



# St Mary's Church Chequerfield NEWSLETTER

November 2018

Next St Mary's coffee afternoon with stalls, music and refreshments  
**Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> December from 1:30pm.**

## ADVENT and CHRISTMAS SERVICES at ST MARY'S

Christmas is a time of great joy and happiness, of family and friendship, of love and of hope. Please come and share in the joy of preparing for and celebrating Christmas by joining us in one of our Advent and Christmas services.

**9:00am 2<sup>nd</sup> December:**

Advent Sunday

**10:00am 9<sup>th</sup> December:**

Second Sunday of Advent

**9:00am 16<sup>th</sup> December:**

Third Sunday of Advent

**9:00am 23<sup>rd</sup> December:**

Fourth Sunday of Advent

**5:00pm 24<sup>th</sup> December:**

Christmas Eve Worship

**9:00am 25<sup>th</sup> December:**

Christmas Day - Family Eucharist with carols

#FollowTheStar

For many of us, Christmas brings up so many emotions, memories and expectations. We have one nativity story, but it can seem like we all have very different Christmases.

For you it might be a time of joy and togetherness. Or perhaps it's all about planning and to-do lists. Many others can find it a sad and lonely time – nagged by the feeling that your Christmas is not like those 'perfect' ones we see in the media.

But just like the unexpected assortment of people who were invited to meet the baby Jesus, the message of Christmas doesn't ask you to be perfect. It says: come just as you are to take a life-changing journey. Wherever you are this Christmas, you are invited to follow the star and to be with Jesus. You are welcome. You are deeply known and truly loved.

Mary and Joseph and all those caught up in the Christmas story were surprised by the astonishing way that God chose to live among us.

Each Christmas we are reminded of God's longing to surprise us with his gift of joy, love and new life. It's the greatest present we can receive and share with others!

Archbishops Justin Welby & John Sentamu

[Adapted from #FollowTheStar booklet, Church House Publishing]

## A big 'Thank You' from St Mary's Church

Church members would like to say a huge thanks for all the support which has been given in our fund-raising for St Mary's Church and charity—through stalls outside St Giles', at our coffee afternoons and in other ways. We really appreciate all your help and support.



## What is Advent?

Advent is a season observed by Christian churches as a time of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the nativity of Jesus Christ. Advent occurs throughout the four weeks before Christmas. Christians use the four Sundays and weeks of Advent to prepare for and remember the real meaning of Christmas. In fact, Advent Sunday is the beginning of the Church's year.

The term 'Advent' originates from Latin and means 'coming'. The first and most predominant idea of Jesus' 'coming' happened about 2,000 years ago when He was born into the world. The second meaning is that Jesus is present in our lives now after returning from the dead through His resurrection. The third will happen when Jesus comes back to the world as king and judge.

It is uncertain as to when exactly the celebration of Advent first began. Some believe it began on November 30<sup>th</sup> on St Andrew's Day sometime in the 5<sup>th</sup> century and involved fasting in the lead up to Christmas.

There are several ways in which the season of Advent can be counted down, the most common being Advent calendars which can be bought almost anywhere. The origin of an Advent calendar is traced back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The first style came from the Protestants where religious families made a chalk line for every day of December until Christmas Eve.

However, for many Christians the Advent wreath is the most recognized way to celebrate Advent. This tradition is full of rich symbolism. The wreath is made of evergreen branches laid flat which symbolize eternal life. The circular shape of the wreath, without beginning or end, is symbolic of God's complete unending love for us. On the wreath, four or five coloured candles are arranged with one candle being lit each Sunday during Advent services. Each candle represents the spiritual preparation for the coming of the Lord and is usually followed by a scriptural reading or an Advent carol like 'Come Thou long expected Jesus' by Charles Wesley or 'O come, O come, Emmanuel' based on a 12<sup>th</sup> century Latin hymn.

The first candle is purple and represents Hope. On the second Sunday, we light another purple candle, this time representing Faith and often referred to as the Bethlehem candle. On the third Sunday a pink candle is lit, the Shepherd's candle which symbolizes Joy. The final purple candle, lit on the fourth Sunday, is for Peace. Many wreaths have a fifth white candle in the centre: this candle is referred to as the 'Christ candle' and is lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

Advent is a wonderful time to spend in prayer and song to reflect Jesus' miraculous entry into our world and to celebrate the liturgical year, as well as a festive Christmas count down to the celebration of the nativity of Jesus on Christmas Day.

Josephine Harrison



The Advent wreath is a special symbol. The evergreen leaves mean everlasting life. The circle of the wreath (with no beginning and no end) reminds us of the eternity of God and the four candles are the four Sundays of Advent.

### Make your own Advent wreath

1. Cut a hole in the middle of a paper plate.
2. Draw around your hands on green recycled paper.
3. Stick the cut-out hands around the outside of the paper plate to make the leaves.
4. Make four candles by rolling paper into tubes (3 purple and 1 pink).
5. Attach a paper flame to one candle on each Sunday of Advent.





# Thinking of others in Advent and at Christmas

## Every child should feel safe at Christmas

4 million children live in poverty in the UK. The Children's Society aims to fight child poverty and neglect, and to help all children have a better chance in life. Their network of services all over the country enables them to be there for vulnerable children when they feel they have no one they can turn to for help.

### The promise of Christmas

For many children the only promise of Christmas is that the bad things in their lives will feel much worse. But by showing young people that they have hope and aren't alone, the Children's Society can make this a Christmas full of promise for vulnerable children across the country.

### Christmas Eve Services

At our evening services on Christmas Eve, at both St Mary's and St Giles', the collections are used to support the work of the Children's Society.



## TESCO Bags of Help

### Our Parish *FoodShare* Project calls out for votes to bag a share of Tesco's bag fund

The parish of St Giles' with St Mary's is being entered for the Tesco in-store customer vote for two of its community projects during 2019. One of these is *FoodShare*, which seeks to help local families who may find it hard to manage in the longer school holidays when free school dinners are not available. Families on Chequerfield would benefit from this scheme. The other project is *Lunch with Us*, which provides a meal for local people every Wednesday at St Giles', on a 'pay as you feel' basis.

Voting for these projects takes place at Tesco Pontefract during November and December. Please support the 2 projects by asking for a blue token at the Tesco tills and voting for the parish Projects.

*Every token counts!*

### Socks Appeal

If you receive more socks in your Christmas stocking than you are likely to use, then please could you consider donating some?



New only socks for men, women and children can be handed in at St Giles' Church for distribution to people who are street homeless or to refugees through the Wakefield City of Sanctuary clothing store.

Thank you



## "Robins"

"Robin Redbreasts" often appear on the cards we send to friends and families at Christmas. Ever wondered why? There are a number of legends associated with this favourite garden bird. One of these, making the link between Christmas and Easter and the reason why Jesus was born, is that a robin pulled a thorn from Christ's crown of thorns at the Crucifixion so that it was Christ's blood which stained his feathers red. To coin a line from *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*, "Born that man no more may die", the robin reminds us all why we can have Christmas.



## Things to think of ready for Christmas

- ✓ Mince pies
- ✓ Freezer stocked
- ✓ Turkey ordered
- ✓ Pudding (buy this year)
- ✓ Presents
- ✓ Cards—check last posting dates
- ✓ Wine (sparkling for Christmas Day)
- ✓ Oh! - the tree



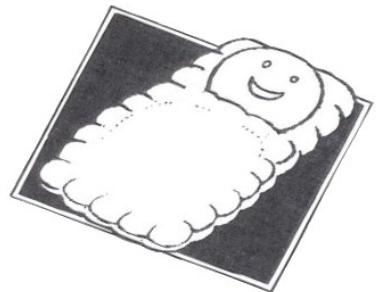
Now what is it I've forgotten—  
I just know there's something!

————— mas

Let's put Christ back into  
Christmas and go to Church  
this year.

## Crib pies

Mince pies with a difference!



### Ingredients

- 340g of shortcrust pastry
- 1 jar of mincemeat
- A little beaten egg or milk
- Caster sugar for dusting

### What to do

1. Roll out the pastry and cut into rectangles about 12x8cm. Put half the rectangles to one side.
2. Place a teaspoon of mincemeat in the middle of each of the rectangles.
3. Brush a little milk or egg around the edges of each rectangle and use the remaining rectangles to make lids.
4. Crimp the edges to seal into a "crib" shape.
5. Cut circles from the pastry left-overs to make the baby's head. Mark eyes and a mouth.
6. Make a slit in the top layer of pastry and tuck the baby's head under the slit to make a pastry "blanket" on top of each crib.
7. Bake at 220°C for 20 minutes or until the pies look golden.
8. Cool on a wire tray and dust with caster sugar.

