



St Mary's Church

Prestwich GROWING • GIVING • SERVING

Monthly News—January 2019

Free



Welcome to our new year monthly newsletter

A New Year message from the Church Wardens
May we firstly wish all of you a Happy New year as we look forward to an interesting and challenging 2019 in our lives and in the life of St.Mary's.



As you will be aware, Rev. Chris officially leaves us on the 12 January, and we wish him well and hold him in our prayers as he continues his spiritual journey in east Lincolnshire. As wardens we become sequestrators and act as a conduit for the day to day running of the parish.

Since the last vacancy in 2013 the growth in attendance and the increased number of initiatives and activities taking place

at St.Mary's has been welcomed and we rejoice in it. The deployment and training of deacons and curates, under Chris's guidance, will now pass

and become the responsibility of the cohort bishops whilst they minister at St.Mary's.

The future of the present Rectory staying the home of any new incumbent is under review and entering a consultation period with the Property Committee at Church House.

The growth of St.Mary's, in comparison to the general malaise within the church, has been rooted on Welcome, Generosity, Hospitality and Prayer and it is with this in mind we seek to continue and share the good news.

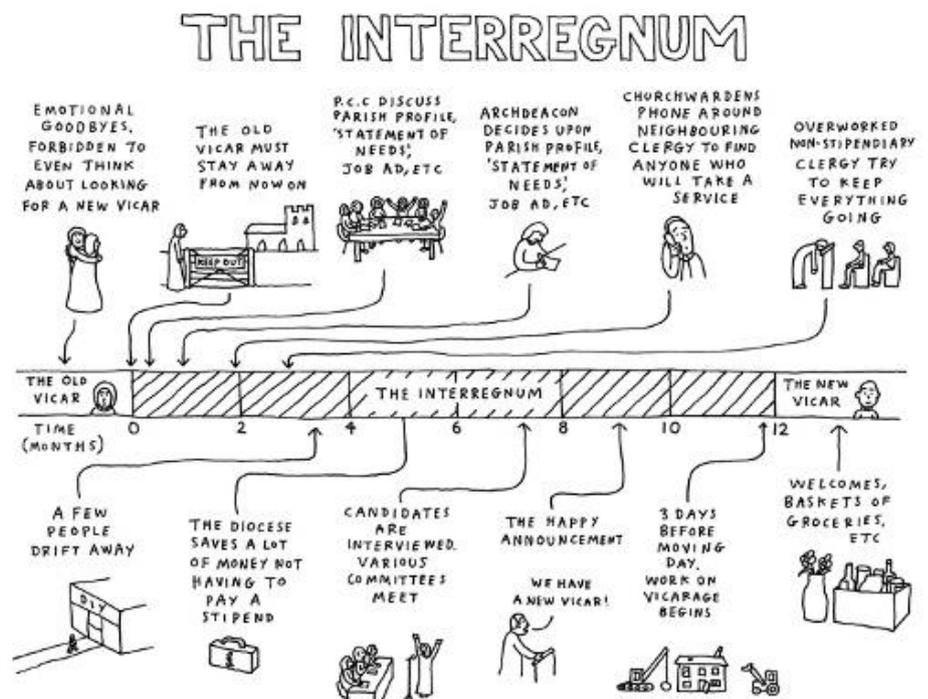
In this season of Epiphany, when the wise men came from

the east to offer gifts to the infant Jesus. May we offer ourselves in service to the Church and to the continued ministry at St. Mary's.

We ask you to pray for the church and for the wardens, ministry team and all involved in the running of our worship groups to continue their work at St. Mary's and as we enter a period of important decision making by the PCC in preparing a parish profile and selecting parish representatives as part of the process to appointing an incumbent, we pray for them also.

Susie & Stewart -Church Wardens

[Porch Boxes](#) is a local charity providing crisis packs to individ-



uals or families. The packs include enough food for two days and some basic toiletries. Porch Boxes also provide different types of packs depending on need including: baby boxes, family 7 day packs, Christmas boxes, street packs for people living rough and home starter packs for people moving on from hostels. Staff from local agencies like Social Service contact Porch Boxes if they come across a person or family in need and someone from the project delivers a parcel to the agency who then pass it on to the person. Referrals also come from other charities, schools or people supporting those in crisis.

Porch Boxes relies on donations of food and toiletries, and a number of groups, churches and primary schools support the work with donations throughout the year. A donation box can be found at the back of St Mary's. Please consider bringing a small contribution with you each week.

More information can be found at www.porchboxes.org.uk/



School News

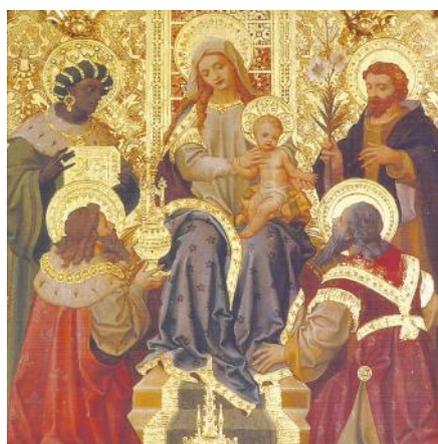
We are delighted to announce

that Rev. Carole has been accepted as a Foundation Governor at St.Mary's School leading on RE and Worship. Rev.

Chris's position on the board will be filled during the vacancy by the area dean, Rev. Deborah Sandercock-Pickles (vicar of St.Margaret's)

Year of Confidence 2019

Our 5 year Mission Action Plan labels 2019 as the year of Confidence. The definition for this can be summed up as:



"the feeling or belief that one can have faith in or rely on someone or something."

And also:

"a feeling of self-assurance arising from an appreciation of one's own abilities or qualities"

The PCC set out an ambitious programme of aims and objectives for our 5 year plan and they are confident that, with prayer and self belief they can be fulfilled and the worship and praise at St.Mary's will thrive, deepen and grow in the coming years.

Epiphany to Candlemas
[Epiphany, or the 12th day of Christmas, falls on January 6 and marks the official end to the festive season for many Christians. The ancient Chris-](#)

[tian feast day is significant as a celebration of the baptism of Jesus](#) by John the Baptist, as well as a more general celebration of his birth. The six Sundays which follow Epiphany are known as the time of manifestation. The Twelfth Night (Epiphany) also marks a visit to the baby Jesus by three Kings, or Wise Men. The word 'Epiphany' comes from Greek and means to show, referring to Jesus being revealed to the world.

In the West, Christians began celebrating the Epiphany in the 4th century, associating it with the visit of the Wise Men to Jesus.

According to the Gospel of Matthew, the men found Jesus by following a star across the desert to Bethlehem.

The three men - named Melchior, Caspar and Balthazar - followed the star of Bethlehem to meet the baby Jesus. According to Matthew 2:11, they offered symbolic gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

The gifts were symbolic of the importance of Jesus' birth, the gold representing his royal standing; frankincense his divine birth; and myrrh his mortality.



During the medieval period, Christmas was celebrated for the 12 days from Christmas Eve on December 24, until the Epiphany. Even up until the 19th century, January 6 was as big a celebration as Christmas

Day.

For many Protestant churches, the season of Epiphany extends from January 6 until Ash Wednesday and the start of Lent. The last Sunday of the Epiphany is celebrated as Transfiguration Sunday. Others, including the Catholic church, observe Epiphany as a single day. Some Catholic dioceses in the US mark the Epiphany feast on the Sunday after January 6.

[Orthodox Christians, however, celebrate the holiday on January 19 each year.](#)

Across the world, the day's festivities vary. In the Spanish speaking world Epiphany is known as Dia de los Reyes (Three Kings' Day). In Mexico, for instance, crowds gather to taste the Rosca de Reyes - Kings' bread. In other countries, a Jesus figurine is hidden in the bread.

Ten facts about the Feast of the Epiphany

1. The three Kings (Melchior, Caspar and Balthazar) represented Europe, Arabia and Africa respectively.
 2. Hundreds of years ago, roast lamb was traditionally served at Epiphany in honour of Christ and the three Kings' visit.
 3. Whoever finds the small statue of a baby Jesus hidden inside their slice of the Rosca de reyes throws a party on Candlemas in February.
 4. In some European countries, children leave their shoes out the night before to be filled with gifts, while others leave straw for the three Kings' horses.
5. According to Greek Orthodox Church's traditions, a priest will bless the waters by throwing a cross into it as worshippers try to retrieve it.
 6. In Bulgaria too, Eastern Orthodox priests throw a cross in the sea and the men dive in - competing to get to it first.
 7. In Venice a traditional regatta that started as a joke in the late 70s has been incorporated in the celebrations of Epiphany Day.
 8. In Prague, there is a traditional Three Kings swim to commemorate Epiphany Day at the Vltava River.
 9. In New York, El Museo del Barrio has celebrated and promoted the Three Kings' Day tradition with an annual parade for more than three decades. Thousands take part in the procession featuring camels, colorful puppets and floats.
 10. The day's activities involve singing holiday carols called aguinaldos.

Archbishop Justin Welby

and friends reflect on the meaning of Christmas in new book ['In This Light'](#)

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, has published a



new book bringing together people from all walks all life to reflect on what Christmas means to them.

['In This Light: Thoughts for Christmas'](#) features stories from the world's toughest prisons, to people finding courage in refugee camps. Doctors reflect on facing fear at the operating table, while others talk about finding hope after disappointments and struggles at Christmas.



Published by Harper Inspire, the collection of personal essays includes contributions from Bishop Michael Curry, Julie Etchingham, Jonathan Bryan, Matt Brittin, John Kerry, Sadiq Khan, Agnes Abuom, Hosam Naoum, Sally Phillips, Bryan Stevenson, Alan Titchmarsh and Hae Woo, among many others. All royalties from the book are being donated to three charities close to Archbishop Justin's heart. They will be divided equally between Caring for Ex-Offenders, part of the ministry of Holy Trinity Brompton; the Equal Justice Initiative; the Melanesian Mission and Charis Tiwala.

What's on

The award winning Pre School Praise



begins again after the Christmas Break on the 10 January from 10am in Church with Praise and worship, singing, music and craft activities and don't forget the yummy cakes and drinks. Catering for 0-4yrs and their carers.

Choir Practice

also begins again after the hard work of the Nine Lessons and Carols and Christmas services



on the 10 January at 7-30pm. If you think you can sing and would like to try, please speak to our organist and director of music,
Gary Hulme.

Regular worship at St Mary's



Sunday

8.00am Eucharist
10.30am Sung Eucharist

Tuesday

7.30am Morning Prayer*
8.00am Eucharist*

Wednesday

7.30am Morning Prayer*
8.00am Eucharist*
10.00am Eucharist

Thursday

7.30am Morning Prayer*
8.00am Eucharist*
10.00am Pre-School Praise

Friday

7.30am Morning Prayer*
8.00am Eucharist*
9.15am Eucharist in St Mary's School

Services marked * take place in St.Mary's Church, Church Lane. Pre-School Praise and the Friday morning School Eucharist do not take place during the summer holidays.

Bishop Mark

Bishop Mark will be preaching and presiding at our Candlemas



service on the 3 February at 10-30am. We look forward to welcoming him to share the Eu-

charist with us.

Prestwich Mission Partnership

The anniversary of the formation of the PMP is celebrated each year on the 2nd Sunday of January with a Pulpit swop between St.Mary's, St.Gabriel's and St.Margaret's. This year we are delighted to receive Rev. Stephen from St. Gabriel's and share the Eucharist with him.

St Mary's parish prayer

Loving Father, we pray your blessing on our parish. Help us to have hearts open to your Holy Spirit. Give us the courage to follow the way of Christ. Strengthen us to be faithful in prayer and loving service. Help us to play our part in building up your Kingdom here and now.

Contact us



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