

# ST. NICHOLAS NEWS

MARCH 2015

PRICE 50P



# RACHEL'S MARCH LETTER

It feels like it's been a long winter. I know it's not been especially harsh in terms of snow and ice, but it has been dismal and bleak. People seem to have been unable to shake off colds and chills. There have been days when the sun has hardly raised itself from its slumbers.

I don't think I suffer from Seasonal Affective Disorder (S.A.D.) but I'm very glad that March is here and spring is almost upon us. I know that the weather can still be a bit yuck right through April, but at least we have the promise of the summer. Snowdrops are peeping out. Daffodils and bluebells are coming into bloom.

Recently I've been reading about how, during Christianity's expansion in Europe after 300 AD, Christian festivals and culture overlaid earlier Roman festivals and gods. It's fascinating stuff. In rural areas, for example, devotion to a female fertility goddess – who blessed the grain and so on – took centuries to dislodge. Even then the fertility goddess stories were often turned into stories of female Christian saints.

Most famously it's been argued that the name we use for the greatest Christian festival – Easter – is derived from the ancient name for the fertility goddess Eostre. Insofar as this is true, it's a reminder that the age of Christian European expansion was a time not only of colonization, but also when Christianity had to adapt to local conditions in order to thrive.

When Christianity spread across Europe, most of its inhabitants lived in villages and were closely tied to the land. It was hardly surprising that the Church would appropriate the rituals and

practices of the community to tell the story of Jesus. Even to this day, we use images of eggs and grain springing into new life as metaphors for Jesus' resurrection from the tomb.

We live in a very different context to that in which Christianity spread. Not least we are all, basically, urbanites and city dwellers. As Lent progresses and we move towards Easter, I wonder how well any of us still relate to the images of new life and the hopes for good harvest embedded in the old agricultural practices?

Those of us who live in cities – and in the UK that's most of the population – can feel both alienated from nature and from the rituals and practices of religion. Sometimes I think, as we shove another bag of pre-washed salad in the shopping trolley, we fail to appreciate how miraculous and fragile creation is.

I sense that right up to the Industrial Revolution, the people of the so-called West had a stronger and closer relationship with creation than we now have. For most people on the planet outside the privileged west, that sense of both the bounty and also the danger of creation is still alive. I think that we have some lessons to learn here.

So I have an invitation to you this Lent and, indeed, a personal challenge to me. It's to attempt to be more aware of the world around us. That is, to attempt to be more aware of the liveliness of creation, even in our stark, urban surroundings. I know that sometimes we can think that there isn't much 'nature' happening in the city, but it's there in every moment. I just think that, in our busyness and hurry, we often don't notice what is directly there before us.

We have come a long way from the agricultural world in which Christianity first took root in Europe. We cannot, nor should we, go back. We live in the here and now. But God is as present and as vibrant as ever. Perhaps we just need to be more attentive to the work God is doing and reconnect once again.

Rachel x

## CHURCH ROTA - MARCH 2015

|            | Warden<br>8.30am | Warden<br>10.30am | Altar<br>Server | Lay<br>Assistants  | Sidespeople                      |
|------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| March 1st  | Fred             | Jane              | Louise          | Louise<br>Margaret | Sybil<br>Caroline                |
| March 8th  | Fred             | Alison M.         | Caroline        | Anne H.<br>Anne T. | Margaret<br>Michael<br>Muriel C. |
| March 15th | Fred             | Grace             | Brenda          | Brenda<br>Cliff    | Muriel N.<br>Amy<br>Val          |
| March 22nd | Fred             | Julie             | Jane            | Jane<br>Grace      | Brenda<br>Colin<br>Alison C      |
| March 29th | Fred             | Jill              | Brenda          | Brenda<br>Cliff    | Lyn<br>Ann A.                    |



## PARISH REGISTERS - FROM JANUARY 2015

| Date                                                                                                                                | Attendance | Cash   | Envelopes |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------|-----------|
| 4th                                                                                                                                 | 38         | £7.00  | £260.00   |
| 11th                                                                                                                                | 32         | £6.00  | £249.00   |
| 18th                                                                                                                                | 46         | £23.00 | £317.00   |
| 25th                                                                                                                                | 41         | -      | £323.10   |
| Total                                                                                                                               |            |        | £1,149.60 |
| <p>St.Nicholas Club<br/>                     1st Prize: Christine Taylor<br/>                     2nd Prize: Women's Fellowship</p> |            |        |           |

## MARCH CALENDAR

|                          |                   |                                                                                                       |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sunday, March 1st        | 8.30am<br>10.30am | Lent 2<br><br>Holy Communion (BCP)<br>Parish Communion & Young<br>People's Church                     |
| Tuesday, March 3rd       | 7.30pm            | Taize                                                                                                 |
| Wednesday, March 4th     | 10am<br><br>7pm   | Eucharist<br><br>Church Wardens' meeting at<br>the Rectory                                            |
| Friday, March 6th        | 7.30pm            | Women's World Day of Prayer                                                                           |
| Sunday, March 8th        | 8.30am<br>10.30am | Lent 3<br><br>Holy Communion (BCP)<br>Parish Communion & Young<br>People's Church                     |
| Wednesday, March 11th    | 10am              | Eucharist                                                                                             |
| Sunday, March 15th       | 8.30am<br>10.30am | Mothering Sunday - all age<br><br>Holy Communion (BCP)<br>Parish Communion & Young<br>People's Church |
| Wednesday, March 18th    | 10am              | Eucharist                                                                                             |
| Sunday, March 22nd       | 8.30am<br>10.30am | Lent 5<br><br>Holy Communion (BCP)<br>Parish Communion & Young<br>People's Church                     |
| Wednesday,<br>March 25th | 10am              | Eucharist                                                                                             |
| Sunday, March 29th       | 8.30am<br>10.30am | Palm Sunday<br><br>Holy Communion (BCP)<br>Parish Communion & Young<br>People's Church                |

# SALLY'S SCRIBBLES

Well I seem to have survived my first 6 months as an ordinand. It feels like an age and yet very brief at the same time. Survived does seem the right word. It has not been the easiest of transitions and there is an awful lot of juggling involved. I am very grateful for the opportunity to train here at St Nik's. It has often felt like a port in the storm over the past few months with so many other changes.

Life at St Mellitus, the college I study at, seems to be fast paced if nothing else. We spent much of the first term focussing on 'what is theology?' - In brief we are not quite sure but we still think it's a good idea. This term we are focussing on biblical studies with an overview of the Bible including its differing styles and authors. On the residential weekends had a brief overview of 2000 years of church history and are starting to draw out key theologians and developments in Christian thought. We also managed to fit in a residential week in France during which we focused on spirituality and discipleship.

There are some fabulous people and it has been a real pleasure to get to know them and make new friends. We come from far and wide and descend on Liverpool Cathedral on a Monday morning to worship and study together. Fortunately our lovely college administrator Cathie always has the coffee brewing for us. The college is still very new and it can often feel like it is still finding its feet but there is a very real sense in which God is in it. It will be exciting to see what God does in and through the college in years to come.

Between the study and the essays I also get chance to come here and work at St Nik's. It is of course a great pleasure and working alongside Rachel is always good fun. I have thoroughly enjoyed

being part of some of the new things that are happening here and I look forward to seeing where these might lead and develop in the future. In all of the chaos I trust that God's vision and purposes are much greater than I could ever imagine. As we move into lent and look forward to the trails of Holy week and the joy of Easter I trust that in retreating to draw near to God we may burst forth with new life.

Sally

---

---

## **BBC'S SONGS OF PRAISE IS COMING TO MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL!**

Manchester Cathedral is hosting two special programmes this Easter. The first is a live broadcast on BBC One of Eucharist for Easter Sunday on 5 April; the second is a recording for the ever-popular programme, Songs of Praise, on Easter Monday, 6 April.

### **Details are as follows:**

Live broadcast of the Easter Eucharist: Sunday 5 April  
Seated by 0915 for the service between 1000 - 1100.

Songs of Praise:

Rehearsal (choir ticket holders only): Sunday 29 March 1415 - 1645.  
Recording (all ticket holders): Monday 6 April 1400 - 1730.

Keen singers are invited to apply for tickets to be part of the special Songs of Praise SATB 'combined choir'. Please note that all choir ticket holders are asked to attend the rehearsal as well as the recording. If you wish to attend but not be part of the choir, please request a congregation ticket.

Tickets are free and you can apply as an individual or on behalf of a group. Please email [songsofpraise@bbc.co.uk](mailto:songsofpraise@bbc.co.uk), call 0161 335 8429 or write to 'Songs of Praise' Tickets (Manchester), 1st Floor, Dock House, Media City UK, Salford M50 2LH.

**The deadline for ticket applications is Monday 16 March 2015,** and tickets will be sent out after this date.



## **PALM SUNDAY** **THE DONKEY'S TALE**

I have to tell you, all peoples, I have had such an unbelievable experience. I am only a little donkey but I can be quite strong at times. This day I was tethered to a tree and two men, I think they were named disciples, came up and untied me. One said quietly to me that I was needed for their Boss.

I am often used to giving rides and lifts to people. This time the person (Boss) was called Jesus. He wasn't heavy; and off we all went. I tried to make the journey as smooth as possible, for this Jesus looked tired and there was something about him that made me feel sad for him. Strange, for the name Jesus is a common one around here and I haven't heard anything about a special Jesus.

People were waving and throwing palm leaves all around us and up in the air. They were singing and jolly as if they were going to a party, as they surrounded us and journeyed with us.

I was taking Jesus to Jerusalem. I shivered a bit after hearing this. Jerusalem can be a strange and cruel place sometimes. We stopped by the outer temple and Jesus slid off my back.

I shivered again and was left with a feeling of sadness. "Why?"

by Irene Smith

## CHURCH HALL BOOKINGS

Church Hall and Glass Room are available for Hire.

Details are on our website:  
[www.St-Nicholas-church.org.uk](http://www.St-Nicholas-church.org.uk)

For bookings please contact:  
Mrs Caroline Abiodon (0161 431 6535)



JESUS SAID TO THEM:  
DO YOU KNOW WHAT I HAVE DONE TO YOU?



Friday  
6th March  
Women's  
World Day  
of Prayer



All are welcome

Praying for The Bahamas

7.30 pm

at St Nicholas Church  
Kingsway M19 1PL

followed by  
refreshments

## ST PATRICK: BELOVED APOSTLE TO IRELAND

St Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland. If you've ever been in New York on St Patrick's Day, you'd think he was the patron saint of New York as well... the flamboyant parade is full of American/Irish razzmatazz.

It's all a far cry from the hard life of this 5th century humble Christian who became in time both bishop and apostle of Ireland. Patrick was born the son of a town councillor in the west of England, between the Severn and the Clyde. But as a young man he was captured by Irish pirates, kidnapped to Ireland, and reduced to slavery. He was made to tend his master's herds.

Desolate and despairing, Patrick turned to prayer. He found God was there for him, even in such desperate circumstances. He spent much time in prayer, and his faith grew and deepened, in contrast to his earlier years, when he "knew not the true God".

Then, after six gruelling, lonely years he was told in a dream he would soon go to his own country. He either escaped or was freed, made his way to a port 200 miles away and eventually persuaded some sailors to take him with them away from Ireland.

After various adventures in other lands, including near-starvation, Patrick landed on English soil at last, and returned to his family. But he was much changed. He had enjoyed his life of plenty before; now he wanted to devote the rest of his life to Christ. Patrick received some form of training for the priesthood, but not the higher education he really wanted.

But by 435, well educated or not, Patrick was badly needed. Palladius' mission to the Irish had failed, and so the Pope sent Patrick back to the land of his slavery. He set up his see at Armagh, and worked principally in the north. He urged the Irish to greater spirituality, set up a school, and made several missionary journeys.

Patrick's writings are the first literature certainly identified from the British Church. They reveal sincere simplicity and a deep pastoral care. He wanted to abolish paganism, idolatry, and was ready for imprisonment or death in the following of Christ.

Patrick remains the most popular of the Irish saints. The principal cathedral of New York City is dedicated to him, as, of course, is the Anglican cathedral of Dublin.

# LENT COURSES 2015

## **Evening group (Les Miserables)**

- Monday, 23rd February, 7.30pm
- Wednesday, 4th March, 8pm (after wardens' meeting)
- Monday, 9th March, 7.30pm
- Wednesday, 18th March, 7.30pm
- Wednesday, 25th March, 7.30pm

## **Afternoon group (York Courses)**

- Tuesday, 24th February, 2pm
- Tuesday, 3rd March, 2pm
- Tuesday, 10th March, 2pm
- Tuesday, 17th March, 2pm
- Tuesday, 24th March, 2pm

Courses are one hour in length, and will meet at the rectory.

---

---

## **ORGANISATIONS**

### **THE MAKER'S CLUB (SUNDAY SCHOOL)**

Mrs. Margaret Witty (0161 432 2933)

For all children aged 3 years upwards in the Vestry at 10.15 a.m.

### **WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP**

Chairman: Mrs Ann Holmes (0161 434 2245)

Second and Fourth Wednesdays at 2.30 p.m.

### **CONFIRMATION CLASSES**

For young people and adults by arrangement with the Minister.

### **RAINBOWS**

For girls aged 5 to 7 years.

Wednesday evening, 6 pm to 7 pm, in the church hall.

# THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST NICHOLAS BURNAGE

## **SUNDAY SERVICES**

8.30 a.m Eucharist (BCP)

10.30 a.m. Family Service and  
Eucharist

## **MINISTER**

Rev'd Rachel Mann  
(0161 432 7009)

## **ORGANISTS**

Vacancy

## **CHURCHWARDENS**

Mrs. Alison Mills  
(01625 540376)

(07932 071977)

Ms Jane Cawley  
(07745392374)

## **ASSISTANT WARDENS**

Mr. Fred Murphy

Mrs. Jill Lomas

Mrs Grace Manley

Mrs Julie Crossley

Mrs Louise Hollingsworth

## **HON. TREASURER.**

Mrs. Elaine Jess

## **MINUTES SECRETARY**

Mrs. Ann Ackerman

## **ELECTORAL ROLL OFFICER**

Mrs Lyn Rimmer

## **DEANERY SYNOD**

Mrs. Grace Manley

Mrs Christine Price

## **ELECTED ON PC**

(in addition to the above officers)

Mrs. Alison Cullen

Mrs. Margaret Witty

Mr. Tony Witty.

Mr David Crossley (ex-officio)

## **MAGAZINE DISTRIBUTION**

Mrs. Brenda Maclese

## **MISSIONARY SECRETARY**

Mrs. Margaret Vessey