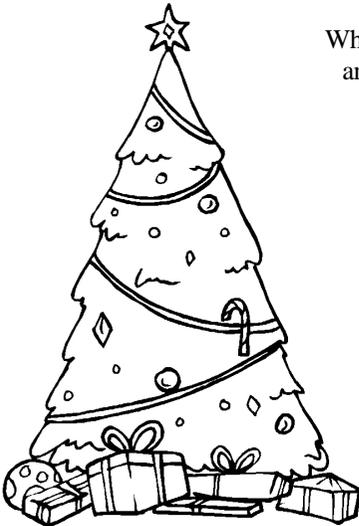
DOWN

- 1 Who were tending their flocks by night
- 2 Who announced the birth of Christ to the shepherds
- 3 The wise men bowed down to Jesus to _____ him
- 4 Jesus was born in this town
- 6 "The _____ of peace" - one of the titles of Jesus
- 8 mother of Jesus
- 9 Jesus was born in a _____
- 10 The shepherds were in the _____ when they saw an angel



ACROSS

- 1 The wise men followed a _____ that led them to Jesus
- 5 human father of Jesus
- 7 There was no _____ at the inn for Jesus
- 9 one of the gifts of the three wise men
- 11 Jesus could not stay at the _____ because it was full
- 12 and on earth _____, goodwill toward men (Luke 2:14)



What are your colouring skills like? Brighten up your pictures and then send them in to the editors to be displayed in next month's edition of the magazine...



CHRISTMAS CARDS FOR SALE



The children of the choir have been making Christmas Cards to help raise money for the Choir Fund. These funds help pay for various trips, such as our recent trip to Drayton Manor, and pay for all the new music sheets and books.

The cards will be on sale before and after each Sunday service in the run up to Christmas and are on sale for 4 for £1.50.

Please do support such a wonderful cause .

Gemma Sutton

FIRST TUESDAY FELLOWSHIP

Tuesday 7 December at 7.30 pm in the Rectory

The Black Country Urban Industrial Mission

A talk and discussion led by

Hugh Williams

Come along and join the fellowship group to hear about the work of this Diocesan initiative which contributes to the economic and industrial life of the Black Country. The topic is part of the Fellowship's continuing discussions on the theme of 'The Church in Society.'

WEBSITE UPDATES

Further to the notes from the editors about the new way of accessing the magazine I would also like to bring you up to date on other website developments.

On the front page of the website we now have a scrolling text banner which is refreshed every week advertising a service or event which is imminent. Also a 3D view of the church which can be accessed when you follow the link to 'click here'. You may be prompted to download a piece of software from Microsoft called Silverlight which will allow you to navigate around a 3D view of the church. I have also added on the front page the ability to download a copy of the current pew sheet in case you weren't able to get to church and a church calendar showing the main services and events taking place in church to keep you up to date. You can scroll through the months ahead or jump to a particular month, print off a copy of the calendar and view the calendar in different formats

Along with the ability to access the church magazine online as described by the editors you can also download a music file from the bell ringing page to listen to the bells ringing a touch of Stedman Triples.

The aim is to make the site a useful and easily accessible source of information both for members of the congregation and also visitors wishing to find out more about the church.

If you have any more ideas of either what you would like to see on the website or how you would like to see the website being developed please feed back to the Parish Administrator. How about the sermon as a podcast? No guarantees, but I'll do my best to incorporate your idea into the site.

John Sutton
Parish Administrator

CHRISTMAS BELLS

'Twas in the town of Cradley Heath,
One jolly Christmas-tide,
An earnest team of bellringers
St Peter's bound, I spied.
The door unlocked, they climbed the steps
To spread some seasonal cheer.
To celebrate the birth of Christ
With people far and near.
But something's wrong. No sound comes forth,
No festive dong or ding.
Like snakes, the cords come tumbling down,
Above, no joyful ping.
Could it be. The ropes were cut?
An expert gives advice.
It's plain to see they all have been
Eaten by Church Mice.

Pat Whalley

CHOIR AND ORGAN NEWS AT ST MARY'S

I am pleased to report the successful replacement of a new motor for the organ. Some of you will have noticed the recent photographs of the damaged motor which supplies the organ with the essential wind. The old motor has been removed and a new, slightly more powerful model, has been fitted. The new arrival in the cellar presented a small teething problem when switching on but the suppliers have returned to correct the problem and the motor has behaved impeccably since.

I was very impressed and pleased with the interest which was generated by the photos. I am not an engineer and I hope that you felt that I had answered your questions with an appropriate amount of conviction! Thank you for your patience – and, what is more important, considerable thanks to Peter Thomson for the use of the electronic in the interim. I am very grateful to him.

Next month – a report on the recent Diocesan Festival in Worcester Cathedral – attended by many members of the choir.

Robin Walker
Director of Music

OLDSWINFORD CE PRIMARY SCHOOL TRIP TO THE CAPITAL

At 6 am on the 13th October a happy band of Year 6 children, along with teachers and governors- including the Rector, set off on a trip to London to visit the Houses of Parliament and experience a trip on the London Eye.

On reaching the capital, after stopping for refreshments at Oxford, our driver gave us a quick tour of some of the main city sights before reaching our destination. Then a bright eyed and excited group of children and adults had to negotiate the security system in the Houses of Parliament, where we were issued with individual ID cards, which made us all look very important and official! After this we were then treated to a super tour of the Palace of Westminster by one of the official guides.

On our way around we did catch fleeting glimpses of Vince Cable, Neil Kinnock, who shook Mr Pepper's hand, and Sir Geoffrey Howe. We were unable to go into the House of Commons itself as it was Ministers' first day back after summer recess and also the first Prime Minister's Question Time with the new leader of the Labour Party. However, we did have time to go into the House of Lords and visit the gift shop, where many souvenirs were purchased! Margot James, MP for Stourbridge, then welcomed us all in one of the very imposing committee rooms and held a question and answer session for the pupils who asked Margot about her experiences as a new MP, her proudest achievement since her election in May and whether she was friends with the Prime Minister!

Margot said, "It was a real pleasure to welcome local children to Parliament today; they asked a wide range of questions and were really well informed. They are a credit to their school and a credit to Stourbridge."

After lunch by the river – a little windy and cold but at least dry - we set off on our walk along the embankment to the London Eye where our "flight" gave us a birds eye view of the city. All too soon it was time to board the coach home with a weary but still happy band who had had a day to remember.

Maggie Abbotts



REMEMBER THOSE WE TRY TO HELP

If you are able please remember to add an item of food or some suitable offering to one of our collecting boxes at the back of church. At this time of year particularly a small token given by you becomes a much appreciated gift to those we try to help all year through our support of the Food Bank and the Women's Refuge. Give a little.....gain a lot!

ST MARY'S WITH ST JOHN'S MOTHERS UNION

Twenty six members attended the November meeting. The opening service was led by Janice Sutton and Betty Foulkes on 'Remembrance.'

The death of M.U. member Edna Brettle was announced and thanks were given for her life and service in nursing, Girl Guides and at St Mary's.

"Relationships not rules" is the M.U. theme for 2010 and our speaker, Margaret Penn, from Kingswinford, gave a thought provoking talk on 'Breaking or bending the rules around the world.' She explained that laws and regulations are needed for order in society – but obeying the LETTER rather than the SPIRIT of the law can stifle change or reason above service, justice or love.

For example, since 1973 MU membership is not restricted but open to all who support the five aims to support family life – so women, men, single, married or divorced are welcome. From 1961 to 1989 East and West Germany were divided by the Berlin Wall and severe restrictions on passing from one side to the other were imposed. Many people did escape – one family even used a gas balloon to cross. Apartheid rules on inter-racial marriage in South Africa were defied despite personal suffering and social exclusion. Now, with legal safeguards, M.U. members can support parents and children of many in hostels or prisons in our Diocese through prayer, gifts or service.

After the vote of thanks refreshments were served.

December Meetings:

Tuesday, 14 December, 'Christmas Celebrations' led by Ruth Atkinson, followed by entertainment in the Narthex, 2.15 pm at St Mary's Church.

Thursday, 16 December, Norton M.U. Carol Service, 2.15 pm at St Michael's Church.

Dawn Nex

Apologies to Marian Tyler whose name was incorrectly spelt in last month's magazine.

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NEWS FROM THE CHURCH HALL



In keeping with our fund-raising programme, we are now planning a coffee morning for the end of January with a cake and preserves stall and raffle. Offers of cakes and preserves for this event would be greatly appreciated.

We have not yet heard from a member of our church family with experience of sound systems and a willingness to give us some help..... but we are keeping our fingers crossed.

Ian Ferguson

THIS MONTH'S RECIPE

LEMON AND AMARETTI CAKE

I have learnt that for Christmas to appear effortless and fun for your family and friends it is rarely achieved without planning and organisation. With this in mind I suggest you make and freeze this cake in advance. I made it last Christmas as an alternative for Christmas pudding haters and served it warm with home made custard. Any left overs can be eaten as an alternative to Christmas cake.

This is ideal for people who are on a gluten free diet, just check that the amaretti biscuits do not contain flour, occasionally some do. The amaretti biscuits puff up as the cake cooks and turn chewy on cooling. It's a very moist cake and can be served as a dessert.

For the cake:-

200g softened butter

200g golden caster sugar

200g ground almonds

3 medium eggs

Finely grated zest and juice of 2 small lemons

2tsp sifted baking powder

9 amaretti biscuits depending on size.

To serve:-

Sifted icing sugar

Crème fraiche or custard

Prepare a 20cm/8in loose bottomed cake tin about 5cm deep. Line and butter the tin. Preheat the oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5.

Place all the ingredients except the amaretti biscuits into a food processor and mix until smooth.

Spread about 1/3 of the cake mix in the base of the tin. Arrange a circle of the amaretti biscuits on top a few cm from the edge, and a few in the middle. Spoon over the rest of the cake mixture smoothing the surface.

Bake for 35mins approximately until a skewer comes out clean.

Sprinkle with icing sugar just before serving warm or cold with crème fraiche or custard.

- Don't forget to kiss the cook, Happy Christmas.

Ann Jennings

Thank you Ann for the fun and enjoyment your recipes have brought to so many people during the past year. We hope you will be able to share more delights with us in 2011.....And thanks also to Richard for his knowledgeable gems.

AND FOR THE WINE.....

Christmas is coming.....although apparently not everyone loves Christmas pudding! On summer's days we might have served our lemon and amaretti cake with a lemon sorbet and opted for an intensely flavoured Limoncello liqueur. However, as a winter dessert, accompanied by custard, we do not need such piercing flavours. A glass of Amaretto would of course pick out the almond flavours wonderfully - the Italians seem to be blessed with all that is best in the world of sweet liquids don't they?! Prosecco carries an almond note : sounds like a Prosecco Passito [with the grapes dried to concentrate the sugars] would be ideal - but I'm only aware of one such wine, imported by a merchant in Oakham, Rutland, with a passion for quirky Italian wines! Nevertheless, the baked cake/dried grape match is persuasive. The cake mixture will moderate the lemon flavouring so let's head to northern Italy, where the technique of air-drying the grapes produces a wine of nicely balanced sweetness and flavours. By contrast, in southern Italy and the islands, the grapes are dried in the sun and the flavours more intense and raisiny. Araldica, a major name in Piedmont in northern Italy produce a more widely available Moscato Passito wine, moderately sweet and spot on here. Hmm, and a winter cruise to the Aeolian Islands off the coast of Sicily to find some Malvasia di Lipari seemed so tempting the things we wine people have to forgo to get the wine-match just right! Enjoy your Christmas sipping.

Richard W.B. Ryan

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS COMPETITION

Complete **one** of the following tasks and bring it in to church (you can leave it in the basket at the back of church) by the end of the Crib Service on Christmas Eve or post it to Reverend Ruth Atkinson at the address on the front of the magazine. There will be prizes for different age groups.



1. Draw a picture or write about the gift that you would take to Jesus if you could go to the stable to see him. Say why you would take your gift. You can ask an adult to help you to write it down but it must be in your words.
2. Imagine that Jesus was born in Stourbridge, describe the scene and say why you think that he would be born there.
3. Write a story imagining that you have been to the stable to see Jesus. You can draw a picture to go with the story if you would like to.

Don't forget to include your name, age and a phone number

ST MARY'S WALKING GROUP

30th October 2010

With the closure of Stourbridge bus station for rebuilding, the first challenge was to find where Stand F had been relocated. Eleven of us were successful and boarded the 256 at 10.00a.m. We alighted at Penn and made our way to Showell Lane, a pleasant residential road just off the A449. No pavement here, but many large detached houses to admire. The lane narrowed and went steeply downhill until a wooded footpath on the left was reached. This opened out into a shallow grassy valley with distant views towards Clee Hills. I was surprised at how green most of the trees were; only two russet coloured ones were visible at this point.

The next footpath took us to the old railway line where we had an unplanned coffee stop at the old station. It was very pleasant sitting outside in the Autumn sunshine. We then proceeded to the planned lunch stop at the Bratch picnic site where we could watch fishermen at work.

After lunch we walked a stretch of the canal where we viewed several narrowboats. The one that provoked most interest was towing a large dinghy containing several children and their bikes. Further down the canal we were aware of a heron on the edge of the towpath. We edged forward slowly, but it eventually noticed us and flew off ahead of us. This is the closest I have been to a heron and I was particularly surprised at the size of its beak.

Leaving the canal at Hinksford, we took footpaths which led us to Wall Heath, from where we caught a bus back to Stourbridge, having walked about 6½ miles.

Chris Day

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NEWS AND NOTES

May I say a big thank you to all Children's Society Box Holders whose generous support has produced over £800 which has been sent off to Head Office from where it will be used to fund the different aspects of their important work with children.

Yesterday, we enjoyed a fund raising evening, again in support of the Children's Society. Marion, of Webster's of Wollaston, entertained us with one of her wonderful flower demonstrations accompanied by her witty remarks and extensive knowledge of the flowers and foliage she used. The arrangements were raffled at the end of the evening resulting in a total of £821.23 being raised and a few challenges for the winners who had to fit them into their cars.

Thank you to all our friends who are kind enough to support us on a regular basis. It is particularly lovely that our committee includes members from St Mary's, St John's, St Peter's and Holy Trinity Churches.....Such a lovely way of working together.

Anne Davies

PARISH REGISTER

Baptisms

| | |
|------------|---|
| 3 October | Alexander William McAdam * |
| 17 October | Eliza Kristina Bradley Sienna Alexandra Billings |
| 7 November | Jacob Edward Meese Maeve Elizabeth Smith |

Weddings

| | |
|------------|---------------------------------|
| 15 October | Aimee Stinton and Robert Murphy |
|------------|---------------------------------|

Funerals

| | | |
|------------|------------------|---------|
| 11 October | Joe Banks | aged 86 |
| 14 October | Winnie Meade | aged 94 |
| 18 October | Margaret Harris | aged 94 |
| 21 October | Shirley Bevan | aged 73 |
| 3 November | Michael Sturgess | aged 71 |
| 5 November | Edna Brettle | aged 91 |

* Apologies to Alexander and his family. Alexander's second name was incorrectly printed in last month's issue.

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100 YEARS AGO

A meeting of magazine distributors was held at which circulation of 510 –520 magazines a month for the previous year was revealed. The contribution of 1d per copy was not covering costs and subscribers were invited to increase their annual payment to 1s 6d or even 2s.

With Christmas Day falling on a Sunday parishioners were reminded that, as the 'Lord's Day', it demanded due reverence. The more boisterous merry-making of the social festivities would be more appropriate on the following day.

And parishioners were asked to nominate two boys, aged seven to eleven, to fill a vacancy at Oldswinford Hospital, a prerequisite being that their parents should never have received parish relief.

Children's Page Answers

1. Mary 2. Bethlehem 3. Carpenter 4. There was no room 5. We are not told. 6. Manger
7. A valuable incense made from the sap of a tree 8. No one knows but more than one 9. Caesar
Augustus 10. Matthew and Luke.

DOWN:

- 1-Shepherds
2-Angels
3-Worship
4-Bethlehem
6-Prince
8-Mary
9-Myrrh
10-Fields

ACROSS:

- 1 –Star
5 –Joseph
7 - Room
9 –Myrrh
11 –Inn
12 –Peace

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