

The Vicar's Letter

Dear Friends,

Our Mission Action Planning is beginning to gather momentum. We have had a useful parish meeting on October 19, and an enjoyable and productive PCC Away Day on November 1. Questionnaires have been handed out to everyone we can reach, and have begun to come back, building up a picture of how people who worship at St Mary's see the life of the church and its future development. This is still only the start of a process that is intended, by the end of next year, to produce a realistic plan for our mission as one part of the church of Christ in Godmanchester.

One or two concerns seem to have cropped up. These are almost always reported to me second-hand. I am told, 'Some people are unhappy about...' or, 'A lot of people are saying...' People seldom march up to me, and say, 'Vicar, I don't like the way things are going.' But you can, you know! That is part of what I am here for. However, members of the PCC in particular also have the rôle of letting me know what people are really thinking or feeling. So I don't mind how these matters get reported to me, but if you want to be sure I have heard your worry or frustration accurately, you will have to tell me yourself! I promise not to bite, or even bark.

Be that as it may, the concerns that have been expressed to me can be summed up roughly as follows:

They are going to change everything!

There are two things I would like to say in response to this worry. The first concerns that word 'they'. Ideally, no church should ever have a sense of 'them and us' about it, and if ours does then I am sorry to hear it. We are a body, a community, not a club with inner and outer circles. Obviously, the Vicar and the PCC combined constitute what is, in effect, a governing body for the parish church, and if you are not a member of the PCC it might sometimes feel as if decisions are being taken in which you have only a small and indirect say. But this should not be the case this time. Mission Action Planning is about each one of us having an equal say in where we believe our efforts in mission should be placed. The questionnaire you should have received if you are a regular worshipper is only the first step in this process; there will be repeated opportunities over the next year for your voice to be heard.

Being heard, of course, does depend on speaking up in the first place. We really do need **YOUR** questionnaire back – so far we have had only about fifty. Without wishing to sound too schoolmasterish, if we don't know what you are thinking and feeling about the mission of the church, your thoughts and feelings can't be taken into account at all. Please see Mission Action Planning as something that concerns all of us, not the work of a select group.

Secondly, while most of us fear change at least some of the time, there is as yet no plan to do anything at all. The plan will emerge once it becomes clear what God is saying to us through the collective voice of each one of us. The voices of those who do not wish to see any change will be part of the planning process.

Having said all this, there are two related points I would like to make. The first is that, as the new Bishop of Huntingdon reminded us at the Deanery Evensong recently, my first thoughts as to the way ahead for the church may not necessarily be God's way. While we all, I hope, have things we want to see happen, or not happen, if we are serious about listening to God we will begin to move away from considering simply 'what I want' or 'what I like' towards asking ourselves and each other, 'what, in the life of St Mary's, will help more people grow more deeply in the knowledge and love of God?' Planning for mission means thinking first and foremost about the needs of those whom we do not yet know, and about making efforts to get to know them.

Which leads me to my final point. In the end, we are being called to consider not our plans – an old joke says that what makes God laugh is people with plans – but the mission of Jesus Christ. Here is that mission in a nutshell:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.

(Luke 4:18-19)

How do we help that work of Jesus Christ become more of a reality in Godmanchester? What can we do that will bring to others good news, freedom, new vision and an awareness of being the object of God's favour? These are exciting questions to be asking, and the approach of Christmas is a good time to address them, as we prepare to celebrate the presence among us of the One who is in Himself our Good News, our Freedom, our Light and our Blessing.

May your Christmas be filled with this life-giving Christ, and the New Year bring us and all people renewed trust in the good purposes of God.

With love,

David



Mothers' Union

At the November meeting, Joan Walton gave an excellent slide show entitled 'Animals in Church'. She said that this was the eleventh presentation she had given and for the eleventh time we were fascinated. We looked at stained glass windows, flowers, paintings, brass work and woodcarvings. The variety of animals was amazing and many of them had different meanings: the pelican, unicorn, dove and fish were religious emblems; mythical animals thought, in medieval times, to represent evil were the dragon and the wyvern. Working animals were well represented and also animals involved in sport such as bears, foxes and stags. The owl it seems did not speak of wisdom but rather, alongside the cat, was a symbol of the dark. We are already looking forward to next year when, we are told, the theme is to be 'Angels'. Thank you Joan. At our next meeting in January we will be welcoming Jackie Norton-Jones from the Salvation Army hostel for the homeless who will talk about her work.

Jean Morgan

Wives' Group

'*The Co-op belongs to you*' – this was the message that Adrian White was eager to project at our November meeting. Adrian is manager of the Co-op store in Godmanchester and has over twenty-four years of experience. He told us that the Co-operative movement was started in 1844 by a group of Rochdale weavers who had been made redundant and were

anxious to serve their community honestly. This ethic has continued and the Co-op has grown into a multi-million pound industry, embracing banking, insurance and many other offshoots.

Adrian explained that Co-op stores differ from other major supermarkets in that they are owned by their members, each eligible to vote, whose opinions are taken into account at all times. The Co-op is also anxious to plough back profits into the community and fund local projects. Last year the ice-skating rink on School Hill was sponsored by the local branch and this will be repeated this year on December 12.

Adrian told our meeting that he was delighted with the success of the Godmanchester store, which had exceeded all expectations. He displayed a selection of items which are on sale, many of them Fairtrade, and handed out some tasty samples – all were eagerly tested! At the end of his most interesting talk Adrian gave us all a generous 'goodie bag' to take home, an added bonus to a most enjoyable evening.

On Tuesday 9 December we will be holding our Christmas party at **7.30 pm** in the church hall. Please bring a plate of food and a present for the bran tub (value £4-£5).

Barbara Thirlwall



Men's Social Group

There was a lot of twitching at our November meeting when Neil Renwick of the RSPB spoke about the Fen Drayton Lakes' nature reserve. In the 17th century a large area of East Anglia, bounded by Peterborough, Wisbech, Lakenheath and Huntingdon, existed as wetland and provided habitat for a variety of wildlife and plants. However, due to the efforts of the Dutch drainage engineers, the wetlands eventually dried out until only a few isolated areas of wetland remained. Fortunately more recent activities by man, namely the large-scale extraction of aggregates, have provided the means by which areas of wetland can be re-established. Worked out gravel workings have been landscaped and the gravel pits allowed to fill with water to establish habitats that replicate the natural wetlands and provide the environment necessary for the associated wildlife to establish itself. Fen Drayton Lakes are such an example and were acquired by the RSPB in 2007 and subsequently further developed to form the present nature reserve. This consists of a number of self-contained lakes and lagoons as well as grazing land. The first lakes to be developed tended to have steep edges but in later developments the edges have been shelved to encourage the growth of reeds and to provide a suitable habitat for those birds that like wading rather than diving. Some of the lakes also contain islands to provide suitable breeding grounds for other types of bird – there are even proposals to provide floating mud islands to cater for the birds which need this type of environment.

The work has been very successful in attracting breeding birds, and Fen Drayton Lakes are recognised nationally as an important site for seven types of water-bird. Many other types of water and land based birds can be found there attracted by the varied habitats. The site is also a stop off point for migratory birds on their way to warmer climes. Even the common starling roosts there in the autumn, when swirling aerial displays of groups of a thousand or so birds can be seen. But even though the birds are provided with every 'mod con' there are still dangers, especially for the ground nesting birds. The site is still part of a flood plain and heavy rains at the wrong time of the year can result in the nests being washed away.

Thank you, Neil, for a most interesting and very well illustrated talk – the wonderful colours and plumage of some of the water birds made the 'locals' on The Causeway seem rather dowdy! You certainly stirred up the twitchers in the group and they are already thinking of a visit to the reserve as part of next year's programme – who knows, we may even catch a sight of the very rare, but much talked about, 'Constrictus Omnibus' with its rather unique form of travel.

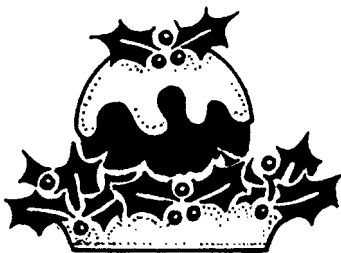
Peter Dawe



Charity of the Month

The Charities Committee will meet on 21 November to decide on the charities for the next year. Unfortunately, the outcome of the meeting will be too late to meet the editorial deadline for the December magazine. I will publish a summary of the deliberations of our meeting, with the agreed list, in the January magazine. We will do our best to ensure that we continue to support as many charities as we practically can. I anticipate a list similar to last year. Of course, we continue to receive appeals from charities across the board seeking our support as they brace themselves to weather the present economic storm and we will consider them on merit. On the other hand, you will remember that the PCC has constrained the limit of our giving to £4,000. This is still a healthy amount that has allowed us to make a significant contribution to our nominated charities throughout the year. If you have any thoughts on how we conduct our charitable giving your views would be welcome. Or perhaps better still, come and join us.

Roy Norris – Charities Committee



Who's Who in the Parish David and Jean Morgan



The 1st March 1939 was the first important day in our lives – Dai was born in South Wales and Jean in Dunstable. Our next joint experience, unbeknown to us at the time, was in 1953 when we were both confirmed at the same service in The Priory Church. We first met at a school dance and became engaged a couple of months before our 21st birthdays! We had both graduated in 1961 and our next joint experience was in August of that year when we were married in Eaton Bray, a small village at the bottom of Dunstable Downs. We then headed off in a hired car for our honeymoon in the Isle of Skye. Despite the gloomy weather we had a very enjoyable honeymoon, and the return journey was rather more exciting when the car broke down terminally twelve miles short of Edinburgh, resulting in an enforced overnight stop in a B&B, a bus journey into Edinburgh and train journeys home via London. Twenty-four hours later Dai departed to Portsmouth to join the Royal Navy in which he served for the next thirty years. During that time we lived in twenty-seven different houses in England, Wales, Australia, Italy the USA and Belgium. Dai had three extended tours at sea in aircraft carriers in the Mediterranean, the Far East and

finally the old HMS Ark Royal (at the time the BBC filmed the 'Sailor' programme) in the Western Atlantic, the Norwegian Sea and the Mediterranean. He returned home with a beard, looking exactly like the picture on Players cigarette packets.

During this time our three offspring arrived, Glyn in 1963, Rachel in 1965 and Samantha in 1967. Wherever we went we joined the local Anglican/Episcopalian Church, which gave us a very wide experience of how different churches operate. We both served on very different PCCs, and Dai also served as Churchwarden and Treasurer. Whenever there was a choir we joined it!

Dai took early retirement in 1991 and found a job as one of the first ever bursars of a state maintained C of E Voluntary Aided comprehensive school and Jean found a job in a primary school. We bought a house in Friern Barnet just outside the North Circular Road. The next five years was a frenzy of work, visiting parents, church and meeting up in the West End with the children, who by this time, were all working as solicitors in the City. In 1994/95 all three parents died within a period of ten months.

It was our intention to move out from London, but very soon after Samantha and Nicholas moved to Godmanchester, we visited them, which was when we saw a very strange house opposite, swathed in scaffolding and blue plastic. We thought it looked very interesting, and at the first opportunity Nicholas arranged for us all to view it. We made an offer, which was accepted and we moved in about ten months later. Not long after, we were

joined by Glyn and his wife, Valerie, who eventually bought the other half of the house! For the next four years we travelled daily to our jobs in North London, but soon after Jean reached pensionable age in 1999, she left the school in Palmers Green and got a part-time job in St Anne's when it first opened. Dai retired after another year.

Our interests and hobbies have varied. We were both involved in a lot of sport in our earlier years. Jean played hockey for Leeds University and Dai played for Bedfordshire under 21 cricket team in his last year at school, and later for Combined Services, Portsmouth, and the Fleet Air Arm. Dai was one of eighteen boys who tested the Duke of Edinburgh's Award when it was introduced, and they all received Gold Awards from the Duke at Buckingham Palace in 1958. We were both involved in amateur dramatics, Jean playing the female lead in a production of 'Separate Tables' in the RN Drama Festival and becoming an absolute natural Wicked Witch of the West in the SHAPE production of 'Wizard of Oz', while Dai made a big hit as the Village Idiot in the Culdrose pantomime one year. Jean developed her cooking and sewing skills (her soufflés and pavlovas are renowned the world over!) and tried her hand at squash and ten pin bowling, while Dai took up golf and carried on painting in oil and watercolours, which he had enjoyed doing from an early age. These days St Mary the Virgin, St Anne's and the grandchildren have taken over and hobbies have been put on the backburner for the moment.

Jean and Dai Morgan

After Dark – 29 October

On Wednesday evenings, after a busy day's work, I generally flop on the sofa till bedtime, but last week was half term, and I decided to satisfy my curiosity, brave the cold and attend the 'After Dark' event in church. I'm really glad that I did, as it was an interesting and uplifting experience.

As I entered the dimly lit church, the sight of two invitingly laid refectory tables at the head of the nave almost took my breath away with its unfamiliarity, and the sound of monastic chant set the scene for something special.

The evening was to be in three distinct parts, as Gillian Bathurst-Hoile explained. First, three visitors from the Ramsey Story Tellers – introduced only as Louise, Bill and Grace – kept us spellbound with a trio of ghost stories. What a neglected skill is the art of storytelling, and how satisfying it is to 'make pictures in your head' sometimes, instead of relying on TV images!

When the storytelling was done, we took our places at the table for the 'monastic meal' eaten in silence, in true monastic fashion, while Mary Jepp and David Busk read to us from the lectern. Mary's choice was a chapter from 'The Student' by Anton Chekhov, and David's was a story from 'A Dresser of Sycamore Trees', by Gareth Keizer; both were inspirational and thought-provoking readings. Our food was simple, plentiful, appropriate and delicious. We had home-made vegetable soup, excellent bread and cheese and fruit.

Gillian and John and their willing helpers served us gracefully, with quiet joy. For a while, it was easy to understand the appeal of the monastic lifestyle, to be moved by the unusual quiet and to appreciate the blessings of good food and like-minded company. Towards the end of the meal a little bell was rung to signify that conversation was appropriate, and there was a chance to talk to our companions and a lightening of the mood. After a short while we each took a lighted candle into the chancel for the concluding part of the evening, the short and beautiful service of Compline, (or Night Prayer, the last service of the monastic day.) At the end, we extinguished our candles and left in silence. This lovely event filled us in body, mind and soul!

Mary Whitman Hardy



Christmas is coming ... and the Charity Christmas Card Shop has arrived in All Saints' Church in Huntingdon Market Square. The shop sells cards from over two dozen charities, plus wrapping paper, advent calendars, stocking fillers, etc, and all profits (after moderate administration charges) go directly back to the charities. This year the shop opens on Wednesday, 5 November and it will be open every day (excluding Sundays) from 10.00am to 4.00pm until Wednesday, 17 December. **Please come and buy your cards from us!!** Thank you. *Kate Robinson*

The Jesse Tree

In this season of Advent, Children's Church has again placed its beautiful wooden palm tree at the front of the church. This is our Jesse tree, and on each Sunday in Advent and on Christmas Day, we hang colourful wooden plaques on it. Why do we have a Jesse tree, and what do the symbols on the plaques represent?

The first Jesse trees appeared about 1,000 years ago and since then, they have been found in many different art forms, including sculpture, painting, manuscripts, woodcarving and stained glass. They showed Jesse, the father of King David, as the root of a vine or tree, with illustrations of his descendants on its branches, including David and ultimately the Messiah, as prophecy foretold.

Like many churches today, we use our Jesse tree to illustrate the history of our faith and to help us look forward to the coming of Christ at Christmas. On the first Sunday in Advent, the symbols we add to it are those of the Old Testament "patriarchs and matriarchs", Adam and Eve, Noah and family, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob, Leah and Rachel, Joseph, Ruth and Naomi, David, Solomon and Esther. Moses and the prophets follow on the second Sunday in Advent: Moses, Miriam and Aaron, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel.

We add a plaque for John the Baptist on the third Sunday, then plaques for Mary and Joseph on the fourth Sunday. Finally, a plaque showing the baby Jesus in the manger is added on Christmas Day.

Members of Children's Church originally painted the symbols on our plaques; please find an opportunity to look at them more closely. Most of the symbols are familiar – a serpent for Adam and Eve, a harp for King David and a splendid coat for Joseph – and all the plaques have an explanatory label attached.

Hanging the plaques on the tree, and lighting candles on the Advent wreath, are very welcome and enjoyable parts of our preparations for Christmas in Children's Church, which we are always happy to share with the whole congregation.

Victoria Richardson

The Parish News

We are very pleased to say that the cost of the *Parish News* will remain unchanged at 45p per copy for 2009.

Please remember that if you order your magazine for the year you will only pay £4.50 – thus in effect getting two month's magazines for free.

Do please consider subscribing to the magazine on an annual basis – not only does it make life easier for our Treasurer, but most people seem to think that The News is a good read. Contact one of the churchwardens, or Peter Ballantine (our Treasurer) tel.450432 to pay.



Happy the Bride – and this time the sun did shine on Emma Irving and Karl Riddick

Saturday 22 November was glorious, it was cold and crisp but the sun was out and shining brightly on Emma and Karl's wedding day. Emma has been a member of St Mary's and also a member of our choir for many years, and the church was packed with family and friends, as the groom, Karl made his way to the front of the church, smiling nervously. Soon after, as the organ started to play Pachelbel's Canon in D, the porch doors were opened and Emma entered the church on her father's arm. Obviously emotional, she looked breathtaking in her bridal gown, her bridesmaids and pageboys following behind her flowing train. Faces turned and smiles shone out as she made her way to the altar. The Vicar greeted the congregation warmly and the service opened with the hymn 'Love Divine'. Declarations were made, and then it was my very honoured duty to read the lesson Emma and Karl had chosen, Colossians 3:12-17. The Vicar gave an inspiring address, and Karl's friend from Hendon Police College then read *The Benediction of the Apaches*, a very simple and moving blessing (see next page) and the Choir sang Pitoni's anthem 'Cantate Domino'. As the actual marriage ceremony took place, Emma and Karl's voices could be heard, clear and sincere. During the signing of the register 'Ave Maria' (Gounod) and 'Let the bright seraphim' (Handel) were sung most beautifully by Emma's friend, Hannah Reed. After the blessing at the high altar the Choir sang Stainer's 'Sevenfold Amen', and Emma

and Karl left the church to the strains of Mendelssohn's 'Wedding March'.

The weather continued fair for their journey to Hinchingsbrooke House, where the reception was held. The House was filled with the happy sounds of the wedding party as old friends met, and for a number of us, memories of times spent in the 6th Form were relived! The party was seated in two separate rooms, such was the number of guests, and we were treated to a most delicious meal. We had been asked to make donations, in lieu of wedding presents, to the Special Care Baby Unit at the Friarage Hospital in Northallerton, and, before the speeches, we heard a short explanation of their work. Emma's niece, Lucy, who was one of the bridesmaids, had been cared for there as she had arrived ten weeks prematurely and needed their special care. A heartfelt thank you was expressed to Emma and Karl for their thoughtfulness as well as to all those who donated. The speeches were lively and entertaining. The evening was to continue with a disco and buffet supper.

This was such a lovely day, which was perfect in every way. The ceremony was beautiful; a real feeling of love – not only from Emma and Karl but from the whole congregation – filled the church and that overwhelming feeling followed us to the reception where, doubtless, a great night was enjoyed by all. With love and very best wishes for the future, Emma and Karl.

Claire Hurd - Friend of the Bride & Groom and sipper of fine champagne!

Benediction of the Apaches

Now you will feel no rain,
For each will be shelter to the other.

Now you will feel no cold,
For each will be warmth to the other.

Now there is no more loneliness for you,
For each will be companion to the other.

Now you are two bodies,
But there is only one Life before you.

Go now to your dwelling place,
To enter into the days of your
togetherness.

And may your days be good and long
upon the earth.

This month's cover

Adeste fideles – O come, all ye faithful – is one of a series of Eric Gill wood engravings published by his nephew Christopher Skelton, and reproduced here by permission of The Herbert Press. Illustrated editions of *The Four Gospels* and *The Canterbury Tales* are perhaps Gill's most prestigious works. Eric Gill (1882-1940) converted to Catholicism, having been brought up the son of a Congregationalist minister. The conversion influenced his art, the subject matter of which ranges from the deeply religious to the highly erotic. *Parish news* has already produced examples of the former. For the latter, readers may have to look elsewhere...

Dominoes **

Dominoes aren't exactly play-station, but it seems they are making a comeback. In fact, the game is becoming so popular that a few months ago John Lewis reported that its own-brand £4 domino boxes were flying off their shelves at the rate of one every half hour.

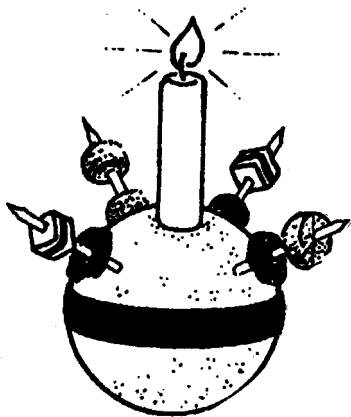
It seems that some celebrities have started the craze, though the cost is within everyone's reach. A low-cost, low-tech present that will last forever, and provide hours of simple numerical enjoyment... not bad!

Sup soup this month - and help the Salvation Army **

The New Covent Garden Food Company has dedicated its December Soup of the Month to the Salvation Army. The soup – chicken, vegetable and pearl barley – is on sale throughout December in supermarkets across the country. Look out for the special cartons carrying the Army's Red Shield logo.

The New Covent Garden Food Company expects to raise £10,000 for the Army to provide food and Christmas gifts for homeless and vulnerable people.





Christingle: 40 years of shining light into darkness

Christingles originated in the Moravian Church, becoming established in 1747, as symbols of Christ's light and love. The Children's Society introduced Christingles to the Church of England in 1968, and they have since become central to popular family and community events, most often celebrated in churches or schools, which raise millions of pounds for the children that The Children's Society supports.

The Christingle is made up of a lighted candle mounted in an orange, with a red ribbon around the middle and four cocktail sticks bearing dried fruit and sweets, stuck into the orange. For an explanation of the symbolic meaning of it, and to join in a procession with lighted Christingle candles, please come to our

**Christingle celebration
at St Mary the Virgin,
Godmanchester
on Sunday 14 December
at 3.00 pm**

Victoria Richardson

Operation Christmas Child

I am absolutely amazed – when the shoe-boxes were collected and counted you generous folk of St Mary's had filled 65 boxes! Last year – our first venture into the realm of filling shoe boxes – you filled 55, which was wonderful, but this year you have excelled. On behalf of all those children you have thought about, prayed for and given, what may well be, their first-ever Christmas present, thank you all so very much,

Joan Jackson



Churches Together – December Diary

25 Dec. 'The Churches Together Lunch; a special day for those on their own to be together.'

Christmas Day Lunch and Tea at Huntingdon Medway Centre

Organised by Trinity Free Church and Medway Christian Fellowship.

Details from Mrs Pearl Ogle, 59 Medway Court, Huntingdon PE29 1SF (phone 01480 454892)



Ice-Skating Rink

The ice-skating rink sponsored by our local Co-operative Society will take place again this year on School Hill on Friday 12 December. This event was a huge success last year and a source of great pleasure and delight to many of our families. We would like to express our thanks to the Co-op for this delightful community event that they organise and sponsor.

Do come along and enjoy it.

Smile **

Are you depressed? Smile – it might help you more than taking Prozac. So says one government scientific adviser, Professor Jane Plant. Her recent book on unorthodox ways to fight depression and anxiety has other unusual ideas, such as:

Dancing cheers you up; spending LESS money, not more, could make you happier; eat kippers for breakfast (they contain omega-3 fatty acids); and send fewer text messages.

The book is: 'Beating Stress, Anxiety and Depression', by Professor Plant and Janet Stephenson.



October PCC Meeting

Minutes in full of PCC meetings are displayed on the south door notice-board. Here are some key points from the October meeting.

Finance Committee

The policy of trying to match routine expenditure with routine income was not working this year. To date, our expenses exceeded income by about £6,000. To avoid running our reserves down completely, we have the following options:

- * Do nothing and hope something comes along – a high risk option
- * Increase our giving – at the moment, personal giving is reducing
- * Decide what we can afford and can't afford within our income and determine priorities – difficult decisions.

This task falls firmly on the PCC and, after discussion, it was agreed to have an extraordinary meeting on Church Finances on 2nd December.

Fabric Committee

Sound System – Two matching radio microphones, a new chancel speaker and a swan-neck mounting for the ambo have been installed. An anti-feedback device, or feedback destroyer, has been loaned from the sound engineers and a permanent one has been ordered at a cost of £200. Mary Jepp has offered to host a wine and cheese party to raise the money. The total cost of all the work to improve the sound system is just under £2,000. The PCC thanked Malcolm Harris for his perseverance in getting solutions to our various sound system problems.

Experiment to reduce heat loss – A proposal was made to shut the south door of the church and ask everyone to enter the church by the north door as this would significantly reduce heat loss. It was agreed to have a two week trial of the proposal, starting 16 November.

Worship Group

i) Grassroots – This Service had been set up to do much the same job as the Parish Praise Service except that it would include Baptism when required and had become, by and large, a Baptism Service. There is a baby boom going on in Godmanchester and a huge backlog of baptisms would ensue if we insisted that they should all be done during the Grassroots Service. As a result, this Service has become obsolete.

ii) Baptism Service – There is a consensus among clergy that the old Baptism Service, which had been culled from Common Worship, was somewhat outdated and could be difficult for some parents and godparents. With the Archdeacon's blessing, it is now common practice for parishes to draw up their own Baptism Service and to send a copy of the new Service to the Archdeacon. David Busk tabled a new Order of Service for Baptism that had been approved by the Worship Committee. After David went through the new Order of Service, pointing out the various changes, Ken Diffey proposed that the PCC authorise the new Order of Service for Baptism, seconded by Gillian Bathurst-Hoile and carried by the PCC.

iii) Timing of the Parish Praise Service
The Service was introduced as a one-year trial in January 2008. It started at 11.00am, lasting about 45 minutes and

finishing with a light meal. The format has now changed to coffee and cakes after the Service and proved very popular. It is therefore thought that, if the Service is to continue, we could move the start time to 10.30 am in the New Year, so people could get away earlier and have the rest of the day free.

iv) Whether to continue the Parish Praise Service

- The PCC has three options concerning Parish Praise:

- * To abolish the service
- * To have the service less or more often
- * To have the service in church instead of St Anne's School

It was agreed that members of the PCC should consider these options and be ready to discuss them at the November meeting.

Trevor Weedon – PCC Secretary



And finally . . .

We wish all our readers God's richest blessing this Christmas and every happiness in the New Year.



The Registers**Baptism**

16 November Benjamin Oliver Waymont
 23 November Molly Jane Abigail Silvester
 30 November Dylan Ian Czapla-Wick
 TJ Coran Czapla-Wick

Holy Matrimony

8 November Noah David Price and Sarah Jane Waites
 22 November Karl Neil Riddick and Emma Caroline Irving

Funerals

20 November Betty Gadsby
 25 November Dora Holdich
 25 November Cyril Abbott

The Lectionary

7 December **Advent 2**
 Isaiah 40:1-11; Mark 1:1-8

14 December **Advent 3**
 Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-end; John 1:6-8, 19-28

21 December **Advent 4**
 2 Samuel 7:1-11,16; Romans 16:25-end; Luke 1:26-38

24 December **Christmas Eve**
 Isaiah 52:7-10; Hebrews 1:1-12; John 1:1-14

25 December **Christmas Day**
 Isaiah 9:2-7; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-20

28 December **Holy Innocents Day**
 Jeremiah 31:15-17; 1 Corinthians 1:26-29; Matthew 2:13-18

G O D M A N C H E S T E R P A R I S H N E W S

** Items taken from *The Parish Pump*, the Church News Service on line.



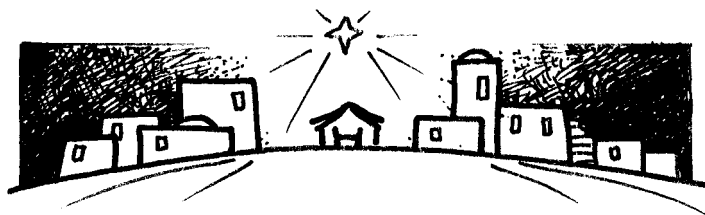
Dates for your diary

December 2008

Mon	1	1.30 pm	Stepping Stones	Baptist Church Centre
		6.00 pm	Godmanchester Cubs visit	Church
Tue	2	7.30 am	Drop-in Prayer	Church
		9.15 am	Christingle Service	St Anne's School
		2.00 pm	Mothers' Union Meeting	Queen Elizabeth School
		7.30 pm	PCC Meeting for Finance	Church Hall
			No Men's Group meeting	
Wed	3	11.00 am	Holy Communion	The Chestnuts
		6.00 pm	Mayor's Christmas Carols	School Hill
Thu	4	7.30 am	Drop-in Prayer	Church
		9.45 am	Holy Communion	
		10.00 am	St Mary's 0s – 5s	Comrades' Club
Fri	5	7.30 pm	Choir Practice	Church Hall
Sat	6	10.00 am–	Churches Together Christmas Family	Salvation Army Hall
		2.00 pm	Day	
		6.30 pm	Dinner and entertainment night	Church Hall
Sun	7	8.00 am	Holy Communion	
		9.45 am	Sung Eucharist	
		11.30 am	Shalom	
		4.00 pm	Reading of 'A Christmas Carol'	Church Hall
		6.30 pm	Sung Evensong	
Mon	8	1.30 pm	Stepping Stones	Baptist Church Centre
Tue	9	7.30 am	Drop-in Prayer	Church
		7.30 pm	MAP Sub Committee Meeting	Vicarage
		7.30 pm	Wives' Group Christmas Party	Church Hall
Wed	10	10.30 am	Holy Communion	Oak Tree Court
Thu	11	7.30 am	Drop-in Prayer	Church
		9.45 am	Holy Communion	
		10.00 am	St Mary's 0s – 5s	Comrades' Club
		7.30 pm	Carol Service	Wood Green Animal Shelter
Fri	12		Co-op Ice Rink	School Hill
		7.30 pm	Choir Practice	Church Hall
Sun	14	8.00 am	Holy Communion	
		9.45 am	Sung Eucharist	
		11.30 am	Baptism	
		3.00 pm	Christingle	
		4.00 pm	Reading of 'A Christmas Carol'	Church Hall
		6.30 pm	Sung Evensong	
		6.45 pm	Youth Group – Murder Mystery Party	Church Hall
Mon	15	1.30 pm	Stepping Stones Christmas Service	Church
		7.30 pm	Fabric Committee Meeting	Vestry

G O D M A N C H E S T E R P A R I S H N E W S

Tue	16	7.30 am	Drop-in Prayer	Church
		All day	St Anne's School	Church
		12.00	Churches Together Lunch Club official launch	Salvation Army Hall
		6.00 pm	St Anne's School Christmas Carols	Church
Wed	17	11.00 am	Holy Communion	Woodley Court
Thu	18	7.30 am	Drop-in Prayer	Church
		9.45 am	Holy Communion	
		10.00 am	St Mary's 0s – 5s Christmas Party	Comrades' Club
		7.30 pm	Prayer Group	36 Old Court Hall
Fri	19	7.30 pm	Choir Practice	Church Hall
Sun	21	8.00 am	Holy Communion	
		9.45 am	Sung Eucharist	
		4.00 pm	Ecumenical	Rectory Gardens
		4.00 pm	Reading of 'A Christmas Carol'	Church Hall
		6.30 pm	Sung Evensong	
Tue	23	7.30 am	Drop-in Prayer	Church
		7.30 pm	MAP Sub Committee Meeting	Vicarage
Wed	24	9.45 am	Holy Communion	McCartney House
		4.00 pm	Nativity Service / Lighting the Tree	
		6.00 pm	Nine Lessons and Carols	
		8.30 pm	Quiet Christmas Service - Vigil	
		11.30 pm	First Eucharist of Christmas	
Thu	25	Christmas Day		
		8.00 am	Holy Communion	
		9.45 am	Sung Eucharist	
Sun	28	8.00 am	Holy Communion	
		9.45 am	Sung Eucharist	
		6.30 pm	Evening Prayer	



The Editorial Committee meeting for the January magazine will be held on **Sunday, 14 December**. Would you please ensure that material is with one of the following by that date, and if possible not later than **Friday, 12 December**:

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