



St. Nicholas News



Price 50p

May 2012

Church Diary May 2012

Date	Time	Event
Tuesday 1st	7.30pm	Taize Evening Prayer
Wednesday 2nd	7.30pm	Fundraising Committee, glass room
Thursday 3rd	7.30pm	Community Choir Rehearsal
Sunday 6th	8.30 a.m. 10.30am	5th Sunday of Easter Holy Communion (BCP) Parish Communion
Wednesday 9th	10.00am 2.30pm	Eucharist Women's Fellowship
Thursday 12th	7.30pm	Community choir in church
Sunday 13th	8.30 a.m. 10.30am	6th Sunday of Easter Holy Communion (BCP) Parish Communion
Monday 14th	7.30pm	PCC meeting, glass room
Wednesday 16h	10.00am	Eucharist
Thursday 17th	7.30pm 7.30pm	Ascension Day Community choir in church Deanery Eucharist , St.Wilfred's Northenden
Sunday 20th	8.30am 10.30am	7th Sunday of Easter Holy Communion BCP Parish Communion
Monday 21st	7.30pm	St.Nicholas Christians Together in Burnage Pentecost week Service (see article in the magazine for details of other services)
Wednesday 23rd	10.00am 2.30pm	Eucharist Women's Fellowship : Annual General Meeting
Thursday 24th	7.30pm	Community choir
Sunday 27th	8.30am 10.30am 4.00pm	Pentecost/Whit Sunday Holy Communion BCP Parish Communion CTIB joint service for Pentecost at St.Bernard's

Please hand in articles for June magazine by Sunday 8th June. Thank you.

Rachel writes...

Rachel's letter this month is her annual report delivered at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting on Sunday April 1st 2012.....

In A Tale of Two Cities, Charles Dickens begins by claiming, 'It was the best of times. It was the worst of times.' Dickens, of course, was talking about the late 18th Century and the time of the French Revolution in particular. However, I've long since been convinced that his statement could equally apply to most Anglican churches and St Nick's in particular. It is always tempting to dwell on the difficult things in the life of any church, especially when it is facing financial worries, the loss of family members and fears about the future. Instead I want to begin with some of the things which have genuinely encouraged and excited me this year.

Firstly, I have been thrilled by the growing confidence and commitment in our worshipping community. This has been signalled most especially by the willingness of individuals to step forward and participate in facilitating worship in new ways. We have new people reading on a

Sunday, offering to lead intercessions and act in the important role of Lay Assistant. I want to thank you all for your faith and commitment and encourage others to consider what God may be calling you towards. We have also had the privilege of having Ollie Mills step into the important role of organist and experienced the impact of our Community Choir upon the Carol

*Let us face the
coming year in
confidence and
hope....*

service. Though we have to face the reality of losing Ollie to his university studies soon, it has been wonderful to have him for a brief, but God-led season. Under the guidance of Grace Manley our Taize service contin-

ues to be a powerful witness to God's love and hope and offers worship which not only stills us but inspires. Other significant moments of prayer and worship have been the responses to our labyrinth and this year's very lively Lent group. It was also a delight to have Helen Reid with us as part of her Reader training. She was a reminder of how much our worship is enhanced by different contributions. On a sobering note she challenges us to think about how we can grow in ministry. For decades St Nick's has relied upon the wider church to provide its ministers. We should be asking, 'When was the last time we produced a priest or a

reader for the church?’ I hope and pray that in the coming years there may be individuals who feel God is calling them to one of the differing forms of authorized ministry.

I am also pleased by emerging patterns of mission and service. We seem to have become an established part of the Didsbury Arts Festival and our commitment to offering art exhibitions has provided new opportunities for people to come into our building for the first time. Equally our hall not only provides a much welcome income but is being used increasingly by the wider community. I thank Anne Holmes for her ongoing work as Hall Bookings Manager. Clearly we cannot afford to be complacent about how we make use of our building and serve our community, but we have reasons for encouragement. The point is this: there are things we are now regularly doing that we weren't a few years ago, and I believe we do them quite well. Nonetheless there are challenges. If we are to be a true parish church we need to think how we can better serve that parish. Demographically we now have significant numbers of South Asian people as part of our community. We can bury our heads or we can embrace this reality. One thing for sure – this reality is not going away. One of the great challenges and opportunities is to explore how we can better relate to our neighbours from many traditions and none.

One further exciting dimension of our mission and service is our work with young people and children. In the middle of last year, the Brigade was in an extremely vulnerable state. However, after a relaunch last September we saw a large growth in new members and I should like to thank Margaret Witty, Sharon Bartlett & our young leaders, Jenna, Jenny & Keeley for their commitment. While it is the case that since many of our teenagers started regularly working on a Sunday, our Maker's Club has been struggling for numbers there are plans for a relaunch soon. I also congratulate the commitment of the likes of Emily, Claire, Peter, Sophie & Adam at a time when it is unfashionable for young people to come to church.

Inevitably when one is part of an ageing church there are emerging pastoral concerns. In the past two years increasing numbers of our congregation have found it difficult to come to church on a Sunday. I'm pleased to say that our Lay Assistants have been magnificent in offering time and energy to ensure that no one is left without God's holy feast. At the same time it is crucial that we do not forget our brothers and sisters just because they are out of sight. Do continue to pray for those in need, visit and remember that one doesn't have to come on a Sunday in order to be a full member of our church.

On a personal note I should like to acknowledge the fact that, due to ongoing illness, I have been much less than I want to be as Rector. There is simply no doubt that God is telling me to do less and seek his guidance to discern how I use my limited personal resources. This means that moving forward as a community here at St Nick's may be a slower, patchier affair than some might hope. I'd like to thank you all for your ongoing support and patience. I genuinely hope that the new treatment I am about to start will provide some solutions and a way forward. There is simply no doubt that without the key support of our church wardens, Jill and Alison, and our deputy wardens, Fred and Jane, I would not have been able to continue. I do not have the words to express my gratitude.

We have sadly lost a number of friends in this congregation this year, not least John Worthington, Bryan Whitwell, Sheila Andrews, Norman Atherton and, in a quite sudden way, Enid Harvey. I have mourned all our lost friends, but I still cannot quite believe that Enid is not with us. As you will know she was a real rock when I came here and it was a privilege to be with her at the end. But not only will they always be with us in our hearts for as long as we remember them, but their examples of commitment and love will inspire us. Not just for the sake of St Nick's, but for the sake of bringing people in this

parish to the love of God and of service to the Kingdom.

I'd be lying to you if I didn't think we face massive challenges in our mission in this parish. We are blessed with a committed congregation and we have seen new faces. Furthermore, much as you may not thank me for raising it, St Nick's is not in strong position financially – either in terms of supporting its ministry or its commitments to the diocese. I urge you to reflect again – as I have – upon the extent of your financial giving to the church. I should like to thank Elaine Jess for her ongoing wonders as our treasurer. I sometimes feel we would be lost without her. Most of us continue to hope for stronger relationships with the wider community and for a hunger to be part of our congregation. By God's grace this will happen, but we all have a role to play in the future. We need to be confident in God and confident in our faith. Let's us dare to be confident enough to invite folk to come and join; let us demonstrate by the ways we live our lives the good news of Christ.

Let us face the coming year in confidence and hope.

Rachel
x



Thoughts for May..

I received a card from a friend which had written on the front a few lines from Psalm 147 vs 8

'He fills the sky with clouds and sends rain to the earth. So that the hills, will be green with grass'

The message was from South Africa, but how many other countries, villages, could agree with these words: could chant or sing the words as a "plea to God" or "praise to God," for rain—or no rain?

Here in Manchester –where we have so much rain - we often have a different reaction to this verse, usually a disgruntled one. Farmers can react with horror thinking of the effect on their crops. This is especially true in spring when their seeds are newly sown, and also at harvest time, when the ripening and gathering of winter food stocks is crucial. God wants us to enjoy his creation and teach our children to ask questions like: 'Who is the neediest for rain?' and 'How do we prioritize our resources?'

Many organizations are trying to help the situations in the driest and most needy areas overseas. We hear and see in the media, the newly built wells for the villages. Also the irrigation schemes for essential crops the poverty stricken people have to tend and harvest.

But perhaps what the World and Manchester needs is to think "en masse". Perhaps, when the weather gets us down, everyone could change their negative reaction to positive reactions. We are so blessed to have so much water in a world where there isn't enough.

Perhaps you think, 'WAKE UP! You are dreaming!' It is hard to be positive when there is so much bad weather and rain, but from small acorns, big acorns grow. From small groups of people who care little miracles can be achieved, here and overseas. So turn your secret or scheme into a working reality, you'll find friendship and awareness will develop in your group and help you over obstacles. But most importantly you will find strength from our Lord Jesus Christ who walks with you and beside you, always.

P.S. Didn't the Church garden look nice for Easter weekend?

Irene Smith



The power of standing together

Christian Aid Week tells the story of a community in Sierra Leone that has seen remarkable change. Tenneh Keimbay's life turned around when the Methodist Church of Sierra Leone (MCSL) started to work in her town, distributing tools and teaching farmers simple food production techniques. She talks enthusiastically about the difference this has made: 'Now the children eat two meals all year round, whereas before it was one. They are growing well; they don't cry around me because of hunger. They are happy to go to school because something is in their stomach.'

The benefits of regular food speak for themselves. But the effects of the food production group have been more wide-ranging than this. Tenneh speaks of the huge difference working in a group has made to her. Acting together, the farmers can share their skills and work more efficiently. As she tells us, the bottom line is that 'the group work provides more food'.

Tenneh speaks of the support and the encouragement that the farmers give to each other, and how much can be achieved when the community comes together. 'What inspires me in life is unity,' she says. 'To me, unity means coming together to decide on one thing and take that forward.'

Now that they are no longer limited by hunger, the people of Gbap (pronounced Bap) have come together and successfully lobbied for a new school and an agricultural work centre for the community. The people of Gbap have taken their future into their own hands.

During Christian Aid Week, 15,000 churches across Britain and Ireland will organise house-to-house collections and events to raise funds to enable organisations like MCSL to carry out their work transforming communities such as Gbap. Christian Aid currently works with 507 partners in 47 countries in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America and the Caribbean, helping people to make change happen. Our donations will be multiplied many times over as many small actions come together to make a huge change. But the giving that takes place during Christian Aid Week is not one-way.

Unity is something that our churches are not always good at, and the value of community that has inspired Tenneh is something that we can learn from and be changed by. Christian Aid Week is about raising funds. But it is also a call to unity – an invitation for churches to come together and celebrate the possibility of hope and life in parts of the world where mere survival can be a struggle.

This is a challenge, because division and inequality and injustice will always be easier than unity. But Tenneh’s insistence that remarkable things can happen when we come together is not new. We see it in the actions and ministry of Jesus, who pushed against all that leads to violence and separation and called his disciples to model a new way of community.

Can we use this Christian Aid Week to allow ourselves to be changed? If we can work together, with each other, with our churches and with our neighbours both at home and as far away as Gbap, then we may start to see huge change happen.

Tenneh says that ‘when you are a group and work with focus and total commitment, you work at a faster rate; the stronger ones can help with work that weaker ones cannot do by themselves’. As we engage in Christian Aid Week, we can rejoice as we stand together in solidarity. Although we might ask who is the strong and who is the weak – and who is actually giving to whom.

Be a part of Christian Aid Week this year: if, together, we take small actions we can give people like Tenneh the tools to make big change happen.

£6.50/€7.50 could buy a set of four hand tools for a farmer living in the town of Gbap.

£50/€57.50 could pay for advocacy training for two young people in a Kenyan slum, equipping them with the tools they need to pressure their government to provide essential services.

SuDoKu

9	1	7		8				3
3	6		2		9	1	4	
	5	4						
		3	1					
7		9	5		2	3		4
					4	5		
						8	3	
	7	6	3		5		9	1
1				4		7	6	5

8			4	2				
					7		3	
	4		8				1	
	2		5					8
		6				9		
9					3		5	
	8				5		6	
	3		7					
				1	6			2



Hot air



My clergy friend put sanitary hot air hand dryers in the toilets at her church, and two weeks later removed them in a hurry. I asked her why, and she confessed that they worked fine, but when she went in there one day she’d seen a sign that read: "For a sample of next week’s sermon, push the button."

Church Duty Rota (May 2012)

Date	Warden 8.30 a.m.	Warden 10.30	Altar Duty	Lay Assistants	SidesPeople
6th	Fred Murphy	Alison Mills	Jane Cawley	Jane Cawley Jill Lomas	Brenda Maclese Grace Manley
13th	Fred Murphy	Jill Lomas	Caroline Abiodon	Julie Crossley Alison Mills	Julie Crossley Cass Williamson Sue Morris
20th	Fred Murphy	Jane Cawley	Claire Lancaster	Lyn Rimmer Grace Manley	Anne Tudor Anne Holmes Elaine Johnson
27th	Fred Murphy	Alison Mills	Emily Crossley	Anne Holmes Anne Tudor	Sybil Gawkrödger Caroline Abiodon

Parish Registers—(March 2012)

Week Ending	Communi- cants	Cash	Envelopes	Total
4th	46	42.20	306.50	348.70
11th	65	18.00	306.50	324.50
18th	43	18.50	324.00	342.50
25th	46	18.10	319.50	337.60
			Total for month	£1353.50

P.C.C. Raffle April

Brenda Maclese
Raised £32.00

St Nicholas Club Draw

Drawn Sunday 1st April
1st Prize : 67 Winifred Murphy
2nd Prize :43 Chris Lancaster

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.

Funeral Service

Tuesday 27th March Sheila Andrews

Former Church Warden and dear friend to many at St . Nicholas Church.

May the souls of the faithfully departed rest in peace....



Hosanna!

Jeanette Threlfall
(1821-1880)

Hosanna in the highest! That ancient song we sing,
For Christ is our Redeemer, the Lord of heaven our King.
O may we ever praise him with heart and life and voice,
And in his blissful presence eternally rejoice!

Solutions

9	1	7	4	8	6	2	5	3
3	6	8	2	5	9	1	4	7
2	5	4	7	1	3	9	8	6
5	4	3	1	9	7	6	2	8
7	8	9	5	6	2	3	1	4
6	2	1	8	3	4	5	7	9
4	9	5	6	7	1	8	3	2
8	7	6	3	2	5	4	9	1
1	3	2	9	4	8	7	6	5

8	6	3	4	2	1	7	9	5
2	1	9	6	5	7	8	3	4
5	4	7	8	3	9	2	1	6
3	2	1	5	9	4	6	7	8
4	5	6	1	7	8	9	2	3
9	7	8	2	6	3	4	5	1
1	8	2	9	4	5	3	6	7
6	3	5	7	8	2	1	4	9
7	9	4	3	1	6	5	8	2

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 mobile number 07932071977)
Assistant Wardens	Mr. Fred Murphy Ms Jane Cawley
Hon. Treasurer.	Mrs. Elaine Jess
Minutes Secretary	Mrs. Ann Ackerman
Deanery Synod	Mrs. Grace Manley Ms. Jane Cawley
Elected on PCC	Mr. Fred Murphy (Ass Warden) Ms. Jane Cawley (Ass Warden) Mrs Ann Ackerman (Hon. Sec) Mrs Elaine Jess (Hon. Treasurer) Mrs Julie Crossley, Mrs Alison Cullen Mrs. Sue Morris Mrs Christine Price Mrs. Lyn Rimmer (Electoral Roll Officer) Mrs. Margaret Vessey Mr. Michael Vessey, (Co-opted non-voting) Mrs. Margaret Witty, Mr. Tony Witty,
Magazine Distribution	Mrs. Brenda Maclese
Missionary Secretary	Mrs. Christine Taylor
St. Nicholas Church Website	www.st-nicholas-church.org.uk