

Deane Parish Church

Advent_Christmas 2011

Welcome to our Advent, Christmas and Epiphany edition for 2011! We hope you will find things to encourage you as we prepare to celebrate the coming into the world of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

The Word
Became flesh
and lived
among us
and we beheld
His glory
full of
grace
and

	9.00	10.30	6.00
27 Nov	Holy Communion	Morning Service	The reason for the season Bringing Life 1 John 4:9
	Though he was rich 2 Corinthians 8:91-9:5		
4 Dec	Holy Communion	All-Age Service	The reason for the season To bring us understanding 1 John 5:20
	Generous or stingy? 2 Corinthians 9;6-15		
11 Dec	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	Sharing the reason for the season 1 Jn 1:1-4;3:16-20
	Demolishing enemy strongholds 2 Corinthians 10:1-18		
18 Dec	Holy Communion	All-Age Nativity Service	Carols by Candlelight
	God does extraordinary things through ordinary people		
25 Dec	Holy Communion	All-Age Holy Communion	No evening service
	The rescuer is here!		

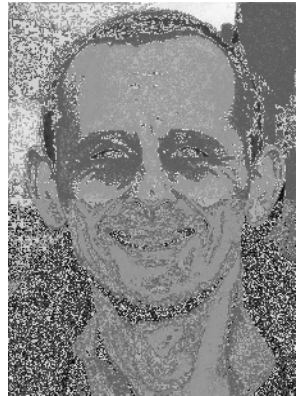
The seasons of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany occur in the period covered by this magazine. We have included some encouragements to think about each one. Observing the seasons of the Church's Year is a great aid in reinforcing the nature of God's revelation to us in Christ.

Our next edition will be published on February 19th and the deadline for copy is 31st January. It would be good if we could include photos of your Christmas activities. Please let the editor have them on anne-roberts@talktalk.net .

The joy of the Lord

"Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is sacred to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength." (Nehemiah 8:10 NIV)

Each year from about late October I am struck by the way advertisers seek to persuade us that if we have a new sofa (or whatever!) delivered before Christmas then our life will be complete! Or if our children get this toy or a trip to that theme park, they will be truly happy and love us so much more. The perfect Christmas is only £799.99 (plus delivery, easy payment option available) away! Every year people buy into this fiction. And what an expensive fiction to buy into!



Do you remember what the angel of the Lord said to the shepherds? *"Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord"*. (Luke 2:10-11 NIV)

Joy is one of those 'big' Bible words, up there with love and grace and peace! There are actually four Bible words translated 'joy' but they have similar meanings and all are rooted in relationship with God. Joy is not the same as happiness. It is deeper than happiness since it also has the sense of security within God's sovereign rule and provision. And joy does not depend on physical circumstances. The Apostle Paul (who was having a really tough time in Macedonia) could write to the

Christians in Corinth in the 1st century AD: "*I am greatly encouraged; in all our troubles my joy knows no bounds.*" (2Corinthians 7:4 NIV).

Centuries earlier on an occasion in Jerusalem when there had been a public reading (and explaining!) of Scripture, God's people were deeply challenged about their neglect of God and his word and they grieved and wept. And Nehemiah reminds them that the joy of the Lord is their strength, after which their sorrow turns to joy and praise. And it is interesting how joy and praise turned their hearts to provide for those who had less than they... perhaps something we all need to be especially mindful of in the run-up to Christmas!

I'm often struck by the tragic reality that many people's joy is so deep that it rarely surfaces! For some the Christian life is at best a discipline, at worst a chore. Or it's all about head-knowledge and not much about relationship. What a bankrupt understanding and experience of the Kingdom of God and the Christian life! With joy go contentment, peace, hope and strength. No new sofa or visit to a theme park can do that! Joy is at the heart of the Christmas tidings that the angel brings to the shepherds in Bethlehem. The news that God himself had come to earth in human flesh to teach them and us about himself and to make it possible for them and us to be in a very special relationship with him. A relationship of joy and peace and security. A relationship where we need never again feel lonely or inadequate or without value, purpose or meaning.

May the joy of the Lord be your strength this Advent, this Christmas and into 2012.

Terry Clark



ADVENT

As November closes, Advent begins. The exact birth-date of Jesus is not known, but during the 5th century the date of 25 December was chosen to become the Feast of the Nativity, or Christmas.

By the sixth century, the Christian Church was in the habit of spending several weeks leading up to Christmas in prayerful, expectant preparation. The fourth Sunday before Christmas Day became Advent Sunday. 'Advent', of course, means 'coming', or 'coming in', and traditionally special candles have been lit, and more recently, advent calendars used, as the Church prepares itself for the coming of the Holy Child, the long-awaited Messiah.

The Advent wreath

The Advent wreath is an increasingly popular symbol of the beginning of the Church year in many churches as well as homes. It is a circular evergreen wreath (real or artificial) with five candles, four around the wreath and one in the centre. Since the wreath is symbolic and a vehicle to tell the Christmas story, there are various ways to understand the symbolism. The exact meaning given to the various aspects of the wreath is not as important as the story to which it invites us to listen, and participate.

The **circle of the wreath** reminds us of God Himself, his eternity and endless mercy, which has no beginning or end. The **green of the wreath** speaks of the hope that we have in God, the hope of newness, of renewal, of eternal life. **Candles** symbolise the light of God coming into the world through the birth of His son. The **four outer candles** represent the period of waiting during the four Sundays of Advent, which themselves symbolize the four centuries of waiting between the prophet Malachi and the birth of Christ.



Between the Testaments

Earlier this year in our sermons we were looking at how God prepared his chosen people, the Jews, for the arrival of Jesus. But have you ever thought about how God was in fact preparing the whole world for the arrival of his Son?

By the time Jesus was born, communication throughout the known world was as easy as it ever had been, there were good roads and the knowledge of only two languages, Latin and/or Greek, would have enabled a traveller to understand and be understood in almost any town or city anywhere.

Between 336 and his early death in 323 BC Alexander the Great, King of Macedon, conquered the whole of Greece, the Middle East, Egypt, what is now Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan and even ventured into NW India and southern Russia. When Alexander died his empire fell apart, but he had left cities and governments and the Greek language in all the places he conquered. Greek was to be the language of education, government and literature for many centuries. It was because Greek was THE language almost everyone could understand that the New Testament was written in Greek. Just a little bit later in the second century BC the Romans began to spread their influence outside Italy into Spain, France, north Africa and eastwards into Yugoslavia, Greece and the Middle East and north into Belgium and parts of Germany. Britain was not conquered until 43 AD.

The Romans imposed Latin on the areas they dominated, but Greek was always the commonest language in the eastern Mediterranean. Indeed all Romans learnt Greek and many spoke it fluently.

So by the time Jesus was born language was no barrier to the gospel spreading throughout the Roman Empire.

But the Romans were also great road builders. Travel was as easy as it would be until the 19th century on good roads and on the many ships which regularly crossed the seas. In the east Roman

roads linked up with ancient trade routes bringing silks from China and cottons and spices from India. When St Paul was in Damascus (one of the main trade centres at the time) he could have met merchants bringing in tin from the Cornish tin mines and amber from the Baltic as well as those selling Chinese silks and Indian cottons.

But there was one other way in which the world was being prepared. In 27 BC Augustus became the first Roman Emperor. In the previous sixty years there had been many civil wars in the Roman world with Roman fighting Roman and hundreds of thousands of innocent people being killed. Augustus was far from being a 'nice chap' or a constitutional monarch, but his reign brought in a time of calm and stability when there was peace and security. He encouraged poets to write patriotic poetry praising the glory of Rome and the peace that it had brought to the world. The most famous poet of the time was Vergil who wrote the Aeneid. But Vergil also wrote one short poem which predicted the birth of a boy child who would be the son of gods and would bring in a golden age which would never end. Augustus and Vergil were no doubt thinking of a child to be born to Augustus and his wife. But Augustus never had a son; his only child was a daughter.

So should we dismiss that poem as an unfortunate mistake? Was it a co-incidence that Vergil wrote about the birth of a very special baby? We know that there was a boy child born in the reign of Augustus who was and is the Son of God and whose reign will never end. So

BC / AD

was Vergil's poem a co-incidence.....or a God-incidence?

And so the decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed.... Mary and Joseph set out for Bethlehem..... The world was ready for Jesus' arrival.

Advent Calendar

Advent calendars are not just for children. Whatever your age , on your own, or living with others, why not have an Advent Calendar to help you anticipate Christmas?

Use it to help you pray for Christ's coming in your own heart.

From the Huckers

our link missionaries in Chile

Crossing the Andes

The beginning of the year we set out on an adventure to cross the Andes and reach Argentina, a 17-hour bus trip. We set off not really knowing what to expect, just having faith in God that He had it all in control. It was the peak season for travelling and all tickets for buses were taken, so we went as far as we could in Chile

and arrived at the border in a quaint little town called San Pedro de Atacama. This *pueblito* (small village) numbered around 2,000 people, but swells to over 15,000 during the holiday season. In this seemingly insignificant town there was a gathering of the nations, as many different countries were represented in this tiny oasis.

After spending two nights in this tourist hot spot, we were finally able to board a bus headed for Salta Argentina. We passed through the high altitudes of the magnificent Andes Ranges, with 5,000m being the highest point. Needless to say, the scenery was breathtaking. Having just snowed, this added to the mystic majesty of the unspoilt landscape on offer through the crossing. Arriving in Salta we were able to stay a few nights, do some sightseeing, relax and then finally return home to Chile.

Fresh optimism

2011 started with a lot of optimism for us in the Church. This year has been by far the best year with the congregation growing, *los hermanos* (brothers and sisters in Christ) participating in ministry, the building 90 per cent finished and a general belief that God is moulding and shaping the community of believers that gather in Arica under the title of Anglicans. We have baptised various people, married others and generally been encouraged by the way everything has been unfolding according to God's gracious plan.



We three kings of Orient are... what?

"A cold coming they had of it at this time of the year, just the worst time of the year to take a journey, and specially a long journey, in. The ways deep, the weather sharp, the days short, the sun farthest off, in solstitio brumali, the very dead of winter."

It was 1622, and the Bishop of Winchester, Launcelot Andrews, was preaching a magnificent sermon to King James I. Reckoned one of the best preachers ever, Launcelot Andrews' words were later taken up by T S Eliot and transformed into his wonderful poem 'The Journey of the Magi'. What a vivid picture - we can see it all! The camels' breath steaming in the night air as the kings, in their gorgeous robes of silk and cloth-of-gold and clutching their precious gifts, kneel to adore the baby in the manger.

Yet the Bible does not give us as much detail as some people think. Tradition down the centuries has added a great deal more. For instance, we know from St Matthew that the magi were 'wise', or learned men of some sort, but we do not know if they were kings or not. The Bible tells us there were several; tradition has decided upon three, and even named them: Balthassar, Melchior, and Gaspar. But the Bible does tell us that the magi gave baby Jesus three highly symbolic gifts: gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. Gold stands for kingship, frankincense for worship, and myrrh for anointing - anticipating his death.

The term *epiphany* means "to show" or "to make known" or even "to reveal." In Western churches, it remembers the coming of the wise men bringing gifts to visit the Christ child, who by so doing "reveal" Jesus to the world as Lord and King.



This month's profile

Lee Higson

As a newly elected warden, it's great to have an opportunity to tell you a little about myself and I hope to get to know many more of you over the coming months. I was born in 1976, lived my childhood years on Ladybridge and was a regular attendee at Sunday School, Cubs and Scouts here at St. Mary's. Like many young people though, I lost interest in the church for a few years, but re-found my faith at 14 and got involved with a local Baptist church for a number of years.

I went to Deane School, Canon Slade VI form and then Bangor University where I studied theology for three years. In addition to theology, I've always had a love for ships and the sea since a very early age. And so in 1997, I started at nautical college as a deck cadet in South Shields, qualifying in 2000 as a deck officer. Sailing mostly on gas carriers, tankers and container ships with Maersk Line, I've now visited over 120 ports in 85 different countries and islands (having some amazing experiences in the process!). In 2007, I was promoted to Chief Mate and also passed my Master Mariner examination. Since 2006, I have also held a commission (Lt) in the Royal Navy Reserve, serving within the Amphibious Warfare branch.

In 2007, I married Melanie and very soon we were expecting our first son (Harry). Melanie had joined me on several trips at sea but we both decided that the days of long tours at sea should come to an end. In 2008, we both relocated to Aberdeen for a year where I was mostly office based as a marine superintendent. At the end of the year, we moved back to Bolton to be nearer to family and friends. I started a new job with the same company working on an FPSO - a converted

oil tanker which produces oil and gas from the Curlew oil field (about 120 miles east of Aberdeen). It's not as exciting as navigating around the world but the time off makes it worthwhile.

In 2009, we had our second son, Isaac, and being located back in Bolton (Hunger Hill), we were able to get more involved with St. Mary's which we'd been sporadically attending since 2006. In addition to my warden duties, I co-ordinate the men's ministry, sit on the DCC and regularly lead intercession. My wife Melanie runs the toddler group. It's great to see that St. Mary's is positively thriving and I look forward to seeing what God has in store for us as the church grows and sets itself new challenges.

As a seafarer who spends a lot of time looking at the stars - it is the design and order within the constellations that absolutely convinces me of the existence of God and it also reveals a lot about his nature (infinite love and power, transcending time and space etc). Whenever I need a faith boost, I just take a look up into the stars.

Keeping up with Bible reading and prayer is something most of us struggle with. I've found that using an app on my smartphone called the "You Version Bible" is great for keeping on track as it offers various reading plans and also allows the reading of God's word in any of a multitude of translations that can be downloaded. My favourite books of the Bible are Daniel and James.



Evening Specials

Since September we have held four 'special' evening services. They are 'special' in the sense that they are different to our normal Sunday evening services, with each having a specific focus:

Prayer for Healing service (25th September)

This was the second Prayer for Healing service at Deane and is part of the development of our prayer ministry. Once again the service was attended by a variety of people, some who had come along to receive prayer for specific issues. Terry Clark spoke on Matthew 9:18-26, in which Jesus brings Jairus' daughter back from the dead and heals a women who has been bleeding for twelve years. The bible really is clear that Jesus heals people! After a time of corporate worship the prayer ministry team (in pairs / groups) were on hand to pray with people.

Members of our prayer ministry team are now around after most 10:30am services, so if you would like somebody to pray with you then look out for somebody with a badge on. Please make use of the pray ministry team - they will be very happy to spend time praying with you. As we pray we will see God at work.

Café Service (2nd October)

We have held a number of these services now, exploring a range of issues, and they provide a great opportunity to focus on a specific issue within an informal setting. At the beginning of October we turned the spotlight on 'God, the devil and spiritual things'. In Ephesians Paul writes 'For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms' (Ephesians 6:12). We are in the middle of a spiritual battle whether we realise it or not! The Café service gave us an opportunity to explore that, what it looks like and how it impacts on our everyday lives.

Service of Thanksgiving and Remembrance (30th October)

Every year, for a number of years, we have held a Service of Thanksgiving and Remembrance on the Sunday closest to All Saints Day. At this service we invite the family and friends of those whose funerals have been conducted by members of the clergy team at Deane over the past twelve months. Within the service there is a time for them to remember their loved one and light a candle in their memory. There is also an opportunity to remember others who have died in previous years.

'Jesus at the Movies' (13th November)

With the now familiar strapline of 'watching movies without putting our minds into neutral', this is a chance to watch clips from some famous, and some not quite so famous, movies with our gospel glasses on! What are the underlying messages that the movies are giving? This time we watched clips from:

V for Vendetta (2006)

Control (2008)

The way (2010)

Finding Neverland (2004)

The book of Eli (2010)

Cold souls (2010)

Good night, and good luck (2005)

Conspiracy (2001)

Amelie (2001)

Lemony Snicket's A series of
unfortunate events. (2004)

The clips from each of these films helped us to think about how we are all on a journey. Sometimes that journey can be hard and difficult, and sometimes that journey can be exciting, but God is always with us, and as Christians we know where we are heading so the journey, exciting or difficult, is not in vain!

So next time you're wondering what film to watch, why not try one of these and watch it with that in mind?



Churches by the Ribble

Years have passed since I first visited the Church of St Saviour, otherwise known as Stydd Chapel, along Stydd Lane in Ribchester. It was then rarely, if ever, used and the Norman porch was occupied by sheep. My memory may deceive me when I say the sheep were in the chapel as well. Now it has been skilfully



and in a seemly way restored. Like the porch some of the windows are Norman, most of the building is Early English and other features, the font, the screen and the pulpit, belong to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The interior of the small chapel is plain and there are some rows of modern chairs whose design is in sympathy with their setting. They are there for the worshippers who congregate once a month and continue the tradition of this sacred place. It was once part of a larger community supervised by the Knights of St John and it was during an excavation, designed to uncover the remains of their Hospital, that traces of an earlier Roman temple, dedicated to Mithras, were revealed.

Ribchester is rich in traces of the Roman occupation. Walking to the Chapel in the driving rain, you must wonder what the Roman soldiers thought of their posting to the British Isles. The superbly extended small museum near the Ribble shows how they made the most of their stay in Ribchester long before the Christians, once barbarians, demolished their temple. Now, next to the museum, stands the Parish church



of St Wilfrid, parts of which may be older even than St Saviour's. There are remains of walls and a gravestone from the twelfth century and fragments of crosses from two centuries earlier. Later additions are a font, octagonal in shape like that at St Saviour's, a medieval wall painting and, as we have at Deane, a seventeenth century pulpit.

It may be that there was a Christian foundation here before the Norman Conquest. What we can be sure of is that Christianity has continued to grow over long centuries in Ribchester and the present state of the two churches suggests there are many people who care for them. A visitor can easily walk from one to the other and enjoy the museum as well. As part of a day out there are places to eat in and the opportunity to walk part of the Ribble Way.

Charles Winder

*I Asked for Peace
I asked for Peace -
My sins arose
And bound me close,
O could not find release.*

*I asked for Truth -
My doubts came in,
And with their din
They wearied all
my youth.*

*I asked for love -
My lovers failed,
And grief assailed
Around, beneath, above.*

*I asked for thee -
And thou didst come
To take me home
Within thy heart to be.
Digby Mackworth Dolben*

*Unto Us a Son is Given
Given, not lent,
And not withdrawn
- once sent,
This infant of mankind,
this One,
Is still the little welcome Son.*

*New every year,
New born and newly dear,
He comes with tidings
and a song,
The ages long, the ages long.
Alice Meynell*



Christian Blogs and using the internet

What's the point of the internet?

The internet is a confusing place, full of far too many voices wanting to be heard. If you want completely opposing views on every topic then the internet is the place to go. It can be hard to find reliable, encouraging and uplifting sites to visit. So we thought we would give you a few sites that have encouraged us, made us laugh and helped us to think more about God each day.

The Bible

Bible Gateway - Forgot where that verse was, wanted to read the bible on your phone or at work on a break. You can even listen to the bible being read and read other translations, like the updated NIV, the ESV or the NLT. www.biblegateway.com

66 Clouds - Would you like to see the most used words in the bible or in any particular book, take a look at this interesting site. www.66clouds.com

The Sword project - If you want a program to read the bible on your PC or Mac take a look at the Sword project free software to read the bible on your computer or even your iPad.

Daily Devotions - You may use bible reading notes but sometimes it is nice to listen or read something online when you sit down with a brew. So here are a couple to get you started.

Word live - An audio bible reading and reflection provided by scripture union.

www.wordlive.org/session

Explore Bible reading notes -



More of the Bible and questions to help you think about the bible, check out this sample of the notes online tinyurl.com/cl7v8f2

Joni and Friends - A devotion written by someone who has suffered greatly, writes to encourage.

www.joniandfriends.org/daily-devotional/

News - Not the BBC, news from a Christian point of view.

The Christian Institute - Headlines which otherwise would often slip through the net, concerning Christian values and our witness. www.christian.org.uk/

Operation World - Want to learn how you can pray for the world take a look at

www.operationworld.org



Blogs and Encouragement

Of First importance - A thoughtful quote each day to remind you what's "of first importance": the gospel of Jesus Christ.

firstimportance.org

Cranmer - Christian thoughts on politics and public life, with a bit of wit. www.archbishop-cranmer.blogspot.com



Top Apps for smart phones or iPads

You Version Bible App

Glo bible - an interactive way to explore the bible and learn more about the word of God.

If you have any thoughts on sites that encourage or have helped you, then let us know about them.

Writing to Prisoners

About 6 years ago I saw an article in the Magistrates' Magazine about a small group who wrote to prisoners. As part of my training I had visited Styal Women's Prison and Forest Bank in Salford, so I had some idea of what some prisons were like. I decided to find out more about the scheme, which is run by one friendly Welsh lady called Gwyn Morgan in London. Six years on, I am still involved.

Gwyn first explained to me the rules and safeguarding involved. I write to the prisoner via a post office box number and they the same way. They never know my real surname or address, although they know I live in Bolton. I can send cards and postcards but not presents or money. If they wished to continue writing after their release the same rules would apply. I can never visit them.

I have written to six prisoners in that time; all are white males, mostly older prisoners aged between 30 and 65. In all cases they have not continued beyond release so I've not a clue how they have managed in the world outside. One has been with me from the very beginning, a lifer going through a series of appeals, and we still write 2 or 3 times a year. He is a well-educated man, a lecturer, who married his childhood sweetheart whilst in jail. He is unusual in my experience, in maintaining his innocence and giving me clear details of the crime. He is also unusual in having a supportive family; many prisoners have little contact with outside or visitors.

Prisoners have to ask for a penfriend and notices exist in each prison giving them details of the scheme; so the first contact request goes to Gwyn and she tries her best to match the correspondents as to ages and interests. When she has a likely match, she contacts you with details of the prisoner and what they are 'in for'. You then write within a week, and it's up to them to respond. I remember my first correspondent was one she apologised for as he was a sad 'old lag', who was basically illiterate. We managed by my sending watercolours on postcards of simple things like balloons that he could

put on his wall, and he using fellow prisoners to read my letters to him and write his answers.

Since then I have had a petty thief using heroin in his 40s who was only in for 9 months. He wrote to me every week when he was in an old local prison who offered him daily work cleaning and collecting rubbish which he loved, but sadly he moved to a prison which had no work and he was locked away each day for hours and he became depressed and stopped writing. Another of my correspondents was very interested in `Lost` the series and most of our letters consisted of discussing likely outcomes!

Gwyn likes using me because of my interest in sports, particularly football. I often write about the joys and not of supporting Bolton to Chelsea and Manchester United supporters, who are usually sympathetic if vaguely patronising! My view is that the letters are a glimpse of another world so I try to keep them positive and non-judgemental, with bits about the weather, my animals and anything amusing that happens. I do edit them-they are aware of the first names and ages of my children, the fact that I am a retired teacher, but not my work as a magistrate! They usually enjoy postcards from my travels and send me Christmas cards. I do not know whether my letters have made any difference to them, but I hope so.

Gwyn remains as a contact if I have any concerns. In the six years I have met her once, at a small gathering in Chester for writers to prisoners, all female-she would love some more male volunteers. All it costs me is two 1st class stamps each time I write and my time. If anyone is interested in the work, they should ask me for contact details and I'll warn Gwyn to expect a contact from them.

BARBARA WINDER



On The Beamers' Trail

There is a leaflet available on this excellent 6 mile trail produced free by Blackburn Council. I picked it up from the Tockholes Information Centre and café some weeks ago, but you can also download and print it from their web-site www.blackburn.gov.uk/parks. It is the shortest of 4 excellent leaflets and trails using the 32 mile longer footpath, the Witton Weavers Way. I like it because it is dog friendly with fewer stiles, and places where they can run and paddle. This is my own version and if you want to try it you need the leaflet and ideally the 287 West Pennine Moors map.

It begins in Witton Country Park near the centre of Blackburn, where you can leave your car for free. From the main car park near the entrance walk up to the wooden sports pavilion and turn right behind it. Then turn left into Big Cover Wood where dogs and children can run! Cross the footbridge on the left through the wood and climb up until the trees thin on your left and you see a kissing gate. Cross two small fields passing a plantation on your right, then through a wooden gate to Under Billinge Lane (metalled but narrow—not much used).

Turn left and immediately right through a gateway, and follow a path climbing steeply left into Billinge Wood. Continue up and straight on until you emerge from the wood by a rough metalled car park. You now have good views over the area and have done most of your climbing! Continue across a field making for a small hump. These are known locally as the yellow hills because of their gorse bushes. On your right is the Clog and Billy-cock public house and some 18th century weavers' cottages. Climb a stile into another field, going over a brow next to a fine small quarry pond- a good place for picnic and dog swim. Drop down the field keeping to the fence on the left to a stile.

At this point in the walk we encountered some young

bullocks in a field so we ignored the directions and did a short road walk until we reached Close Farm, which was undergoing restoration. Leave the farmhouse on your left down a rough lane with a hedge on our right. Head for the gully ahead and slightly left with a stile on the right hand side. Follow the path including steps through the mud downhill then right (following the fence) to the River Darwen. This is a lovely spot for a paddle or picnic with the bluff of Houghton Tower above on the opposite bank. Follow the path alongside the river and past the wooden scout hut to Lowe Park Farm. Climb the stile at the corner of the ancient buildings, going past the farmhouse and through the gate. When you reach the river again, keep to the left bank down a track until you reach an ancient stone bridge.

Turn left along the track with Pleasington Golf Club course on your right. Go through a stile in the wall on your right, and follow the wall to the left to reach the next stile. Climb the fence into an open field and climb out of the valley following the fence on your right, over a stile and into a smaller field at the top. A final stile leads onto a lane leading you to Pleasington Village and the Butlers Arms—refreshments!

Cross the road, continuing along the track with Pleasington Priory on your left—interesting doorway then down a sandy path to Pleasington playing fields. Turn right along a little used road to Butler's bridge. Over the bridge join the river footpath on your left which meanders pleasantly back to Witton Park.

I would recommend the walk. Walking boots are essential and a stick useful. The last part of the walk was fairly busy with dogs and children playing along the river path by Witton Park, but the remainder was quiet and little known. There is some climbing, but the majority is early in the walk, with the exception of the last climb through fields to the Butler's Arms.

Barbara Winder

Men of Deane Winter Programme

Wednesday 14th December 7:30pm

Pre-Christmas get together at the King's Head followed by takeaway Supper and light hearted entertainment in the Rectory. This will most likely involve Scalextrics. We will be pre-ordering the food this year to save on time spent waiting, so I will be e-mailing the food options in the week prior to the event. Please notify me of your e-mail address if you're reading this in the church magazine and would like to come along.

Tuesday 17th January 7:30pm

Movie Dilemma Night (the return!) - Rectory - Following the success and stimulating discussion following the last movie dilemma's night, this event is being run again with a fresh set of 5 minute movie clips guaranteed to raise a whole spectrum of moral debate and discussion. Light refreshments.

Saturday 11th February 8:30am

Men's Breakfast at the Café Vienna . There will be a guest speaker from a local church - speaker and topic TBC.

Any queries, please contact Lee Higson on 01942 795038 or alternatively e-mail me leehigson@hotmail.com If you want to be included in the Men of Deane mailing list, please drop me an e-mail and I'll add you to the distribution.

A prayer for the end of the year

Most gracious God, you have been infinitely merciful to us, not only in the past year, but through all the years of our life. Please accept our sincere thanks for your amazing blessings to us; graciously forgiving the many sins and failings of our past life and generously instilling in us those graces and virtues which may make us more like you. And, every year which you are pleased to add to our lives, add also, we humbly ask you, more strength to our faith, more ardour to our love, and a greater perfection to our obedience; and grant that, in humble sincerity and constant perseverance, we may serve you most faithfully the remainder of our lives, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen

The ladies of the Handicraft Group

would like to thank all who
supported their craft
coffee morning, and are
pleased to tell you we were
able to donate a
further £650 to the
New Hall Fund



Thank you all again for your
support as without it, the
day would not have been
such a success.



Poem

As I walk down
the street
With the wind
blowing
Flowers sticking out
onto the sidewalk
Cars passing
Children yelling
I stub my toe
I go into a different
World
The wind blows more wildly
The flowers become spears
The cars become running rhinos
The yelling children become hollering
wolves
As the pain stops
the wind stops
The spears turn into flowers
The cars are no longer rhinos
and the wolves are back to
yelling children
crossing the street

Maria,
Barbara Winder's granddaughter

*Man's Maker was made man that he, Ruler of the
Stars might nurse at his mother's breast; that the
Bread of Life might hunger, the Fountain thirst, the
Light sleep, the Way be tired on the journey, the Truth
might be accused of false witness, the Teacher be beat-
en with whips, the Foundation be suspended on wood;
that Strength might grow weak; that the Healer might
be wounded; that Life might die. Augustine*

S t M a r y's D i r e c t o r y

Team Rector	Terry Clark	01204 61819
Curate	Stephen Bazely	01204 849228
DLM	Elizabeth Plant	01204 63730
Readers	David Dewhurst	01204 651347
	Nola Kilsby	01204 665700
Wardens	Les Kilsby	01204 665700
	Beccy Rutter	01204 654737
	Ken Tidmarsh	01204 652184
Administrator	Beccy Rutter	01204 654737

District Church Council

Lay Chair	Jane Hampson	01204 848433
Hon Treasurer	Les Kilsby	01204 665700
Hon Secretary	Bryan Shephard	01942 817288

Other Responsibilities

Flowers	Josie Crompton	01204 655964
Gift Aid Sec	Les Kilsby	01204 665700
Handicraft Group	Dorothy Benyon	01204 417794
Ladies' Guild	Josie Crompton	01204 655964
	Pat Sewell	01204 61278
Magazine Editor	Anne Roberts	01204 849468
Memorial Hall Bookings	Church Office	01204 659637
Music Group	Beccy Rutter	01204 654737
Verger	Josie Crompton	01204 655964
Weddings Admin	Anne Roberts	01204 849468

Sunday Schools

Climbers (3-7)	Sally Cooper	0777 644 1440
Explorers (7-11)	Paula Small	01204 650981
Pathfinders 7-9	Elizabeth Tidmarsh	01204 652184
CYFA (10-13)	Karen Greenhalgh	01204 654737

Youth Groups

Voltage/Element	Karen Greenhalgh	01204 654737
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Uniformed Organisations

Rainbows	Paula Small	01204 650981
Brownies	Anne Calderbank	01204 398206
Guides	Carole Baxendale	01204 419167