





St. Gabriel

The Parish of The Good Shepherd,



St. James

Ashton-under-Lyne



St. Peter



St. Michael and All Angels

January 2016
Price 50p

Editorial

Good bye 2015 and welcome 2016!! After the joyful celebrations of Christmas, we can perhaps expect a quieter time during January, although there are still celebrations ahead. The Feast of the Epiphany on the 6th January marks the beginning of the season of Epiphany. Epiphany means manifestation and the traditional observation begins with the celebration of the visit of wise men from the East. It then explores other ways in which Christ reveals himself to be the Son of God: the celebration of the baptism of Christ by John, when the voice from Heaven declared Jesus to be God's beloved Son; and Jesus's first miracle, when he turned water into wine at a wedding in Cana.

In this perspective, the season of Epiphany provides an opportunity for the Church to pray for the worldwide mission of the Church. The week of Prayer for Christian Unity falls appropriately in the Epiphany season.

A happy and peaceful New Year to you all!

If you would like to submit an article, we would love to hear from you!!

The views expressed in articles in the magazine are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Parish of The Good Shepherd. Please consider writing something for the magazine yourself! And, if you have any comments to make on the Magazine you can contact the editor, Roger Farnworth on 0161 330 2771 or talk to a member of your DCC or PCC who will pass on any comments that are made.

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The Parish Prayer

Father God, whose Son came to bring love and peace to the world, help us to grow in faith and share our hope and joy with all whom we meet, so

that we can work together to build your kingdom in Ashton, welcome new people into our churches, and be relevant to those around us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

www.goodshepherdashton.co.uk

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Happy New Year!

Have you made your new year's resolutions yet? Maybe by the time you read this article you have forgotten or broken them already. Maybe you're like me and stopped making them years ago because you knew that you wouldn't keep them.

Well the New Year is upon us and I guess that we can only wonder what the coming year will have in store for us.

Personally, as many of you know, this will be a massive year for us as a family. Dan is already away at University in Chester and Nathan will take his GCSE's this coming summer. As the third year of Katie and my, respective, curacies comes to an end, we will be moving on to pastures new. Although we've now got a reasonable grasp of the end of curacy process, it isn't yet clear as to where we will end up.

For the last 5 years, we have undertaken a particular leg of our journey with God, which took us away from our cosy existence in Radcliffe, to a relatively hectic 2 years at theological college in Nottingham, and then the blessing of the last few years with you guys here in Tameside. And I do believe that it has been a blessing for us, if not you! :-)

At times the last 5 years has felt a little bit like being on a

roller coaster, with ups and downs, sometimes living on adrenaline, but mostly with the assurance that there are tracks in front of the carriage and that it won't be derailing. There have been so many unknowns for us that I'm glad that we haven't been steering and we've had to rely on God to carry us through.

We will be getting our own churches going forward and we are not in a hurry to stop relying on God to guide us to them. I'm drawn to Proverbs 3:5-6 'Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding: in all your ways submit to him. and he will make your paths straight'. There is a lesson for all of us here to trust in the direction of the Lord, and to worry less. I know that this is naturally hard for many of us, but there are rewards for giving things to God and trusting in his care.

We pray that God will continue to make our paths straight and that as the future becomes a little clearer in the next few months we will continue to fix our eyes on him.

Oh, by the way, we haven't left yet!

Rev George

Ask, Seek and Knock



"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it will be opened to you." (Luke 11:9)

Please choose one focus for each week of the month or pray for all of the following issues throughout the month, as you prefer. There is a prayer at the end to draw it all together if you're unsure how to start or finish your prayers.

This month:

- At this start to a new year, please pray for the peace of God to descend on our world. For a new start to be made in bringing people together to live harmoniously alongside each other. That love and acceptance of our neighbours be followed by respect for our differences and friendship.
- Please pray for the year ahead. We pray for those who will face new beginnings and for those who will face endings in all different situations. Pray that they feel God's presence in their lives and are firm in the knowledge that God walks alongside us at all times and carries us when we are not able to walk ourselves.
- Please pray for our churches to reach out to the communities in which
 we serve. Help us to be welcoming and relevant places that are a joy
 to those who celebrate, a comfort to those who mourn, a sanctuary to
 those in need and a source of Good News to all.
- Please pray for those who are suffering with illness or pain, those living with mental illness or dementia, those who are grieving the loss of loved ones and those who struggle daily with the isolation of loneliness.

Lord, we offer you our prayers. Hear us as we bring our concerns to you and help is to place them into your hands in confidence that you will hear us.

Amen



Laughter is the best medicine!!

What did the raspberry say to the blueberry? Breathe, breathe!!! A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion A bicycle can't stand on its own because it is two tyred.

What's happening?

St. Michael's – Open Days

St. Michael's is now open every
Thursday from 10.30am to 3.00pm
The Eucharist will take place as usual at 11.00am on
Thursdays

Café Church

at St James Church Wednesday 13th January at 1.45pm

Everyone is welcome to join us for informal worship, coffee, cake and a chat

Café Church

Study Group at the Vicarage

Topic: Building a People of Faith

Be involved in the discussion

7pm Wednesday 27th January and 3rd February Venue: 2A Hutton Avenue

Collection for the Homeless

St Michael's Church wants to build a supply of goods that can be given to the homeless when they call:-

Underwear / Longjohns / Sleeping Bags / Socks Toothpaste / Tooth brushes / Deodorant Liquid Hand Soap / Hats / Gloves Clothes, inc Coats

If you have any items that you would like to contribute, please contact Revd Rachel



Mothers Union

On 8th November, Ashton
Deanery held their Branch
Meeting - at Christ Church
Denton. Five churches were
represented. Deanery Leader
Jean Driver welcomed
everyone and the meeting
opened with prayers.
Jean handed out copies of the
Council Meeting held on 30th
October to those who had
been unable to attend and we
discussed these.

At a previous meeting a question had been raised about Christmas gifts for the Men's Hostels - it was suggested that the new project "Just Up Your Street" was taking off quite well and was asking for various articles, and donations were needed, so had we done enough over the years for our two Men's Hostels? Nothing had been decided at that time, but this point was raised again at this meeting. There were mixed feelings about it, but as I had already received some articles for the hostels, it was decided that I should do it this year again. There were some changes last year, as one hostel does have

10 residents at all times, the other one seems to have men on a temporary basis, they then move on to other hostels, perhaps nearer to their families. However, I have made 30 parcels up from the generous supply of hats, gloves, scarves, deodorants, shampoo, toothpaste, tooth brushes and chocolate, and I put a Christmas Card in each parcel. I am very grateful to those ladies who sent these to me.

Jean Driver has now completed her 6years as our Deanery Leader and done them extremely well. She does not wish to continue in this role and at the moment we have no one to replace her. Joanne Roberts, Branch Leader for St Mary's Droylsden, had asked each Branch for a donation for a gift for Jean and at this meeting we presented Jean with an MU necklace and a bouquet of flowers, alona with a card signed by all of us thanking her for all the work and help she had given during her 6 years as Deanery Leader. Jean was surprised and very pleased!

For the time being, we have no Deanery Leader but it is hoped that something will be decided in the New Year.
The meeting closed with prayers.

It is with regret that I record the death of *Betty Kerrison* on 10th December. Betty was an Indoor Member and has, along with her sister, been members for many years. She

maintained her interest in the MU, despite not always being well enough to get to events. I met her in Ashton to give her the MU books and information, and we went for a coffee and had a good chat. She was always good company. May she rest in peace.

I wish you a happy and peaceful New Year

Thought for the month:

Dear Lord, pour out your blessings to all MU members, here and overseas, and as a New Year begins we pray for peace throughout the world

Joan Brayshaw

Friends of Ashton Parish Church



Friends Lunch Thursday 10th March 2016 Heroes of Waterloo Mossley Road OL6 9DQ

Once again we are going to the Heroes for our Annual Lunch. For those who are not members Booking Forms are available at the back of church and must be returned no later than Sunday 6th of March. Cheques to be made payable to The Friends of Ashton Parish Church c/o Mr A.F/Bacon, 17, St Christopher's Avenue, Ashton-under-Lyne OL6 9DTTel 0161 330 5829. Please join us for this annual event and bring your friends for an enjoyable Lunch.

Alan F. Bacon - Treasurer

Quiz for January

In January the Church celebrates the naming of Jesus, the Epiphany, and the baptism of Jesus. so our quiz is based on Matthew 2 and Luke 2 & 3.

Questions

- 1 Who said that Jesus should be called Jesus?
- 2 Which two people welcomed the infant Jesus at the Temple?
- 3 What would Jesus be to the Jews?
- 4 What would Jesus be to the Gentiles?
- 5 Whom did the wise men upset when they arrived in Jerusalam?
- 6 What three gifts did the wise men bring to Jesus?

- 7 How did the angel warn Joseph?
- 8 Where did Joseph take Mary and Jesus, to keep them safe?
- 9 In which body of water was Jesus baptised?
- 10 Who baptised him?
- 11 What happened when the heavens opened?
- 12 What did the voice say?

Answers on page 15

NEW YEAR 2016

If we put our hand in God's hand
As we enter this New Year

Not knowing what the future holds

But that our Friend is near.

We shall not fear what lies ahead If He is by our side, Nor wander from the pathway If He will be our guide. The Sinless One from heaven came

To dwell with us on earth, He sought and bought us with His blood

And offered us new birth.

Now as we travel through this year
He knows the things He's planned,
So let us trust and know just this Our times are in His hands.

By Megan Carter

Church Mission Society

Brazil Encounter 2016

Event date: 01/07/2016 -

28/07/2016

Next summer the world will be

travelling to Brazil to witness the 2016 Rio Olympics. CMS is inviting you to take part in a fun-filled and exciting adventure to this wonderful country.

- W BRAZIL VTF

As part of a team you will be participating and helping lead a sports holiday camp for children in the Recife area.

The Recife Gospel Camps will bring together children from different economic backgrounds with the hope and prayer of bringing communities and children together in the love of God. The camps will features sports, crafts and Bible activities, we also need people who can help with the organisation, hospitality and practical aspects of the camp.

This is a great opportunity to immerse yourself in another culture and deepen your faith during this Brazilian summer of sport.

The cost of the trip is £1,249. The price includes land transportation, accommodation and three meals a day. The cost does not include flights; we will inform you about the flights by March 2016.

Deadline for registration is 12 March 2016.

If you would like further information please download the info pack below, use the <u>'Enquire about this trip' form</u>, or email <u>Helen.Brook@cms-uk.org</u>.



Almighty, eternal, just and merciful God, grant us the desire to do only what pleases you, and the strength to do

only what you command. Cleanse our souls, enlighten our minds, and inflame our hearts with your Holy Spirit, that we may follow in the footsteps of your beloved Son, Jesus Christ.

St Francis of Assisi 1182 - 1226

Star Wars and the Lord's Prayer

Star Wars movies, from 1977 to the present, dramatise the conflict between good and evil. Drawing on themes from various religions and locating fictional events in an imaginary galaxy 'long ago and far away', Star Wars feature alien creatures, robots and the now famous Jedi who represent good, versus the Sith who are evil. An omnipresent energy, known as the 'Force' is said to bind the galaxy together.

So, when the latest in the Star Wars pop-culture series was scheduled for screening

just before Christmas last year, it offered an ideal opportunity to remind

cinema audiences of the importance of prayer in the real world, by drawing their attention to a brand new websitewww.justpray.co.uk.

A one-minute advertisement was made by the Church of England, with a wide range of people simply saying or singing the words of the Lord's Prayer, leading to the website. The video was paid for by the Allchurches Trust and approved by the British Board of Film Classification. The company selling the cinema advertising space, Digital Cinema Media, actually said they would give a discount of 55% on their standard

advertising rate. Months later, with no explanation for their change of mind, they issued rules which would exclude religious advertising on the grounds that it might offend.

News of this extraordinary ban hit the UK headlines, then went round the world. Within days, more than a million people had seen the video on YouTube and the justpray and other websites.

Director of Communications for the Archbishops' Council of the Church of England, the Revd Arun Arora, said:

> "the Church of England is absolutely full of people like me who make mistakes, but who have a change of

heart or who are led to repentance and forgiveness. I hope the next step would be for the people who run DCM: Odeon, Vue and Cineworld, to show the strength of leadership, to recognise they've made a mistake, have a change of heart and reconsider their decision".

Unknown opponents then attempted to bring down the website and fill it with spam messages. They failed. So in spite of everything, people who want to pray can still learn the 'Our Father' by

visiting www.justpray.co.uk.

25 January St Paul – the first Christian intellectual

This month, on 25th January, the Church celebrates probably the most famous conversion of all. At least, what happened to a young man called Saul on the road to Damascus has become a byword for all instant conversions - what is known as a 'damascene' moment. Saul was a devout Jew, a Pharisee, a student of Gamaliel and a fierce critic of the followers of Jesus, then a very new sect on the religious scene.

On his way to Damascus to organise a purge of Christians in that city, he was blinded by a bright light and heard a voice saying, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?' He asked the identity of the voice, and it replied, 'Jesus, whom you are persecuting'. Stunned by the experience, he followed further instructions which led him to a Christian man in Damascus, who prayed with him. As he did, Saul's sight was restored.

The experience convinced him that Jesus - crucified in Jerusalem four or five years earlier - was in fact the Messiah and had risen from the dead. After a period of instruction, Saul was baptised and took the name by which history has recognised him, Paul. At first, some Christians were wary about the reality of his conversion, but over a period of time he was accepted and indeed eventually recognised as an 'apostle', a 'special messenger' of Jesus Christ.

His intellectual stature and leadership gifts quickly marked him out, and within a few years he became a leading figure in the emerging Christian Church, preaching and founding churches all over the Middle East, largely of Gentile converts. He was eventually martyred in Rome, probably in 65AD.

Paul was the first intellectual of the Christian Church, the man who was able to set the events of the life and teaching of Jesus, and especially his death and resurrection, into a coherent theology, with its roots very clearly in the Jewish faith of his own upbringing. He's not always easy to follow. Even the New Testament admits that: 'there are some things (in his letters) hard to understand' (2 Peter 3:16). But at the same time he gave the new faith a foundation and credibility which have stood it well down the centuries.

Many people think of Paul as a rather negative, narrow misogynist, but even a quick reading of his letters actually reveals a person of great warmth, who evoked enormous affection and devotion from others. 'You would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me!' he writes to the Christians at Galatia. He was, of course, a man of his time and culture, in days when women were disregarded in terms of status and leadership.

But read his letters, and see how large a role women play in them and how much scope he gave them to lead and teach in the Church. In terms of the first century, St Paul was a dangerous liberal!

The amazing Paul of Tarsus deserves a bit of celebrating on 25th January.



Canon David Winter on how little things lead to big things...

The Way I See It: 'minute particulars' change lives

I was struck last Autumn by the way public reaction to the news was shaped by apparently small events – small, that is, against the backdrop of the 'big' news of the refugee crisis. One photo – of a Greek soldier carrying the body of a tiny boy who had drowned when a refugee boat sank – literally transformed public opinion in Britain.

The man leading the prayers in my church, who had pleaded with God to help us to wake up and do something about the plight of these people, admitted to me after the service that he had originally felt that stronger measures should be taken to limit this mass migration from Middle East war zones. 'What changed your mind?' I asked. 'Simple', he said. 'That picture. Instant conversion!'

I thought of that when I watched an elderly woman putting a bag

of pasta in the food bank bin in our local Coop store. Such



a small gesture, but full of profound intent. And then I remembered the words of the poet William Blake: 'He who would do good to another must do it in minute particulars'. That's profoundly true, because our lives are built of 'minute particulars'. Jesus pointed out to the crowds on one occasion that He, and the prophets of old, dealt with individuals. Not everyone was being healed, not every blind person restored to sight. If minute particulars would change things to the extent He did, then I'm all for them.

As the saying goes, I can't do everything, but that's no reason to do nothing'.

There's probably a New Year resolution there somewhere.



CHILDREN'S CORNER



What do you call a camel with 3 humps?

Humphrey!

Who rides a camel and carries a lamp?

Florence of Arabia!



Does Christmas seem long gone? Well, Christmas doesn't really end until Twelfth Night, 6th January. In the past all the 12 days of Christmas used to be celebrated with feasting and parties. January 6th is also the Feast of the Epiphany, which is the day on which the wise men, led by the star, arrived at Bethlehem At Christmas we sang about Three Kings but we don't really know who they were, kings or wise men or where they came from – you can check the details in St Matthew's Gospel, chapter 2.

We do know that they brought very expensive symbolic gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh for Jesus, not the usual things that you would give to a small baby. Traditionally the gifts have a special meaning: gold is for a king; frankincense (sweet smelling incense) is for God and myrrh (a spice used to prepare bodies for burial) for mortal man.

Pray with *Us* **for children** - Children live in a world created by adults and look to adults for nourishment, protection and auidance.

Sadly, being so vulnerable, children are often on the receiving end of all the hardships and conflicts adults create in the world.

"I no longer go to school. I don't know how I will survive"

Agnes, 17, Zambia

Both my father and mother died of HIV/AIDS in 2013. Since they died, I have been taking care of my 5year old brother and sister who is 7yrs. We live in the house left by my parents and life has become very difficult because I have to provide for my brother and sister. For me to buy food, I have started selling kapenta (small fish) and tomatoes on the streets. I no longer go to school. It pains me a lot to see my friends going to school knowing that I am not. I don't know how I will survive in the future."

Agnes is now receiving help from the Zambia Anglican Council Early Childhood Development Programme, which is providing her young siblings with healthcare and education.

Andrew, 17, Sierra Leone

Before the outbreak of the Ebola virus, I was staying with my mother and father in Bonde village and attending secondary school.

In August 2014, one of my uncles, who was staying with us, fell sick. They took him to hospital and he was tested positive for Ebola. A few days later he died. We were put into quarantine for 21 days. We were given food, soap and cloths for washing. During this time, my mother also got sick and was taken to hospital. Two days later, she died and was buried. During the outbreak, we did not attend school for nine months. My hope for the future is to be educated and to be become a doctor so I can help my family and country.

The Anglican Church in Sierra Leone is reaching out to communities left reeling by the Ebola outbreak, the worst of which has now passed.



Us are an Anglican mission agency working in partnership with churches around the world to improve health, put children in school, tackle discrimination, nurture leaders, give a voice to women and much more.

If you would like more information or to make a donation, go to www.weareUs.org.uk/europe

Online resource for parishes launched for HM The Queen's 90th official birthday



A central news-sharing resource for churches has been launched to encourage and equip communities as they organise celebrations to mark Her Majesty The Queen's 90th official birthday in June 2016. The Church of England's ChurchCare website will provide a virtual map of events and offers tips on themed celebrations, a helpful checklist on how to involve community partners as well as publicity opportunities. Dr John Inge, Bishop of Worcester and lead Bishop for Church Buildings said, 'Churches up and down the land will be organising myriad events in thanksaiving for the wonderful Christian service that the Queen has given, celebrating her commitment to God and the common good over ninety years. ChurchCare will be doing everything possible to help by offering practical advice and creating a virtual space where communities can exchange imaginative ideas on how to mark this great milestone in the life of our Queen and nation.' Official celebrations will take place in London between the 10th and 12th June including a thanksgiving

service at St Paul's Cathedral, a Birthday Parade on Horse Guards Parade and a street party in The Mall. It is envisaged that church events will be integrated into local community celebrations that take place that weekend. The birthday celebration weekend offers churches the opportunity to share local stories from the last 90 years through exhibitions and oral histories. securing these memories for future generations. Liturgical resources are also in preparation and will be made available on the CofF website in the New Year. The project encourages people to celebrate their community and provides a number of resources designed to assist in seeking sponsorship, generating publicity, and gathering information about local history. News of planned events can be sent to ChurchCare by email:

queensbirthday@churchofengland. org You can visit the resource online by using the following link: bit.ly/HMQ90 To find out more about events and news on Twitter follow @CofE_ChurchCare using #HMQ90

Answers to Quiz on page 8

- 1 The angel
- 2 Simeon & Anna
- 3 Many would fall, and many would rise because of him.
- 4 A light for revelation.
- 5 Herod
- 6 Gold, frankincense & myrrh

- 7 In a dream
- 8 Egypt
- 9 Jordan
- 10 John
- 11 A dove descended
- 12 You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.

Parish Notices



Baptisms:

We give thanks with the families and friends of:

November 2015

Draiden Lucas Khan Alex James Anderson Jordon Leigh Silcock Gemma Hayley Turner

December 2015

William Gregory Johns

Weddings:

There were no weddings in December

Funerals:

We pray with the families and friends of:

Betty Kerrison

Jean Clegg

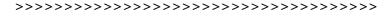
Richard Fisher

Dates for your Diary

January

Sunday 3rd 5.00pm Taize Service at St Michael's Church

Wednesday 27th 7.00pm Study Group at 2A Hutton Avenue





Vernon Shipley

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January 2016 - Parish Sunday Services

Epiphany Sunday 3 rd January	11.00am 11.00am	St James St Peter St Gabriel St Michael	Holy Communion + Baptism Morning Prayer + Baptism Holy Communion + Junior Church Holy Communion + Baptism	
Baptism of Christ Sunday 10 th January	9.30am 11.00am 11.00am 11.00am 4.00pm	St. Peter St. Gabriel	Holy Communion Holy Communion All Age Service of the Word Holy Communion St James on Sunday Afternoon	
2nd Sunday of Epiphany Sunday 17 th January <i>Week of Prayer for</i> <i>Christian Unity</i>	11.00am 11.00am	St. Gabriel	Family Communion Holy Communion Holy Communion + Junior Church Holy Communion	
3rd Sunday of Epiphany Sunday 24 th January	9.30am 11.00am 11.00am 11.00am 4.00pm	St James St. Peter St. Gabriel St. Michael St James	Family Communion Holy Communion All Age Service of the Word Holy Communion St James on Sunday Afternoon	
4th Sunday of Epiphany Sunday 31 st January	9.30am 11.00am 11.00am 11.00am 4.00pm	St James St Peter St Gabriel St Michael St James	Holy Communion Holy Communion Family Communion Holy Communion St James on Sunday Afternoon	
Regular Weekday Services				
Tuesday:	12.15pm	St Peter's (followed b	Morning Prayer/ Holy Communion by optional bring and share lunch)	
Wednesday: (except 2 nd Wed of the m		St. James	Holy Communion	

Thursday: 11.00am St. Michael Holy Communion

4.00pm Holy Trinity Evening Prayer



