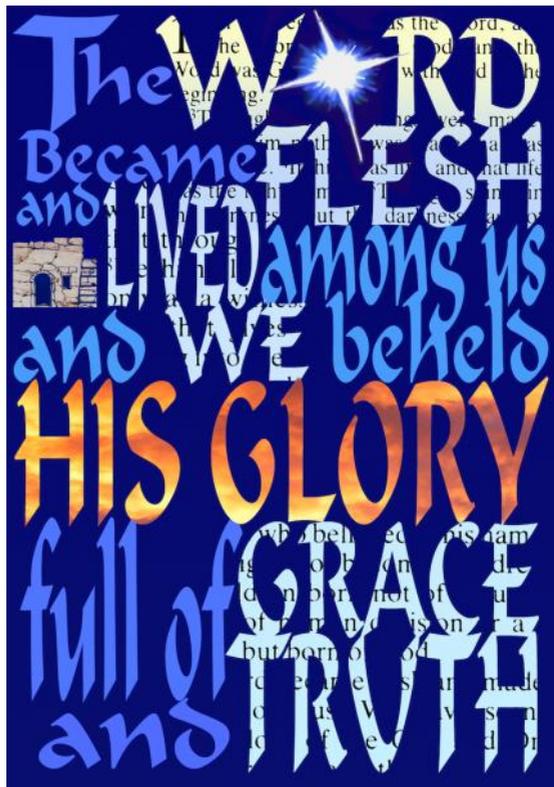




St. Nicholas News



Price 50p

December 2011

Church Diary December 2011

Date	Time	Event
Thursday 1st	7.30pm	Community Choir in church
Sunday 4th	8.30 a.m. 10.30am	2nd Sunday of Advent Holy Communion (BCP) Parish Communion
Tuesday 6th	7.30pm	Taize Evening Prayer
Wednesday 7th	10.00am	Eucharist
Saturday 10th	10.00 to 12.00 12.00 to 2.00pm 2.00 to 5.00pm	Coffee and mince pies at 8 Ivylea Road, £1, all welcome Christians Together in Burnage Carol Singing at Tesco, Burnage Lane. 'Funky Boutique Sale' in the church hall.
Sunday 11th	8.30 a.m. 10.30am 6.00pm	3rd Sunday of Advent Holy Communion (BCP) Christingle Service Community Choir in church
Tuesday 13th	8.00pm	Prayer group, Rectory
Wednesday 14th	10.00am	Eucharist
Thursday 15th	7.30pm	Community choir in church
Sunday 18th	8.30 a.m. 10.30am 3.00pm	4th Sunday of Advent Holy Communion (BCP) Parish Communion CAROL SERVICE to include the first performance by Burnage Community Choir—don't miss it !!
Wednesday 21st	10.00am 7.15pm	Eucharist Service at Emmanuel Didsbury with Iona Community to be broadcast on Christmas Day. All welcome but arrive early !
Saturday 24th	11.30pm	Christmas Eve Midnight Mass
Wednesday 27th	10.00am	Eucharist
Sunday 25th	8.30pm 10.30pm	Christmas Day Holy Communion BCP Family carols and Communion
Wednesday 28th		No Eucharist



Rachel writes...

One of the songs I remember most distinctly from my childhood is 'All I Want For Christmas is My Two Front Teeth' – the plaintive tale of a child who simply wants two front teeth in order for their Christmas to be complete. How very far we have come since that song was written! Today's Christmas lists (especially among the young) are likely to include requests for X Boxes, Kindles, iPads and so on. In our age of electronic wonder, one should not expect someone to simply want two front teeth.

If I asked you to complete the phrase 'All I want for Christmas is...' I wonder what you might reply? Perhaps some might finish the statement with words like 'peace' or 'hope for the future' or 'good news about x or y'. Some might end the phrase with 'to see my family' or 'to not be alone'. And some might, indeed, write 'lots of presents'!

On the basis of all the TV adverts we are bombarded with,

Christmas can seem like a time for asking for things – specifically expensive presents. By the time you read this, many small children will have sent their 'requests' off to Father Christmas and it would take a particularly hard-hearted adult to mock this behaviour as inappropriate. However, at a wider level it is simply the case that

Christmas has become less of a religious festival and more of a test of how much we can spend or eat.

Christmas is, actually, less about asking for things

than being prepared to receive the greatest gift that has ever been offered. For at the heart of the Christmas mystery and story is the bewildering gift of God coming among his people as a vulnerable baby. God might have come as a mighty warrior or a dazzling king, but he chooses neither path - he chooses to come without fanfare or power as the child of a couple of Palestinian peasants. And both the wise and the foolish have been meditating on exactly how this can be a gift ever since.



*May you have a
joyous, peaceful
and profound
Christmas and a
happy New Year!*

How can God dwelling among us as a baby be the greatest gift the world has ever been offered? For surely what we'd all really have preferred is a god who - like Superman – would have come as an invincible superhero. That is, as someone who would get us out of all sorts of scrapes and bring about world peace and so forth by sheer strength and intelligence. A baby really isn't much use in this respect.

However, babies - and particularly the baby Jesus Christ – invite us to make a response and take responsibility. To dwell with us as a baby – as one dependent upon us – is to demonstrate trust and love beyond belief; it is one way in which God says, 'You are my beloved – for I rely on you for my nurture and encouragement'. And what is the only appropriate response to that? To give back one's love in return, that is, to not keep it for oneself but to lavish it upon God.

This Christmas we will all be under pressure to conform to the consumer stereotype – to spend far too much, to pretend that unless we buy someone (or ourselves) x, y, or z the world will be a less happy place and to eat like it is the last night on earth. But we are invited to something far simpler and, therefore, far more difficult: to simply respond to the love of God by offering our love in return. Each of us must figure out how that looks for ourselves, but – if we take it seriously – it will certainly change us.

May you have a joyous, peaceful and profound Christmas and a happy New Year!

Rachel x



Sybil and Vera invite you to join them for

Coffee and Mince Pies

At 8 Ivylea Road (off Barcicroft Road)

£1 in aid of church funds

Saturday 10th December 10.00am to 12 noon

Everyone welcome

Art Exhibitions

During September and October St Nick's hosted two art exhibitions. The first was part of the Didsbury Arts Festival and was presented by Rob Floyd. Rob is a portrait-ist who worships at Christ Church, West Didsbury. His works are dramatic, lively and colourful inspired by Vincent Van Gogh. The opening party welcomed around a hundred visitors and more visited through the week.



In October the "Magpies" held their exhibition. The Magpies attend adult education classes, and they meet up during the half term breaks and Summer holidays to visit locations around Manchester for painting and sketching.



This was the first time they have exhibited together and a wide range of media and subjects were involved. Landscapes, still lifes, portraits and sculptures were shown. But as well as enjoying the works presented many visitors commented on how beautiful the church is and how striking. These events gave us a great opportunity to share this amazing building with others and to celebrate St Nick's as part of the community of Burnage and South Manchester.

Jill Lomas



"Nice idea, Amelia, but I don't think the Angel of the Lord texting the shepherds would have the same dramatic effect."



The highlight of Christmas at the vicarage was always 'name the hymn tune' played on comb and paper.

Bible Study held on 23rd November.

A few of us met to study the New Testament book of the Letter of St. Paul to the Philippians. This letter was sent by Paul to the new Christians in Philippi (a town which is still there in north east Greece). It is thought that Paul was in prison or house arrest in Rome, when he dictated this letter to his scribe; this letter, as it is in the bible today, may be an amalgamation of 2 or 3 letters sent by Paul to the Christians in Philippi in around 61 A.D. However, this is a positive letter to the young Christian church at Philippi for their congregation, telling them to keep up their good work in following in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, that he is praying for them and he thanks them for the gifts they had sent to him.

There are also phrases in this letter, which are used in hymns and Taize chants, as well as in our service of the Eucharist. We then went on to read slowly through a portion (verses 1 – 11) of the second chapter of this letter. If there was a phrase that meant something to each one of us we repeated it slowly to ourselves and meditated on it in the ten minute silence that followed, maybe silently praying about the effect that that phrase had had on us.

Those that wanted to could just be still and pray in the silence. Also those who wanted to shared the phrase or phrases that had resonated with them. After closing prayers we departed at 9 pm, so the session was not too long.

This way of looking at the scriptures is called Lectio Divina, which means divine reading, and was first practised by St. Benedict. You can do this at home on your own, just pick out a portion of the scriptures from the Old (including the psalms) or the New Testaments, say it slowly, meditate on it as if you yourself were meeting God in that piece of writing and then pray about it.

The word picture is from the proper words from Philippians 2: 1 – 11 done by a computer programme called wordle (www.wordle.net). It prints the words as large as the number of times they are mentioned in the text and randomises them.



Helen Reid.
(Lay Reader-in-
Training)



BARNABUS
Bringing hope to the homeless and vulnerable

Barnabus News Extra

When the recession hit 'Sadly as feared there has been a rise which is continuing, in broken relationships, abuse in the home, loss of jobs and higher costs of living. From the typical 60 people visiting for an evening meal, the figure has risen to 122, with the staff and volunteers also feeling the effects of the increase number.'

Vinelife church is now part of the evening drop in on a Friday when the homeless can receive hot food, blankets, clothing and a listening ear and prayer if requested from the Vinelife volunteer

Domestic Bliss—a cookery session is going well. Mainly attended by men who over the past months have learnt how to plan a cheap meal and many basic cooking skills.

The BUPA Greater Manchester Run 10K, raised £2,058.00. The 'Big Walk' for Barnabus by BUPA employees results in a cheque for £2,500.

There will be a Santa run in early December

Email: carol@barnabusmanchester.co.uk if you are interested in participating.

Thank you, Sue Morris

Christmas Services

Sunday 11th December 10.30am Christingle Service

Sunday 18th
December
Carol Service,
3.00pm



Saturday 24th
December
Midnight Mass,
11.30pm

Sunday 25th December

- 8.30am Holy Communion BCP
- 10.30am Family Carols and Communion

Please join us.....everyone is most welcome

Saturday 10th December

***Funky Boutique
Sale'***

In the Church Hall
2.00 to 5.00pm

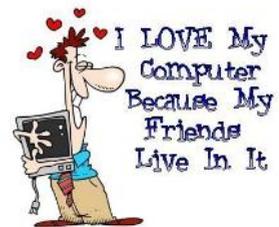
***Come along to buy
your Christmas
gifts.***

Cleaning Poem

I asked the Lord to tell me
Why my house is such a mess
He asked if I'd been 'computering',
And I had to answer 'yes.'
He told me to get off my butt,
And tidy up the house.
And so I started cleaning up...
The smudges off my mouse.
I wiped and shined the topside.
That really did the trick...
I was just admiring my good work.
I didn't mean to 'click.'
But click, I did, and oops - I found
A real absorbing site
I got SO way into it -
I was into it all night.

So nothing's changed except my mouse.
It's as shiny as the sun.
I guess my house will stay a mess.....
While I sit on my bum.

Thank you for being my e-mail buddy and
friend!



Jesus, the Ultimate Gift

By Paula J. Fox

God sent a very special Gift that's personally for you..

An incomparable expression of His love - and here's the clue....
It's everything you've wished for, even better than you thought.

It won't cost you a penny; in fact it can't be bought.

Designed to be a perfect fit for hearts of every size

This Gift will change your life and it will open up your eyes.
It will give your life more beauty; you'll discover why your here.

You'll see with greater vision as His purpose becomes clear.

Sometimes a gift has strings attached, which surely isn't fair.

But this one offers freedom from each burden that you bear.

It's the best deal of a lifetime, and it has a guarantee

It will be with you forever, and throughout eternity.

Now you're probably imagining just what this Gift could be

And perhaps you're thinking – *How could it be quite so wonderful for me?*

A Gift beyond what human understanding can conceive,

It's more than you would dare to think, imagine or believe.

You won't find another like it any place upon this earth-

Jesus is the ultimate Gift; One of a kind right from His birth.

He's called *Immanuel*, which means that "God will be with you."

He's the Gift that keeps on giving, always faithful through and through.

Superior in every way; none other can compare

He is greater and more powerful than you'll find anywhere.

But there is one more bonus with this Gift, as you shall see:.

A home for you in paradise, and He's the master key.

Oh how could you refuse this Gift that opens heaven's doors?.

Especially when it comes from God..

Signed *"Personally yours."*

Church Duty Rota (December 2011)

Date	Warden 8.30 a.m.	Warden 10.30 a.m.	Altar Duty	Lay Assistants	SidesPeople
4th	Fred Murphy	Jill Lomas	Clare Lancaster	Anne Tudor Anne Holmes	Sybil Gawkrödger Caroline Abiodon
11th	Fred Murphy	Jane Cawley	Helen Reid	Grace Manley Lyn Rimmer	Julie Crossley Cass Williamson Sue Morris
18th	Fred Murphy	Alison Mills	Jenny Cullen	Julie Crossley Jane Cawley	Margaret Vessey Michael Vessey Muriel Clark
24th	Fred Murphy	Jill Lomas	Emily Crossley	Katy Mills Alison Mills	WARDENS
25th	Fred Murphy	Tbc.		Tbc.	WARDENS

Parish Registers—(October 2011)

Week Ending	Communicants	Cash	Envelopes	Total
2nd	54	36.60	347.60	384.20
9th	67	28.20	0.00	28.20
16th	49	34.00	571.00	605.00
23rd	48	19.00	361.80	380.80
30th	74	27.00	237.50	264.50
			Total for month	1,662.70

Christmas Fair 19th November 2011

Thank you for all your contributions to the church fair, for helping on the day or for simply coming to enjoy the café and spend some money on the stalls. We raised the fantastic sum of £1,281.10p an increase of £87 on 2010. Well done to everyone it was a great team effort.

Rachel, Jill, Alison x

Organisations

The Maker's Club (Sunday School)
Mrs. Margaret Witty (0161 432 2933)

Church Lads' & Church Girls' Brigade
Mrs. Margaret Witty (0161 432 2933)

For all children aged 3 years upwards in the hall from 10.15 a.m

Every Friday in St. Nicholas Church Halls

Women's Fellowship
Chairman: Mrs Ann Holmes (0161 434 2245)

Martins (5-6 years) 6.30—7.30 p.m.
The "Y" Team (7-9 years) 6.30—7.30 p.m.
JTC (10-12 years) 7.30—8.45 p.m.
Seniors (13+ years) 7.30—8.45 p.m.

Second and Fourth Wednesdays at 2.30 p.m.

Confirmation Classes :For young people and adults by arrangement with the Minister.

P.C.C. Raffle
October

Barbara Gregory

Raised £30 for Church Funds

St Nicholas Club Draw

Drawn Sunday 2nd October

1st Prize : 54 St.Nick's (B.Stenton)

2nd Prize : 28 Betty Priestly

Do you enjoy singing ?? Fancy joining a choir ??

Well we have an answer

Burnage Community Choir

Meets on Thursday evening 7.30pm in St.Nick's

Miss Sheila Andrews

Many of you will remember our dear friend and former Church Warden Sheila Andrews. Due to recent health problems Sheila is no longer able to live independently. Sheila would like everyone to know that she now resides at:

Lea House
37-39 Lea Road
Heaton Moor
Stockport SK4 JT

Visitors are welcome, please pay Sheila a visit when you can. Thank you.

The Parish Church of St Nicholas

Burnage

Sunday Services

8.30 a.m	Eucharist (BCP)
10.30 a.m.	Family Service and Eucharist

For Saints and other weekday Services, please see the Diary page inside the magazine.
Holy Baptism on 3rd Sunday of each month at 10.30 a.m.
Holy Communion is taken to the housebound by arrangement with the Minister.

Minister	Rev'd Rachel Mann 0161 432 7009
Organist	Mr Oliver Mills (07786 337087)
Churchwardens	Mrs. Jill Lomas (0161 432 5426) Mrs. Alison Mills (01625 540376)
Assistant Wardens	Mr. Fred Murphy Ms Jane Cawley
Hon. Treasurer.	Ms. Elaine Jess
Minutes Secretary	Mrs. Ann Ackerman
Deanery Synod	Mrs. Grace Manley Ms. Jane Cawley
Elected on PCC	Mrs. Lyn Rimmer, , Mr. Fred Murphy Mrs. Margaret Witty, Mr. Tony Witty, Ms. Jane Cawley, Mrs. Margaret Vessey, Mrs. Sue Morris Mrs. Eunice Wilshaw,
	Mr. Michael Vessey, (Co-opted non-voting) Mrs. Christine Price (Co-opted 2011) Mrs Ann Ackerman (Hon. Sec)
Magazine Distribution	Mrs. Brenda Maclese
Missionary Secretary	Mrs. Christine Taylor
St. Nicholas Church Website	www.st-nicholas-church.org.uk