

FROM THE REGISTERS

Baptisms

Sun 10th Dec Harriett Lila May Whitehead

Weddings

Sat 4th November; Melanie Western and David Tyson.

Funerals

Fri 10th Nov Josephine Yvonne Turner at Altrincham Cremr.

Wed 15th Nov Andrew Stephen Woodward, followed by burial

FLOWER ROTA

Jan 7th Fiona Ablett & Maureen Woolley

Jan 14th Fiona Ablett & Maureen Woolley

Jan 21st Joyce Davies

Jan 28th Joyce Davies

MAGAZINE CONTRIBUTIONS

The deadline for the next magazine is **Thursday 18th January**
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Large format copies of the magazine are available.

Rector Writes

January 2018

At the start of a new year

The start of the Christian year is Advent: a solemn season of preparation for Christmas. One of the set Bible readings in Advent was from the Old Testament: the Second Book of Kings, Chapter 22, verses 1 to 28. This is from ancient Israel, when the kings of Israel and Judah sought advice as to whether to go to war with the King of Aram. Many prophets were summoned and they all sang the kings' praises and assured them of victory. One other prophet was sent for – the prophet Micaiah who had a reputation for speaking without fear or favour. Micaiah saw that battle would leave Israel 'scattered on the mountains, like sheep that have no shepherd'. The King of Israel condemned Micaiah to prison on reduced rations. Battle was joined, and the King of Israel died, thus handing victory to Aram.

Why are we given this reading in Advent? Because we know how highly the truth is valued – and yet how easily and readily the truth is perverted or defied.

Who will be a seeker after truth? Who is willing to pay the personal price?

See how readily a veil is drawn over the truth in public discourse – in politics. See how leaders of the nations speak lies and propaganda. See how the truth is bought and sold.

Hear the clamour of conflicting voices as the two kings sit on their thrones and ponder strategy. Where is truth to be found? If a single voice is to be more authoritative than many voices, which voice is the voice of truth?

See how, despite our longing for truth and righteousness, those who speak out are condemned. The whistle-blower now has some statutory rights, but the law does not govern every subtlety of human interaction.

There is a lone voice of judgement, and that voice is our Lord, Jesus Christ, before whom we will all stand at the day of judgement. Turn to Christ, repent of your sins, be Baptised and know salvation.

DIARY JANUARY 2018

Thurs 4th 10.00am Holy Communion at Alderley

Sun.7th First Sunday after Epiphany

8.00am Holy Communion at Birtles
 9.45am Holy Communion at Alderley
 11.15am Family Service at Birtles
 6.30pm Evensong at Alderley

Thurs 11th 10.00am Holy Communion at Alderley

Sun 14th Second Sunday after Epiphany

9.45am Family Service at Alderley
 11.15am Holy Communion at Birtles
 6.30pm Holy Communion at Alderley (said)

Thurs 18th 10.00am Holy Communion

Sun. 21nd Third Sunday after Epiphany

8.00am Holy Communion at Alderley
 9.45am Holy Communion at Alderley
 11.15am Mattins at Birtles
 6.30pm No service at Alderley—

Thurs 25th 10.00am Holy Communion at Alderley

Sun 28th Septuagesima

9.45am Mattins at Alderley
 11.15am Holy Communion at Birtles
 6.30pm Evensong at Alderley

ROTA FOR JANUARY 2018
SIDESPEOPLE / LECTORS / WARDENS

D'T	TIME	SIDESPEOPLE	LECTOR	W'N
Jan 7th	8.00am	(at Birtles)		
	9.45am	Mrs W Liddle & Mrs J Martin	Mrs W Liddle	MP
	6.30pm	Mrs L Kershaw	Mr P Kershaw	JY
Jan 14th	9.45am	Mrs G Beeley & Mr S Welsh	Miss C Mowforth	MP
	6.30pm	Mrs A Robinson	Mrs A Robinson	TF
Jan 21st	8.00am			HW
	9.45am	Mrs E Fairhurst & Mrs H Jabr	Mrs SJ Wilkinson	MP
	6.30pm	No service		
Jan 28th	9.45am	Mr G Woolley & Mrs E Jackson	Mrs A Davis	MP
	6.30pm		Mr P Reynolds	PR

COFFEE is available in the Parish Hall after the 9.45am Service.

At the end of the Morning Service coffee and biscuits are provided by a stalwart group of volunteers in the Parish Hall.

Donations will be given to charity.

Thomas Hardy – looking back 90 years

Poet and novelist Thomas Hardy died 90 years ago this month, on 11th January 1928. He is probably best known for the Wessex novels, named after one of the kingdoms of Anglo-Saxon Britain and set largely in the Dorset area, where he was born and where he died. But his real talent was as a poet.

Hardy's long career – he was born in 1840 – spanned the Victorian and modern eras. He is generally regarded as pessimistic and fatalistic, although in his youth he had wanted to be a parson, and his biblical knowledge, expressed in both his poetry and his novels, was exceptional. Although generally regarded as an agnostic, he never stopped attending Anglican church and taking Holy Communion.

His novels, though very readable, were marred by an excessive use of coincidence, but some of his poetry was brilliant, employing the music of language to the full, and often revealed an underlying hope – or at least the desire for it. In *The Darkling Thrush* he writes of "some blessed Hope, whereof he knew / And I was unaware", and in *The Oxen* he concludes: "I should go with him in the gloom, / Hoping it might be so."

When Hardy died, his ashes were deposited in the Poets' Corner of Westminster Abbey. His heart was interred in the graveyard at Stinsford Church where his parents, grandparents, and his first wife were buried.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

This year the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity runs from 18th to 25th January. The theme of the week this year comes from the churches of the Caribbean, and addresses some of the problems which affect the people there, but also worldwide.

Thus, as abuses of human rights are found across the region, the week will challenge us to consider our manner of welcoming the stranger into our midst. Human trafficking and modern-day slavery continue to be huge issues. Addiction to pornography and drugs continue to be serious challenges to all societies. The debt crisis has a negative impact upon the nations and upon individuals – the economies of the nations and people have become precarious. Family life continues to be challenged by the economic restrictions which lead to migration, domestic abuse and violence.

What are Christians to do, in the face of such vast problems? The Caribbean Churches work together to heal the wounds in people's lives, but also know that reconciliation demands repentance, reparation and the healing of memories. The whole Church is called to be both a sign and an active agent of this reconciliation

Email addresses

The email address of the Office at The Rectory is alderleyandbirtles@gmail.com. Ken Wilkinson – the Church Administrator – works in the office on Wednesday and Friday mornings.

You can also contact the Rector on this email address: vicar@jkcahale.co.uk

Morning Prayer

Morning Prayer is held on Wednesdays at St. Catherine's Church, Birtles at 8.45am. All welcome.

COLLECTION TOTALS

Week ending	Envelopes	Misc Cash	Standing Orders	Total
5 th Nov	168.00	60.00		228.00
12 th Nov	496.50	0.00		496.50
19 th Nov	178.00	40.00		218.00
26 th Nov	183.00	37.00		220.00
TOTAL	1025.50	137.00	731.00	1893.50

Donald Henderson Tel 01625 584008 or email orchardmain@ntlworld.com

NETHER ALDERLEY 200 CLUB **December draw winners**

1st prize Geoff Woolley
2nd prize Mary L Harwood
3rd prize Jean Stone

Congratulations to all the winners

Your cheque or standing order gives you a chance of being the winner.

Forms can be found at the back of Church and in the Parish Hall Kitchen.

A total of £4000 has now been handed over to St Mary's treasurer, towards the day to day running costs of the Church.

Thank you to all participants!!

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

We held the Christmas Fair on Dec.2nd, I hope successful from all angles. The choir was well received. Once again they were so enthusiastic. They love singing in our treasured Church.

A huge thankyou to everybody who worked so hard to bring success. We made £1.000 profit, £830,00p of this has gone to help in a small way the church accounts.

At the moment we are putting together the coffee morning after the morning Carol Service on December 17th.

Our next venture is the February Bridge Drive. Monday February 12th. Starting at 1.30.in the Parish Hall. Tables £26.00. We need you and your friends to support this. Please do. In the main the Social Committee do not play bridge, we rely on you to come and support us.

A very happy Christmas to everybody !

Janet Adamson 01625 583320.

Walking

A group of friends from St Mary's are going for a walk on the **3rd February** 2018 The details are given below and anyone interested is welcome to join the group.

If you do come along, you do so at your own risk as walking can be a hazardous activity. Children and/or dogs are also welcome but you have to take full responsibility for them. It is advisable that you have appropriate footwear and clothing with you to cope with any weather and ground conditions that might be met.

**Lyme Park, Disley, Newtown (A6) 8 1/2 miles 300m climb,
mainly trails, one stretch across fields.**

Meet Lyme Park 10.am (Non members parking charge £8, I think most of the group are members ,let me know if you are not) The walk will head out past the Cage, through Disley and on to the canal towpath to Swizzels (no stopping sadly).

Further information: Drinks and packed lunch needed. Please watch the weather forecast and if it is not promising make sure I have your contact details.

Jamie Smith tel 01625 585245 (callminder so you will have to prepared to give your name to automatic system) mob. 07791 60 40 99

Jamie Smith

19th Macclesfield St.Michael & All Angels parish

20th Macclesfield St.John parish.

21st The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity continues until 25th January. Pray for united Christian witness

22nd Macclesfield St.Paul parish.

23rd North Rode parish.

24th Pott Shrigley parish

25th Prestbury parish

26th Please pray for Bishop Libby Lane, Bishop of Stockport, on this, the third anniversary of her consecration as bishop.

27th Rainow with Saltersford and Forest parish.

28th The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity ended on 25th January. Pray for united Christian witness

29th Sutton St.James parish

30th Upton Priory parish

31st Wildboarclough parish

A Deanery is a group of parishes. There are 18 Deaneries in Chester Diocese. The benefice of Alderley & Birtles lies within Knutsford Deanery. The other parishes in Knutsford Deanery are: Chelford; Alderley Edge; High Legh; Knutsford St.Cross; Knutsford St.John the Baptist; Lindow; Lower Peover; Marthall; Mobberley; Over Peover; Over Tabley; Rostherne with Bollington; Toft; and Wilmslow.

Churches Working Together

I believe that the churches should work together. In Alderley the churches work together in Churches Together in Alderley known as CTIA. The CTIA churches are Alderley Edge Methodist Church; St.Pius Church, Alderley Edge; St.Philip & St.James, Alderley Edge; and St.Mary's Church, Alderley.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is Thursday 18th to Thursday 25th January. On Sunday 21st January all the churches in Alderley will come together for evening worship at St.Pius Church, Stamford Road, Alderley Edge at 4.30pm. There will not be a 6.30pm service at St.Mary's Church on 21st January.

The Annual General Meeting of CTIA will be held at St.Pius Church, Stamford Road, Alderley Edge on Monday 29th January at 7.30pm.

If you care about the churches working together please be at both events.

Diocesan Prayer Intentions for January 2018

The Benefice of Alderley & Birtles lies within the Diocese of Chester and the Deanery of Knutsford. Throughout the year, on a daily basis, you are invited to hold in prayer all aspects of Diocesan life in Christ. This is the Diocesan Cycle of Prayer.

January 2018

- 1st Moulton parish.
- 2nd Northwich (Castle) Holy Trinity parish
- 3rd Northwich (Winnington) St.Luke parish.
- 4th Over St.Chad parish
- 5th Over St.John parish.
- 6th Sandiway parish
- 7th The Baptism of Christ. Pray that we may realise the power of Christ's Baptism in our own discipleship.
- 8th Weaverham parish
- 9th Wharton parish.
- 10th Whitegate parish.
- 11th Witton (Northwich) parish.
- 12th Macclesfield Deanery
- 13th Bollington parish.
- 14th The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity starts on 18th January. Pray for united Christian witness.
- 15th Bosley parish
- 16th Gawsworth parish.
- 17th Henbury & Broken Cross parish.
- 18th Hurdsfield parish.

THANK YOU

Many, many thanks to everyone who so kindly donated to the Candle Fund, stripped their gardens of evergreen or assisted me in the preparation of the Church for Advent and Christmas.

It is only your generosity, kindness and valuable help that enables us to make our already beautiful Church "special" during Advent and Christmas. Thank you so much.

Michael Penlington

BRIDGE DRIVE

This has been organised for **Monday February 12th** in the Parish Hall starting 1.30pm. Tables will cost £26.

Please tell your friends. We need to advertise this!!

Everybody's support is necessary. Some people who have habitually had a table are no longer able to do so, so we need some new blood!!

Let me know if you would like a Table or know anyone who would be interested.\

CAROL SINGING

A big thank-you to all our hosts and to all our singers. We raised a record amount of £1615 over 2 nights carol singing and a session at Woodlands Court. The money has been split evenly between the 'NSPCC' and 'East Cheshire Hospice'.

**In 25 years we have raised just over
£23,000 for various charites**

What do you think of when you hear Church bells ringing?



Weddings? Special National Events, such as Remembrance Sunday? Or do you think of the picture of the village green with the sound of leather on willow and the local village church in the background?

You may have heard in the media that to remember the 1400 Church Bellringers who gave their lives in the Great War, the Central Council of Church Bellringers has set us the challenge to train 1400 new ringers so that on Sunday November 11th 2018 many more church towers will be ready to ring to mark 100 years since the Armistice.

At St Mary's, Alderley we have a long history of bellringing for Sunday Services, weddings and other 'special occasions' and we are keen to recruit new members to join us.

If you would like to learn a new skill, meet new friends and have fun we would love you to join us for our open weekend or practice night every Tuesday to have a go at ringing the bells.

THE OPEN BELL RINGING WEEKEND AT ST.MARY'S CHURCH IS SATURDAY & SUNDAY 17th & 18th MARCH.

Those beloved little red bricks

Sixty years ago this month a Dutch company copyrighted a new toy. They called it 'Lego', Latin for 'gather, pick or choose'. They can't have foreseen the enormous, world-wide enthusiasm with which these little red clip-together building blocks would be greeted by children from about two years old to early teens. Toddlers would clip them together and imagine they were houses or lorries. Older children would build progressively more sophisticated structures, many with cogs, wheels and battery powered motors.

Parents and grand-parents loved them, because they were a universally welcome gift, and even a youngster who already had some Lego was always glad to get some more. Mind you, little red bricks in odd places rapidly became a feature of many homes – under chairs and settees, in beds, and even turning up in the cat's tray or the bath.

Lego has been, for sixty years, a feature of any home with children. It was also, I admit, the inspiration for a little children's song which I wrote nearly 50 years ago, which was included in the BBC school song book. It was called 'The Building Song' and included the immortal lines Everybody's building, everybody's building, Everybody's building in a different way.

Not, I agree, exactly Isaac Watts, but the tune, by Roger Hurrell, was catchy and it became very popular at school assemblies. Yes, we are all building – lives, character, personalities, friendships. After all, 'made in God's image', what could we be but creator/builders? We gather, pick and choose – and like Lego, make something of all the bits!