



**Christ Church Walmersley
and
St John with St Mark Bury**



December 2012

REGULAR SERVICES

Sunday

8 a.m.	Holy Communion	St John w St Mark
9 a.m.	Holy Communion (BCP)	Christ Church
9 a.m.	Holy Communion	St John w St Mark
10.30 a.m.	1 st Holy Communion 2 nd Family and Parade 3 rd Holy Communion 4 th Morning Service 5 th Holy Communion	Christ Church
10.30 a.m.	Sung Eucharist 3 rd Parade Service	St John w St Mark

Wednesday

10 a.m.	Holy Communion	St John w St Mark
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Thursday

2 p.m.	1 st First Thursday Prayer	Christ Church Hall
7.30 p.m.	Holy Communion	St John w St Mark

Saints days and other services as announced
(see calendar on page 25 & 26)

If you need transport to church please contact the
wardens.

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

What are you expecting this Christmas?

We all look forward to Christmas – children and adults alike. The period of looking forward starts at the end of August in many supermarkets or even earlier in some pubs and restaurants (“Book your Christmas party now!” adverts start appearing in mid-summer!) There are many of us who try not to think about the festive season until the latest possible moment but just when we think we have successfully achieved getting beyond 31st October someone will go and ruin the good work with a cheery “Won’t be long till Christmas!”

What is it that we are looking forward to? Parties, presents, having a happy family gathering round the table for Christmas Dinner? Over indulgence on the food, drink (and spending) front? Or maybe a time of peace and quiet? A few days off work when we can put our feet up and enjoy a snooze in front of the Queens Speech?

And then there’s all the preparation. Cards to be written (I know of certain people who have them all written before October is out – my mother has already received her first card – on November 8th!!) Presents to be bought – once you’ve decided what everyone would really like – but end up sending M & S vouchers! Of course there’s the food – the pushing and shoving round the supermarket to try and buy some sprouts

before they’ve all gone! Just thinking about it all is a nightmare - but we all know it has to be done becausewe are all expecting certain things at Christmas.

Christmas – the one time of the year when we can concentrate on peace and goodwill to all. Can’t we? That’s not too much to expect is it?!



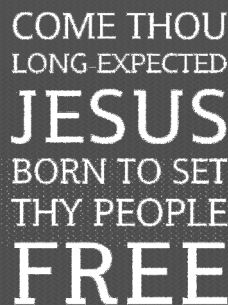
A little over two thousand years Jesus was born into a world full of expectations. His mother Mary had been told to expect a very special baby. The Jews were expecting a Messiah - and they still are. The Magi (wise men) were expecting a king. The shepherds were not really sure what to expect as they hurried to the stable after the angels had told them God had good news for them. A long time before Jesus' birth the prophet Isaiah had raised expectations of a Prince of Peace. And for most ordinary people two thousand years ago that is what they wanted – peace. Some things never change you might say!

So here we are in Advent – the church's season of expectation. A time when looking forward with expectation and anticipation is very much encouraged! In our services the Bible readings, the sermons and even the hymns will be helping us to focus on expectation – the expectation that Jesus will be back in bodily form. If we take ownership of that expectation then we re-build our hopes, inspire our dreams, and (hopefully!) make us more determined to be prepared.

Christmas is a celebration of that first time when God came humanly into our world as a baby born in a stable. From that moment our world was different. Hopes and dreams became reality in Jesus. That is good reason to celebrate!

So let us look forward to the celebration. Let us be expectant of good things to come. But let us remember what we are celebrating. In amongst all the presents, tinsel and indulgence keep an eye out for Jesus. He will be there - just waiting to be noticed and to be asked to be a part of your Christmas celebrations. Let us make sure He is expected!

Nigel



COME THOU
LONG-EXPECTED
JESUS
BORN TO SET
THY PEOPLE
FREE

CONFIRMATION

I know, it does seem rather early to be talking about Confirmations for 2013 when we have not yet had Advent, the Christmas season or Lent!



The confirmation of our candidates, from the United Benefice, will be by Bishop Chris at Christ Church Walmersley on 5th May 2013 at 6.30pm.

I need now to have an idea of the number of both adults and children who will want to take lessons and be confirmed on the above date. Children must be as near to the age of 11 at the date of confirmation, i.e. in year 6.

Can you please let me know as soon as possible of any children or adults wanting to be confirmed in May 2013?

If there are very few in number, perhaps it may be an option to have the confirmations with another church for this year? I will not be able to lead the classes, so will need volunteers, to lead the adult and children's classes.

If you would like to lead the lessons for either children or adults, please let me know as soon as possible. The material will be provided to enable you to deliver the classes. Once I have numbers and volunteers we can sort out where and when the lessons will take place.

Thank you.
Janet

NOTES FROM CHURCH COUNCILS

Much of the energies of our combined PCCs recently has been harnessed towards the preparation of a Profile for our United Benefice. This is the document sent to any clergy who may be interested in coming to serve among us and lead us forward in mission.

It includes lots of facts – details of our patrons, our officers, our buildings, the clergy team. It attempts to give a flavour of the town of Bury and the area in which our two churches are situated. The schools to be found within our boundaries are included, and where relevant the relationship between the churches and schools. It speaks of the opportunities to contact the wider community, through the use made of our buildings by various groups.

It also gives an overview of the provisions made for our children and young people, and the other groups within the church.

The state of our building and of our finances are, of course, required too.

Much of the above was easily put together. The sections which required more discussion were those where we were asked to identify our mission priorities and the qualities we look for in our next priest.

PCC members met in small groups, separately, and jointly. Then, once the text was agreed, the task was to make the end result an attractive document.

Now we wait - and pray!!

BIBLE READINGS FOR DECEMBER

2 FIRST OF ADVENT

Jeremiah 33: 14-16 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13 Luke 21: 25-36

9 SECOND OF ADVENT

Malachi 3: 1-4 Philippians 1: 3-11 Luke 3: 1-6

16 THIRD OF ADVENT

Zephaniah 3: 14-20 Philippians 4: 4-7 Luke 3: 7-18

23 FOURTH OF ADVENT

Micah 5: 2-5a Hebrews 10: 5-10 Luke 1: 39-45

24 CHRISTMAS EVE

Isaiah 52: 7-10 Hebrews 1: 1-4 (5-12) John 1: 1-14

25 CHRISTMAS DAY

Isaiah 62: 6-12 Titus 3: 4-7 Luke 2: 8-20

26 ST STEPHEN

2 Chronicles 24: 20-22 Acts 7: 51-60 Matthew 10:
17-22

27 ST JOHN

Exodus 33: 7-11 1 John 1 John 21: 19-25

28 HOLY INNOCENTS

Jeremiah 31: 15-17 1 Corinthians 1: 26-29 Matthew 2:13-18

30 FIRST OF CHRISTMAS

1 Samuel 2: 18-20,26 Colossians 3: 12-17 Luke 2: 41-52

FROM THE REGISTERS

Holy Baptism

- 28 October Joshua James Heyes
Ollie Jason Keith Brindley
- 4 November Isabella Rose Smith
- 18 November Ruby Mae Lee Reader

We welcome them into the Lord's family

Christian Marriage

- 26 October Chris Sedman and Gemma Bannister

Those whom God has joined together let no one put asunder

Christian Funeral

- 9 November Sheila Parkinson
- 12 November Edith McGuinness

May they rest gently in the arms of God

FLOWERS AT CHRIST CHURCH

- December 2 In memory of J. Melling and M. Illesley
- December 9 Mrs. O. Greenhalgh
- December 16 Mr & Mrs R Nicholls in memory of their parents
- December 23 The Congregation
- December 30 In memory of Mr & Mrs Barcroft Wostenholme



ADVENT FROM UNUSUAL ANGLES

STUDIES on WAITING FOR CHRISTMAS

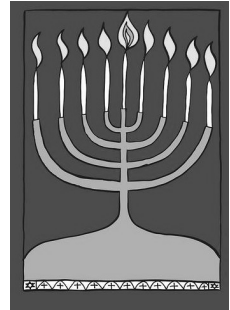
Four Tuesdays: 27th November - 18th December 2012

7.30pm @ 150 Walmersley Road, Bury

Led by Una Kroll and Ian Banks

Everyone is welcome. Please bring a Bible

While there is an over-arching theme, each session stands in its own right - so if you can't make it one week you can still enjoy the rest.



Using the Bible readings for each week of Advent, explore:

- ~ Finding the time to wait expectantly
- ~ Using wisely the time of waiting
- ~ Resting with God
- ~ Anticipation of joy

"BACON BUTTY SUNDAY"

Due to the popularity of our first event, we are going to do this all over again.

Try a bacon sandwich with your Sunday morning cuppa after the 10:30am service on Sunday 16 December in St John's Church Hall.

All proceeds to Church Funds.



Christingle

Monday December 3rd
at 6.30 p.m.
Christ Church

Please come and support this informal service at which Christingles will be distributed and the church path illuminated with candles (weather permitting).



All proceeds from the service will be given to the Children's Society to support the "Safe in the City" project helping to protect young people who have run away from home and find themselves on the streets of our cities, including Manchester. Last year we collected over £400. Please help us to continue this work.

CHILD FRIENDLY CHURCH

I am hoping to 'make a date' early in the New Year 2013, with Steve Dixon to enable both our churches, to start working towards the Child Friendly Church award.

If you would like to be involved and be a member of the team at Christ Church, who will work together in the process and carry it forward, please let me have your name as soon as possible. It would be good if one or two of our teenagers would like to be involved too.

Please, don't be shy, or wait to be asked you could be just that person we are looking for.

Thank you.
Janet

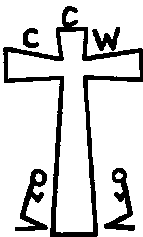
Junior Church Presentation

Please support all our children and young people with those who lead them, as at Christ Church on Sunday 9th December they celebrate.

Presentation Sunday is the time at Christ Church when we celebrate our Junior Church - the young people and their leaders. Every one of them will be given a special card to commemorate their membership of Junior Church.

Also there will be attendance badges distributed and for the second year running the Baldingstone Trust is able to present a special gift to the children that have reached their 100 attendances this year.

During the service we are pleased to be able to give to some of our young people a bible to help them on their Christian journey.



**In the desert someone is shouting,
"Get the road ready for the Lord!
Make a straight path for him."**

Luke 3: 4 (CEV)

If you are not a member of Junior Church at Christ Church or of Sunday School at St John with St Mark, why not come along one Sunday at 10.30 a.m. and see what it is like? Or if you do come, tell your friends how much fun you have and bring them along with you.

Also, getting together every Sunday evening, JAM is the place to be for kids from 11 to 16 years old

FOR QUIET MOMENTS

WEEK ONE

A voice of one calling,
"In the desert prepare
the way for the LORD
make straight in the wilderness
a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be raised up,
every mountain and hill made low,
the rough ground shall become level,
the rugged places a plain.
And the glory of the LORD will be revealed
and all mankind together will see it.
For the mouth of the LORD has spoken."
(Isaiah Chap. 40, vv 3-5)

Father, at this season of Advent, let us prepare for the coming of our Lord. Help us to think of the true meaning of Christmas, the most wondrous gift that we could be given, a light for the world. Help us not to get caught in the rush and bustle of the season but to relax and rest in you and your precious son and reflect on what his birth means for us. Thank you Father.

WEEK TWO

Heavenly Father, we pray this week for all those for whom Christmas holds no joy: for those for whom the loss of a loved one is more poignant and traumatic at this time; and for those who will be alone without family and friends to share the joy of the season. Lord, help them to know that you are with them in their sorrow, that they are not alone, that you sent the light of the world to them in the form of your son at Christmas. Comfort and bless all your people at this holy time. Amen.

WEEK THREE

Dear Lord, at this special time of year, we pray for peace in the world. Peace in Syria and Afghanistan and in the Middle East between Israel and the Palestinians. Lord, let the coming of your son as a babe be a portent for peace. We pray for those living in appalling conditions in refugee camps, and those in towns and villages terrified for their lives. O Lord, hear our prayer and let there be peace. Amen.

WEEK FOUR

A light shining in the east
Angels singing
A gentle virgin
giving birth to your precious babe.
In a stable so poor and bare
with animals for company.
This wondrous gift to us,
visited by shepherds and wise men from afar
is a King, a saviour for our world.
Thank you, thank you, Lord for your son,
for Mary and Joseph and their obedience.
May we rejoice at this time with you
and your angels and saints in heaven.
Amen.



IDEAS FOR ADVENT

- ❖ As Christmas cards arrive, save them with your Advent wreath or candle and use your Advent prayer time to pray for the senders.
- ❖ Some families set up the manger scene and each day move the people and animals in a little closer.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

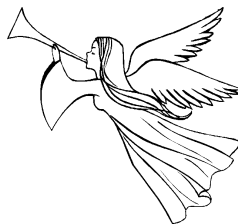
Sunday, 23rd December

for the United Benefice
6.30 p.m. at Christ Church

Festival of Lessons and Carols

with the Haslingden and Helmshore Brass Band

Hear the GOOD NEWS and join in singing new and traditional CAROLS – a great opportunity to celebrate with all the family.



Monday, 24th December

5.00 p.m. at St John with St Mark

Crib Service

to which everyone is welcome

6.00 p.m. at Christ Church

N Creativity

All ages are invited to come and make the Christmas Story.



Midnight Service

At 11.30 p.m. in both churches

Share in the first Eucharist of Christmas

At Christ Church – Archdeacon David Bailey

Tuesday, 25th December
CHRISTMAS DAY

At 10.00 a.m. in both churches

Festal Eucharist

Celebrate the birth of a Saviour



Wednesday, 26th December

Feast of St Stephen

10.00 a.m. **Holy Communion** at St John with St Mark

Thursday, 27th December



St John's Patronal Festival

10.00 a.m. **Holy Communion**
at St John with St Mark

Friday, 28th December

Holy Innocents Day

10.00 a.m. **Holy Communion** at St John with St Mark

Members of all churches
and of none will receive
a warm welcome at all our services.

★
**KEEP
CHRIST IN
CHRISTMAS**

~~C~~reativity

**Christmas
Eve**

6pm



Family Celebration

Christ Church Walmersley

The Spotlight

A spotlight shone onto the earth
Illuminating the darkness,
Revealing crevices and corners no one had ever seen before,
Combing the world in search of cobwebs,
Zooming in on specks of dust
so that all could see them for what they were –
Mountains of dirt.
But the people were angry,
Angry and frightened.
'Give us back our darkness,' they said.
'In the darkness we didn't see the dust – we want no light.'
So they destroyed that spotlight,
Snuffed it out as one would a candle.
Darkness once more!
But it was darkness with a difference.
For everywhere along the edge of the world
Appeared lights, tiny lights,
Miniature copies of the spotlight, not nearly as strong,
But shedding tiny beams of light onto the dust.
They began to multiply – slowly,
Then faster and faster.
They were the spotlight's hope
And the spotlight was their reason for existence.
And they waited for the light.

And the light looked down upon the globe
And saw the tiny sparks of light.
Some were flickering,
Some were dim,
Some were bright as the North Star,
And in between there was darkness.
And the light prepared to shatter the darkness – for ever.

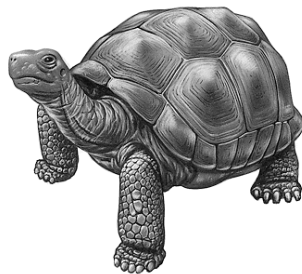
Here we are almost at the end of 2012!

It has been a very exciting year and 2013 promises to be even more exciting, as it brings new challenges to us all, not least to Kathryn Bailey as our new Branch leader and to Barbara Taylor and me as we take up our new posts.

This is likely to be my last contribution to the magazine in my current role and I would like to take the opportunity to say what a privilege it has been to be Branch Leader. I have enjoyed every minute and thank everyone for their wonderful support. It is with great confidence that I hand over to Kathryn and I am certain that the Branch will continue to go from strength to strength.

Our Communion service followed by pie and peas and postcard competition was a thoroughly enjoyable evening from all accounts and I am pleased to say that I won with the best harbour photo! Watch this space for next year's subject!

Peter Smith provided an entertaining and informative talk about the Galapagos Islands showing us the wealth of wildlife and an insight into his love of travel.



Autumn Council was, as always, an information-filled day and I must recommend to you all that you take time to attend one of the two Councils that take place each year. They are a marvellous opportunity for you to share fellowship and share in the wealth of information about our projects. It is always astounding to hear about all the wonderful work we do in the Diocese and beyond.

The Mothers' Union Provincial Celebration was held in Manchester Cathedral on November 8th and several members of our Branch took part. It was an uplifting service if a little sad in view of the retirement of Bishop Nigel but with much to celebrate as Lynne Tembey moves on to be the Worldwide President and our own Barbara to be Provincial President.

Barbara Taylor and I are privileged to be attending both the retirement service of Bishop Nigel at Manchester Cathedral and the commissioning of Lynne Tembey as Worldwide President at St. Matthew's in London. I am sure that you will be hearing a full report about both these events.

Love to you all and wishing you a Peaceful and Blessed Christmas.

Catherine Hilton
Branch Leader

Dates for your diary

Dec 5	Advent Preparation
Dec 12	Christmas Meal at The Red Hall
Dec 2	2.30pm Deanery Advent Service at St James' Woolfold
Dec 6	1.15pm Diocesan Advent Service at St Ann's Manchester
Jan 30	7.30pm Commissioning of Diocesan President at Manchester Cathedral
May 17	11am Commissioning of Provincial President at York Minster

Store up your treasures in Heaven



- not under the Christmas Tree

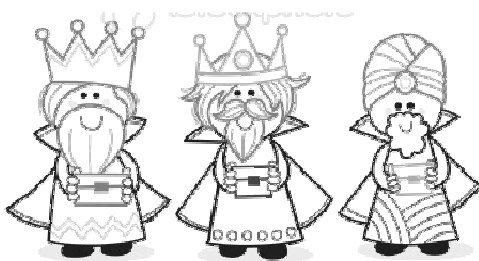
For many of us, one of the most sincere pleasures we have at Christmas is seeing the wonder and excitement of children.

But in our increasingly materialistic and commercialised world, the values our children are absorbing and developing can often be about what they own, and their possessions define their own sense of self-worth: "I am cool because I own this product". Commercial pressures on childhood can put a big strain on family life - particularly at Christmas. Research carried out by ComRes for Mothers' Union showed that nearly nine out of ten parents feel Christmas is too commercialised, and nearly seven out of ten feel their children believe Christmas is about receiving rather than giving.

As part of their *Bye Buy Childhood* campaign Mothers' Union has launched a new booklet to help families manage commercial influences on family life. To help parents manage their children's expectations, members of Mothers' Union have offered some useful tips which are particularly helpful in the run up to Christmas:-

- have a conversation with your child to ask them what they would like for Christmas, rather than simply asking them to write a list.
- discuss the family budget with your child to teach them money management - for example discuss how much money could be saved by buying shop brands rather than brand names on some products.
- talk to your child about why you have set certain boundaries. It helps to build common understanding.

- teach your child how to save - it is an important skill for life. Having to save up pocket money to buy something provides a test of the importance of a purchase to your child. Perhaps explain that grown ups also have to learn to save up for things they really want.
- not buying something for children will not make them suffer or scar them for years to come, even if the child often makes it sounds like it is going to. Your child will not hate you forever for not buying the latest Barbie/Wii/Xbox.



And remember, the wise men came with one, carefully chosen gift each for Jesus, not a whole pile of presents.

For Christians, Christmas presents are a symbolic reminder of the gift of Jesus, freely given by God rather than sent to us because he was nagged or pressured to. Jesus was, too, the gift that was most needed by humankind. Expected as a king, he came instead as a servant, born in humble surroundings.

At this time of expectation - the anticipation of the coming of Christ, we want to encourage families to have a Christmas which is not just a time of material satisfaction and where the gift of giving is the not the sandbag against disappointment, but a time when parents and children alike feel that special magic of giving to one another as God gave to us.

To find out more about the Bye Buy Childhood campaign or the new booklet visit or talk to a member of Mothers' Union.

TREE FESTIVAL

At TOTTINGTON METHODIST CHURCH

A 3-day Christmas Tree Festival

Members say they are looking forward to a "Glorious display of light and colour to herald the beginning of Advent and the coming of Christmas".

Friday November 30th,
Saturday and Sunday
1st & 2nd December.

Also on Sunday, 3rd December at 10.30am, a special Advent and Festival Family Service.



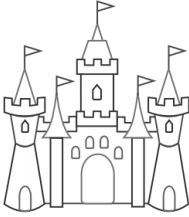
Upwards of 30 Christmas Trees, decorated to a specific theme with Craft and other Stalls, Music, and a Café serving a range of refreshments.

Proceeds to the Church for its ongoing mission and work, and the charity, "Porch Boxes" which provides crisis packs for those in need in the Bury, Bolton and Rochdale areas.

Pray-ing

Come along
for the usual relaxed, informal hour
of songs and prayers.

Monday, 10 December at 7.30pm
at 49 Fairlands Road.



The Great Grill Crisis

***– or how the sizzling nearly stopped
at Christ Church Autumn Fair!***

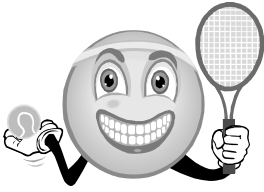
The Autumn Fair opened at 10.30am on Saturday 3rd November with the usual hustle and bustle as folk came into the church hall to enjoy all what was on offer. However by 11.00am it became very noticeable that the queue for bacon butties was getting longer and longer. Head bacon chef Dennis was maintaining his well known calm exterior but one could sense a certain amount of exasperation was building. Problem? “I’ve just realised that only half the grill is working...grrrrr!!!” Dennis politely explained!

The fact that production was now working at half speed was passed on to the expectant line of bacon butty aficionados. In true British spirit, polite smiles were exchanged and shoulders were shrugged and there were no obvious signs of a riot. “Keep calm and carry on, Dennis” was the cry. In the end sixty butties made it through and all orders were met – appropriately, the chairman of the church hall committee taking the last one. Another crisis averted at CCW!

Bacon butties apart the Fair was a great success. Many came to enjoy the array of stalls and other attractions. Friends and families met up and chatted. There was a buzz of people socialising. The relaxed atmosphere did tense a little when the time came for the raffle to be drawn – but that was to be expected when there were such good prizes on offer!

On the day we raised £1330 though with further monies coming that has risen to £1350. The proceeds will be going into church funds but as usual we shall be making a donation of 10% of the proceeds to charity – this time The Manchester Probation Trust which looks after our church yard (for free!).

Thank you all very much for your support.



TENNIS CLUB QUIZ NIGHT

The latest Quiz Night held on Saturday, 27 October was, once again, a social and financial success. Despite the fact that almost a dozen of our regular attenders were missing due to other pre-existing commitments and illness, 60 contestants turned up for an enjoyable evening. There was an impressive breadth of general knowledge on display (none of it serious) apart from some vociferous disagreement about the Question-master's original definition of 'gnocchi'!

As is usually the case, the competition was a close run affair with the winners, Gill and Peter Smith and Diane and Bruce Hardman, holding a very slender lead over the runners-up. They won a tin of Celebrations chocolates whilst the second placed team each got a Crunchie bar because they had just failed when 'things came to the crunch!'

A record £188 was passed to Nigel to add to the Church funds, which made the evening even more worthwhile.

I was asked if it would be feasible to run our Quiz Nights on a more frequent basis, but this is not really possible given all the other events taking place in the parish. So, for the time being, we shall stick to four a year.

Make a note in your diary: the next quiz will be held towards the end of January when the winners will be given the prestigious title of "Brains of Walmersley 2013".

Get swotting!

Stan Parkinson

- 19 9.15 am Coffee Morning & Toddler Group (SJ w SM)
- 20 8.00 pm Joint PCC get together
- 23 **ADVENT 4**
Services at the usual times
- See pages 16/17 for details of services over the Christmas period.
- 30 **FIRST OF CHRISTMAS**
Services at the usual times
- 31 7.30 pm New Year's Eve Party (SJ w SM)

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

Be eco –friendly and at the same time support the charity of your choice.

Pin one card on the board in church for all to see and so share Christmas greetings with many in the congregation.



The 'post-boxes' will be available as usual during December to facilitate the exchange of cards to those to whom you wish to send a more personal greeting.

INTERREGNUM MATTERS



If you have any queries during the interregnum please call in at the office at St John with St Mark on Wednesday evening - 6.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. or contact the wardens, clergy or readers.



Available this year exclusively through Tradecraft
www.traidcraftshop.co.uk - just £3.78