



## Prayer Leaflet

December 2008



Loving Father,  
we thank you for the gift of your Son,  
whose birth at Bethlehem  
we now prepare to celebrate.  
May our hearts and our homes  
always be open to him,  
that he may dwell with us for ever,  
and we may serve him gladly all our days,  
to the honour and glory of your name.

The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin  
Godmanchester

## The Great Earthquake

**John 10:22-30**

*At that time the festival of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon. So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, 'How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.' Jesus answered, 'I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name testify to me; but you do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep. My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. What my Father has given me is greater than all else, and no one can snatch it out of the Father's hand. The Father and I are one.'*

On December 26, 2004, an earthquake shook the whole earth. Many people didn't feel it, but the South Asian region and parts of Africa suffered a devastating tsunami as a result. According to reports, however, no point on earth remained undisturbed. That earthquake shook the ground everywhere on Earth's surface.



The 19<sup>th</sup>-century Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard says that his world was rocked when his religious father told him that he had cursed God for the mistreatment he was getting from others. His father's actions shook Søren so much that he called the event "The Great Earthquake". He wondered for the rest of his life if his family was cursed by God for his father's actions.

We too have had or possibly will have "earthquakes" in our lives. But it's comforting to know that under the worst of circumstances, our faith can — and will — hold us fast. After all, "He's got the whole world in his hands", and that means "He's got you and me, brother and sister, in his hands".

No one, nor any disaster, can snatch us out of our heavenly Father's hands (John 10:28-29). His grip will hold us into all eternity.

Our Prayers in December are especially requested for:

### In the Church

Events – Churches Together Christmas Family Day (6<sup>th</sup>); Pre-Christmas Dinner (6<sup>th</sup>); Christmas Services: Christingle (14<sup>th</sup>); Nativity, Nine Lessons and Carols, Quiet Christmas, Midnight Mass (24<sup>th</sup>); Christmas Day Lunch at the Medway Centre, for those on their own; please pray for these events, and services, and for all those who will attend them.

The Ministry Team – that they may keep their energy through this very busy time.

David Busk and Family – for relaxation and refreshment in their post-Christmas break.

Mothers' Union – for all members, especially the older members that they may keep well during the Christmas season.

Choir – that they may lead the singing during the Christmas services with joy and celebration.

Flower Guild – for the work of all the charities who support the homeless at Christmas.

### In the Community

Pray for all those for whom Christmas brings sad memories or loss.

Pray for those who are struggling to make ends meet this year.

The Schools in the town – for enjoyment in all Christmas activities and greater understanding of the true meaning of Christmas.

### In the World

Christian Solidarity Worldwide – Pray for the Christian Community in Orissa, India, which has faced renewed outbreaks of violence this summer. Pray for their protection and safety in the face of violent attacks; that God will protect them and move to bring lasting peace and security to Christians in India. Pray for the 50,000 people who have been left homeless; that God will fill their need.

The charity the Church supports through the collection plate in December:

**Small Donations** made to various charitable causes, decided at the end of year Charities Committee meeting.

This month, in our Street Prayer Mission, we'll be praying for:

Week commencing Sunday, 7 December

**Porch Close; Grainger Avenue; Littlefield Close; Sears Close.**

Week commencing Sunday, 14 December

**Park Lane; The Avenue; Pavillion Close.**

Week commencing Sunday, 21 December

**Danes Croft; McCartney House; Woodley Court.**

Week commencing Sunday, 28 December

**Prayers for those living outside the Parish.**

Please remember the residents of these streets, those known to us, and especially those, as yet, unknown to us.

## Some Prayers for December:

Almighty God,  
purify our hearts and minds,  
that when your Son Jesus Christ comes again as  
judge and saviour  
we may be ready to receive him,  
who is our Lord and our God.

God for whom we watch and wait,  
you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way of your Son:  
give us courage to speak the truth,  
to hunger for justice,  
and to suffer for the cause of right,  
with Jesus Christ our Lord.

Eternal God,  
as Mary waited for the birth of your Son,  
so we wait for his coming in glory;  
bring us through the birth pangs of this present age  
to see, with her, our great salvation  
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Almighty God,  
as we prepare with joy  
to celebrate the gift of the Christ-child,  
embrace the earth with your glory  
and be for us a living hope  
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Lord Jesus Christ,  
your birth at Bethlehem  
draws us to kneel in wonder at heaven touching earth:  
accept our heartfelt praise  
as we worship you,  
our Saviour and our eternal God.

God in Trinity,  
eternal unity of perfect love:  
gather the nations to be one family,  
and draw us into your holy life  
through the birth of Emmanuel,  
our Lord Jesus Christ.

