

St Bart's



Christmas, 2016



Services

Sunday 11.00 Holy Communion (with hymns)

Thursday 10.00 Holy Communion (said)

A warm welcome to all who worship with us.
After the service coffee is served.



Priest-in-charge

The Revd Gareth Randall

For further information concerning baptisms,
marriages or funerals:

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December 2016

Dear Friends,

"Happy Christmas"

« Joyeux Noël. » "Merry Christmas." "Have a good Xmas." Just some the greetings you may hear this month. But why ? Why should we be merry at this time of year ?

Friends, family, food. Eating and drinking well. The presence of presents. Nicely decorated homes, warm, welcoming, with a Christmas tree in a corner. The thought that in these cold, dark, Winter days, Spring and Summer are on their way again. Going to our Carol Service, to our Crib Service, to Holy Communion on Christmas morning.

Yes, there are lots of possible reasons why we could smile at this time of year. At the heart of Christmas is the heart of our faith, that the God we respect, we value, we worship, God our Father in heaven, is a God who is good-hearted, who had the courage to take upon himself our flesh and to be born a baby boy in a stable of an inn in Bethlehem. Jesus the Christ, Son of God, son of Mary, stepson of Joseph, knows first-hand what it means to be human, to live, to die, then rise from the dead with the promise that he will be here for us, with us - always.

So yes, we can smile, smile despite our aches and pains, our discomfort or worries. Why ? Simply because at this time, the darkest time of the year, we know that Jesus, the Light of the World, shines in the darkness and that darkness cannot extinguish his light.

Happy Christmas - ENJOY.

Father Gareth.



Notes from the Council

November 24th

Almost at the end of my tenth year here as your priest and our meeting was very much focused on fund-raising.

A fact of life, money, sound financial management, cash flow and wise stewardship are the fundamental rock on which St Bart's rests for without you and your faithful commitment and support in mind, body and spirit, we could not continue to exist as a self-supporting church here in France.

So we touched on the possibility of more events here: concerts; meals after church; gatherings in the church garden - developments essentially of what we're already doing. Stewardship, planned-giving, was also identified, to build on the benefit we still receive from the campaign when first I came. And, above all, bequests in wills - again something from which we have recently benefitted.

Apart from that:

- David Norris was congratulated on his rendition of my 12 monologues on Judas which were the subject of a meeting of

the Groupement Oecuménique here in November and which will appear monthly in our parish mag throughout 2017.

- The Advent Appeal this year will be the Little Sisters of the Poor in St Servan who were kind enough to look after Irène Bishop, a former member of our congregation, in their Maison de Retrait before she died in November.
- David Bargioni has been appointed our second Synod rep which means he will also join our Church Council.

Father Gareth



Notices

- **Poppy Appeal** We raised £610/706.50€ this year. Our thanks to Helen Morgan for all her hard work.
- **Headley Court** At our Remembrance Sunday service £440/509.50€ were donated to the above.
- **Deadline** for submission of material for the January edition of St Bart's is *midday on Thursday 28th December*
- **Church Finances for October**
Income: 3,472€ Expenditure: 4,653€



Personal Column - 6th November

Our sympathy to Lorrie at the death of her husband,
the Revd John Schaeffer, former locum chaplain here at St Bart's;
and
to Barbie and Willie Ibbott at the death of Irène Bishop,
her half-sister.



Church Clean

Please join us in a 'Spring Clean' of the church for Xmas -

Tuesday 6th December 10.00 onwards

Thanks !

Corrie Stein



Afghan refugees in St-Cast

Christmas is imminent and, with it, an opportunity for US to show God's generosity to a particular group of people in need.

Thirty young Afghan refugees are living close by us, in the seaside resort of St-Cast, near Matignon, where I live. They are aged 16 to 18 (well, 18 might be a bit flexible) and staying in a holiday centre run by EdF (Électricité de France). EdF is feeding them and paying the chef and the supervisors, and is receiving support in turn from the French state.

Their physical and medical needs (not psychological, but that's another matter) are largely met. But lads get bored, and St-Cast in winter is not exactly a joint that's jumping.

Several local French charities are already doing their best for these lads, but Liz, my wife, and I received an approach BECAUSE WE'RE ENGLISH and because the first foreign language the lads have learned is English. We were able to send them a big bag of books (others have followed) in English, along with... several pairs of socks. (I'll come back to that.)

They've got a cast-off TV and a computer. I suspect they could do with a DVD player and some disks if anyone has one spare. Liz and I

managed to dig out a game of safety-tipped darts and that's gone down well. I've been trying to organise a series of English conversation groups, but no luck so far.

Cricket - they insist - is the Afghan national sport, and they play using tennis balls and a bat that they've fashioned themselves (impressive!) but they have no wickets. A hard cricket ball is a BAD idea because the space they have for playing is surrounded with plate-glass windows and used also for car parking. Apart from proper bats and wickets, what they need is:

Anything to keep them entertained on rainy days:

board games, for instance;

English-language books and magazines;

Writing materials including notepads and pens;

Musical instruments;

Men's underwear and socks;

Waterproof shoes or boots;

Basic hygiene materials: soap, shaving foam, toothpaste, etc.

Please contact me at St Bart's, on david.boggis@wanadoo.fr or on 02 96 41 18 87.

David Boggis



Walking with Peter 12

Peter's gate

"The keys of the kingdom"

Matthew 16 v19

I have the keys of the kingdom.

Jesus entrusted them to me

to keep for all eternity.

So I stand as doorkeeper,

gatekeeper, always ready

to unlock and to open the way

to all through God's grace

who are called to enter in

to the delights of heaven.

But none living can know

what delights await therein.

Brother Paul rightly wrote,

'No eye has seen nor ear heard

what is to be hereafter.'

Brother John, however, saw

that there would be 'a new heaven'

and 'a new earth', 'a new Jerusalem'

where there would be 'no weeping',

'no mourning' for none are sick

and death itself has died –

God in the centre of our life
and we in perfect adoration.
So what can I say to help you
understand what is to come ?
Let me simply say to you
that heaven is like the best –
whatever that might mean to you.
To me, it means to be together,
present with the one I love
who loves me as I love them
and to be perfectly at ease,
conscious, connected, content,
in union with otherness.
So let me encourage you
to live life the best you can,
then to die a good death,
well knowing in your heart
that all will be well
and that you will hear
the one you love say to you,
“Well done, good and faithful.
Enter in and eat with me.”



By Ron Kirk

Help for Heroes
2016 Big Battlefield Bike Ride
Commemorating the 1916 Great Western Front –
Ypres to Verdun

*(Dedicated to My Two Mates:
Chris Downton and Andrew Burnett)*



OUR ALLIES

Saint Quentin was our next destination.

Today was to be Australia's Day. And shortly after departing we arrived at Villers-Bretonneux. At the main site of the Australian Memorial, we were shown the area where the Red Baron was shot down and the story of the first tank on tank action at nearby Cachy. It was here that there were several tank battles of enormous ferocity led by a Frank Mitchell. He seemed to me the sort of guy you would like to have around in a pitched battle, particularly when

the outcome was very uncertain (refer to more detailed account in the historical points notes further on).

I suppose this for me was the pivotal point of the whole experience. Travelling through the beautiful rolling landscape of the French countryside, for the most part on small roads, marked at the edges of fields with the vibrant colours of thousands of poppies, it was hard to imagine the place it must have been a century ago. Each day our guides were bringing to life the events of long ago and I suppose by cycling the route we were all beginning to appreciate the scale of the conflict. It is one thing to see diagrammatic illustrations of the lines on your television screen, it is quite another to see these actual sites first-hand.

It is very evident why poppies were chosen for remembrance when they stand out so much even when restricted to the edges of fields. The following poem perhaps encapsulates their special relevance:

"The Inquisitive Mind of a Child"

Why are they selling poppies, Mummy?

Selling poppies in town today.

The poppies, child, are flowers of love.

For the men who marched away.

But why have they chosen a poppy, Mummy?

Why not a beautiful rose?

Because my child, men fought and died

In the fields where the poppies grow.

But why are the poppies so red, Mummy?

Why are the poppies so red?

Red is the colour of blood, my child.

The blood that our soldiers shed.

The heart of the poppy is black, Mummy.

Why does it have to be black?

Black, my child, is the symbol of grief.

For the men who never came back.

But why, Mummy are you crying so?

Your tears are giving you pain.

My tears are my fears for you my child.

For the world is forgetting again.

Today was to be my toughest day. Not from the physical exertion but from the gathering emotional tempo. We all formed together at the main memorial to be met by a Lt. Col. of the Australian Army. A member of the Australian contingent 'Mates for Mates' stepped forward and recounted a most painful account of his life after suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. In a trembling emotional voice, he explained it was difficult for him to speak to so

many people and was just getting used to speaking one-to-one. He had through his illness lost a wife, found it difficult to keep relationships, moved from one job to another and through a bad business partner was swindled out of his share of his business. There came a point when he remembers sitting in his car with a bottle of vodka in one hand and a fistful of tranquillisers in the other that would knock out a horse, when one of his few remaining friends rang him and asked what he was doing on his birthday.

From that point and with the association with H4H, the right support was brought to bear and he became able to resume a normal life. Later, I went over to him to say how courageous it was for him to speak like that and to bare his soul. I added he needn't have worried as he was amongst friends. To my astonishment, he just threw his arms around me and gave me a brotherly hug.

Having had my photograph taken with the Lt. Col., I was presented with a wooden cross endorsed by a message from an Australian schoolgirl Natalie commemorating the bravery of her nations soldiers. At our remembrance service in France where I now live, I will place that cross with the others in the churchyard. It was now I was beginning to feel the full emotion of it all.

I was still bearing the pain this year of losing two close mates in quick succession over just two months, Chris Downton, my personal lawyer for some 20 years at the age of 62 and Andrew Burnett, at just 51, my brother-in-law. Chris enjoyed with me many successes buying and selling businesses. We shared many successes but I shall remember him most of all when I was under grave threat from a corrupt foreign bank resulting finally in the issue of a personal high court writ to prevent losing all I had gained over a generation of work. He stood by me every step of the way. Andy was like the brother I never had, we never had a cross word in all the years I knew him. Just a couple of months before he suddenly passed away I had visited him in Market Harborough. I had felt how happy he was in just two years of marriage to my youngest sister.

There then came the point at which I could no longer hold the tears back when Jodie Kid read the following poem based on experiences in the Burma Campaign:

MATES' POEM

(by Duncan Butler, 2/12th Field Ambulance)

I've travelled down some dusty roads

Both crooked tracks and straight

And I have learnt life's noblest creed

Summed up in one word, "Mate".

I'm thinkin' back across the years
A thing I do of late
And these words stick between me ears
"You gotta have a mate."
Someone who'll take you as you are
Regardless of your state
And stand as firm as Ayers Rock
Because he is your mate.
Me mind goes back to '43
To slavery and hate
When man's one chance to stay alive
Depended on his mate.
With bamboo for a billy-can
And bamboo for a plate
A bamboo paradise for bugs
Was bed for me and my mate.
You'd slip and slither through the mud
And curse your rotten fate
But then you'd hear a quiet word
"Don't drop your bundle, mate."
And though it's all so long ago
This truth I have to state
A man don't know what lonely means
'til he has lost his mate.

If there's a life that follows this
If there's a *Golden Gate*
The welcome that I wanna hear
Is just "Goodonya mate".
And so to all who ask us why
We keep these special dates
Like ANZAC Day, I tell 'em "Why?!"
We're thinkin' of our mates."
And when I've left the driver's seat
And 'anded in me plates
I'll tell Ol' Peter at the door
"I've come to join me mates."

I couldn't take much more of this, got on my bike and rode my bike
alone the best I could looking through the tears.



Historical Point

In early April 1918, the Germans renewed their efforts, simultaneously beginning the Battle of the Lys in Flanders. The Germans managed to advance towards Villers-Bretonneux, a town on the high ground to the south of the Somme River. The terrain

allowed artillery observers to see bombardments on Amiens, which was only 16 kilometres (9.9 mi) away, which was of great tactical value. On 4th April, the Germans attempted to capture the town with 15 divisions but were repulsed by troops from the British 1st Cavalry Division and Australian 9th Brigade during the First Battle of Villers-Bretonneux. After the first battle, the forces that had secured the town were relieved and by late April the area around Villers-Bretonneux was largely held by the 8th Division. Although it had been one of the best British divisions it had suffered badly in the German attacks of March, losing 250 officers and about 4,700 men, reducing its infantry by half. Replacements in the latest draft from Britain included 18-year-olds with little training.

German 2nd Army attack

On 17th/18th April, the Germans bombarded the area behind Villers-Bretonneux with mustard gas, causing 1,000 Australian casualties. On the evening of 23rd/24th April, an artillery barrage was fired, using mustard gas and high explosive rounds. Next morning, the Germans attacked the village with four divisions. The German infantry, with fourteen supporting tanks (one was unserviceable), broke through the 8th Division, making a 3-mile (4.8 km) wide gap in the Allied line. Villers-Bretonneux fell to the Germans and the railway junction of Amiens became vulnerable to capture. After the Germans took Villers-Bretonneux, the first engagement between

opposing tanks took place. Three British Mark IV tanks from No. 1 Section, A Company, 1st Battalion, Tank Corps had been dispatched to the Cachy switch line, at the first reports of German advance and were to hold it against the Germans. One was a "male" (the No. 1 Tank of the section) armed with two 6-pounder guns and machine guns, under the command of Lieutenant Frank Mitchell. It was crewed by only four of the normal crew of eight, as the others had been gassed. The other tanks were "females" armed with 0.303 in (7.7 mm) machine-guns, for use against infantry. All were advancing when they encountered a German A7V, "Nixe" of Abteilung III Imperial German Tank Force, commanded by 2nd Lieutenant Wilhelm Biltz.

Nixe fired on the two "females", damaging them to the extent that it left holes in the hull leaving the crew exposed. Both retreated; their machine guns were unable to penetrate the armour on the German tank. Mitchell's "male" Mark IV continued to fire at the A7V, while on the move to avoid German artillery fire and the gun of the German tank. The movement meant Mitchell's gunner had difficulty in aiming the 6-pounders. The tanks fired at each other on the move, until the Mark IV stopped to allow the gunner a clear shot and the gunner scored three hits (a total of six shell hits). Nixe heeled over on its side, possibly as a result of crossing an incline at the wrong angle. The surviving German crew (out of 18 men),

including Biltz, alighted from the vehicle and the British fired at them as they fled on foot, killing nine.

The British tank was next faced by two more *A7Vs*, supported by infantry; Mitchell's tank fired several ranging shots at the German tanks and they retreated. Mitchell's tank continued to attack the German infantry, firing case-shot. Seven of the new British Whippet medium tanks arrived, attacked the Germans, encountered some battalions "forming up in the open" and killed many infantry with their machine-guns and by running them down. Mitchell later remarked that when they returned their tracks were covered with blood. Only four of the seven Whippets came back, the rest were destroyed by artillery and five crew were killed.

Being the last tank on the field and slow moving, the Mark IV became a target for German artillery and Mitchell ordered the tank back, manoeuvring to try to avoid the shells but a mortar round disabled the tracks. The crew left the tank, escaping to a British-held trench, much to the surprise of the troops in it when they were asked to get their bayonets out of the way.



As we progressed closer to our destination there continued a flood of other historical events at Pargny and Manchester Hill including accounts of further acts of heroism in dire circumstances. This was like a street fight to a deadly finish.

Not to be forgotten was the industrialisation of the war, the building of narrow gauge railways for supplies of men and materials, even the constructing of a brewery by Everards in Leicester. My brother-in-law Andy would have loved the idea of his favourite brew of Tigers Ale being available on the front line.

Eventually a very emotional day came to a close. We had reached over halfway point and our fourth, penultimate day awaited, which, although longer, would be over fairly flat terrain.



Posted on Facebook

Thoughts from America after the election of Donald Trump

written by David Bargioni's daughter, Lucy Lawless.

This isn't a choice I would have made or an outcome I can fathom, but the way I see it, we have a couple of choices . . . Lay down and be defeated. Allow our lives to be defined by a presidency. Drown in our sorrow. Or pick ourselves up and face the new challenges that we are presented with today. Hate, fear and adversity can only take a hold if we allow it to. We all have the choice to identify and apply our individual abilities to continue to overcome our differences, and defend our values. And we can do it without spreading hate. I still choose to believe in the inherent goodness of people, and my choice is, and always will be compassion and humanity . . . for my friends, family, neighbors, the weak, abused, discriminated against, vulnerable, suffering, isolated and minorities of our world, I will continue to love, learn and make a difference in the ways I know I can.



Victor Hugo our neighbour (7)

Guernsey 1855-1870

Victor lived for fifteen years in Guernsey from 1855 to 1870 but carried on visiting his home there from France up to 1878. His wife and some of his children though drifted back to Belgium. His son, François-Victor, became engaged to the daughter of a wealthy Guernsey land-owning family, Emily de Putron. She helped him to translate the works of Shakespeare but tragically died young of tuberculosis.

Victor refused to return to the continent - he said he wrote best in exile. He was not just a great writer, he also churned out vast numbers of drawings. Over 3,000 are recorded and some were used as illustrations in his books.

Mme Hugo returned to Guernsey less and less. She always visited my Great-Great Aunts when she did so they knew of her unhappiness living at Hauteville House. Her last visit to Guernsey before she died in 1868 was a special occasion. On the 22nd January 1867, she went down the street from Hauteville House and met Juliette Drouet, her husband's mistress, for the first time. The curtains in all the neighbours' windows twitched as they all spied on this momentous meeting. Remarkably, the two got on well, but the domestic details

of Mme Hugo's suppression in Hauteville House became clear in a letter sent the next day by Juliette to Victor. She wrote, 'You were right to give in to your dear wife by handing her the keys to her beautiful salons yesterday'. In other words, she had been locked out of her rooms in Hauteville House. As on other occasions, there was much distress and tears when Mme Hugo visited the Great-Great Aunts, as they were caused by domestic trouble at Hauteville House. She clearly knew that this was to be her last visit to Guernsey and in gratitude gave the Great-Great Aunts her Paris fan as well as other personal items.

Victor was looked upon by many in Guernsey as something of an oddity. The locals, strong Church of England and Protestant churchgoers, frowned upon his keeping a mistress and frolicking with young parlour maids in the bracken on the cliffs. His acceptance did rise somewhat when he started his 'Poor Children's Dinners'. Over forty boys and girls from deprived backgrounds were regularly invited to Hauteville House to be fed and sometimes clothed.

At the end of his stay in Guernsey, Victor planted a number of acorns in his garden. He said that they would grow into large trees in a hundred years as would the United States of Europe. There would be no Pope and no more wars. He got the first two right !

Quite early in Victor Hugo's stay in Guernsey, Napoleon III had offered amnesty to all political people in exile. Victor said he would only return to France when there was real freedom. He said that he sacrificed happiness for his writing and that he could only write well in Guernsey. 1870 saw Victor back in Paris but by 1872 he was back in Guernsey, writing at his rooftop eyrie. He spent nearly nine months working on 'Quatrevingt-treize', published in 1874. On his return to Paris, he was not abandoning his Guernsey home for good because he was back again in July 1878. This time, his morning writing sessions were largely replaced by mornings in bed; his energetic walks replaced by sedate afternoon carriage rides. My Great-Great Aunts saw the declining health of the great man. He outlived his wife and two sons, Charles and François-Victor, as well as his devoted Mistress and Secretary who died two years before him in 1883. In Guernsey his death in 1885 was a sad occasion, and in fond memory of him a statue was erected that showed him in his typical pose. Striding out, head down in deep thought, the wind blowing his coat out as he walked the lanes of Guernsey. Exactly as my Great-Great Aunts remembered him.

Roger Berry

Guernsey. 2016



It happened in St Bart's 6/8

None by name, but memories of some of our locum chaplains.

It was Palm Sunday. As is the custom, the crosses were blessed outside and we were entering the church singing 'Ride On, Ride On in Majesty'. It has two tunes equally favoured and both start with about three identical chords. The congregation sang one and the organist was playing the other, neither gave ground. Afterwards, the organist said she hadn't noticed.

In our first year or so, Peter Polden acted as sideman and he was not always as quick to react as Elizabeth Hannay wished. More than once we were aware of her prodding Peter as she said, "He said Draw near, get 'em moving, Peter". Always getting the response, "The major's coming out again, Elizabeth."

John Marshall



Humorous Christmas Cards

One of the funniest cards I had last year was from my niece, Charlotte. On the front was an earnest-looking lad who had a small, neat, white linen dressing over his left eye and, underneath, the caption read: 'This wasn't quite what he meant when asked for an iPad for Christmas.'

So what about you this year ? Let me know what you found funny and I'll try to publish it in the January 2017 St Bart's.



St Lucy

On 13th December, 304, a young Christian woman called Lucia was martyred in Syracuse, Sicily. She refused to marry a pagan nobleman and make sacrifices to the emperor Diocletian. The spurned prospective groom reported her to the authorities. She was killed in a horrid death which included the gouging out of her eyes, which were held to be particularly beautiful.

According to the Julian calendar used in Sweden until 1753, the night between the 12th and the 13th of December was Midwinter, the longest night of the year, when it was thought that extra protection was needed from the darkness of the world. As St Lucy's or Santa Lucia's name and story reached Sweden, it took deep roots in the culture of the land and her feast on 13th December is celebrated as a powerful symbol of the light of the world, that "light which shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it" (St John 1.5).

Each year in London, the Swedish community celebrates Sankta Lucia. St Lucy's celebration is a time to pray for light in darkness, for hope this winter for all who need that light, especially all refugees and victims of war.

God our redeemer, who gave light to the world that was in darkness by the healing power of the Saviour's cross: shed that light on us, we pray, that with your martyr Lucy we may, by the purity of our lives, reflect the light of Christ and, by the merits of his passion, come to the light of everlasting life.

Bishop David



Joseph as stepfather to Jesus

It can't have been easy for Joseph to accept that the woman he loved and wished to marry was pregnant with a child not his own. But as a righteous man, Joseph did as the angel told him in a dream to do - to marry Mary. And in this 14th-century carol, Mary, sensitive to Joseph's situation, nicely invites him to share in the care of their baby:

"Joseph, Dearest Joseph mine,
Help me cradle the Child divine.
God reward thee and all that's thine,
In paradise," so prays the mother Mary.

"Gladly, dear one, lady mine,
Help I cradle this child of thine;
God's own light on us both shall shine
In paradise, As prays the mother Mary."



Recipes for you to try

The last in the series by Janet and her husband, Geoff,

Christmas recipes

Instant Christmas cake

(otherwise known as boiled pineapple cake !)

This cake rescued us one Christmas when we had unexpected guests for afternoon tea on Boxing Day and no Christmas cake (Janet's Mum always made one for us but it had not yet been collected !)

- ✓ 4oz 120g butter
 - ✓ 6oz 180g brown sugar
 - ✓ Small tin of crushed pineapple
 - ✓ 12oz 330g mixed fruit
 - ✓ 4oz 120g glacé cherries
 - ✓ 2 eggs, beaten
 - ✓ 8oz 220g self-raising flour
-
- Mix together and boil all the ingredients except for eggs and flour.
 - When cool, mix in the eggs and then the flour.

- Put into a lined cake tin and bake in low oven (gas mark 2 150°C) for 1 to 1.5 hours

Janet's Mum's *proper Christmas cake* recipe is very simple but it needs to have been made in October or November so it can mature a bit. Start now and it will probably be fine ! In our experience every cake turns out different.

- ✓ 2lb 900g mixed fruit (sultanas, currants and raisins) with finely chopped glacé cherries and mixed candied peel (and any other dried fruit lying around in the back of the kitchen cupboard, chopped finely) soaked overnight in good dollops of rum or brandy or sweet sherry. Stir the fruit around now and again.
- ✓ 8oz 220g butter
- ✓ 8oz 220g brown sugar, perhaps a good spoonful of treacle as well
- ✓ 8oz 220g plain flour
- ✓ Ground almonds
- ✓ A packet of mixed crushed nuts if you wish
- ✓ 4 or 5 eggs
- ✓ Drops of almond and vanilla essence and a teaspoon of mixed spice
- ✓ Marzipan
- Beat butter and sugar and treacle together.

- Whisk eggs lightly with essences and spices.
- Sieve the flour and mix well with the ground almonds and nuts.
- Add eggs and flour alternately to the butter and sugar mix.
- Line a cake tin with greaseproof paper and put in half the mixture, then a layer of marzipan, followed by the rest of the mixture. Now the purists will say that this is simnel cake (for Easter) so you can leave out the marzipan in the middle if you wish. But we like marzipan and think it helps to keep the cake moist.
- Cook at Gas Mark 2 150°C for 1 hour then Mark 1 140°C for 3 to 3.5 hours until a skewer is clean.
- When cool, wrap in foil.
- Toward Christmas, every week or so stick a skewer in the bottom of the cake and put in some sweet sherry or rum. Re-wrap tightly. We are not sure this is necessary but a dry cake is not very nice and a very moist one is like Christmas pudding!
As Christmas approaches, cover with marzipan and icing as desired.

Janet and Geoff Scott



Choir General Confession

This parody was sent to us by Judy Richeux.

Its rich humour depends on how well you know the original
and appreciate the subtle tweaks

Almighty and most merciful choirmaster,
 We have erred and strayed from your beat like lost sheep,
 We have followed too much the tempi of our own hearts,
 We have offended against thy dynamic markings,
 We have left unsung notes which we ought to have sung
 And sung those notes we ought not to have sung
 And there is no help in us.
 But thou, O resplendent choirmaster,
 Have mercy upon us, miserable singers.
 Spare thou them, Sir, who confess their flats,
 Restore thou them that are prominent,
 According to thy instructions imparted to us at choir practice.
 And grant, O most merciful choirmaster, for the congregation's sake,
 That we may hereafter make a goodly, rhythmic and satisfying sound
 To the glory of God's holy name.
 Amen.



Plage de l'Ecluse

Winter,
early morning,
cold, dry, grey,
with a view
across the beach,
across the bay,
that tempts me not
to stop, to stay and stare.



Odd Words

YULE

Christmas is coming. Don't you love it ? And isn't it good to be here in France to celebrate the season - 'Noël', as the Angel might sing were he a French-speaker.

But it is the word 'Yule', from the Old English 'geol', and from the Old Norse 'jol', that I like us to reflect on as this month's odd word. Yule is the midwinter celebration of the solstice, the moment in time when the days are at their darkest and the year turns again towards Spring. One left-over from the twelve-day Yuletide celebration was the Yule Log, the foundation of the hearty fire that warmed our hearth and hearts on Christmas Day when we were lucky enough to enjoy an open fire !

When the Church was minded to fix the date to celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, it seemed a great idea, then, to mark the birth of the light of the world into the world at the moment in the Northern Hemisphere when days were at their darkest. It also allowed us to embrace a period that already had an established feast, rooted in people's psyche.

Don't you love it ? And, on reflection, it looks as if Yule shares the same root as the word 'jolly', so we have every reason to rejoice, to be glad and to be merry over the twelve days of Christmas starting toward the end of the month !

Gareth Randall



Questions

'Are we what we wear ?'

One old adage states that 'Manners maketh Man' - but can the same equally be said about the clothes we wear ?

A naturist might well disagree but there's no doubt that when Dr David Norris appeared at the start of last year's Carol Service as a jolly, avuncular Santa Claus, we all warmed to him as an authentic expression of Father Christmas, not least for the fact that he was clearly well red !

I know I feel different, depending on what I'm wearing. Walking into the assembly hall in school in a suit, white shirt and tie, wearing an academic gown, I felt like the Senior Teacher I was at the time. Wearing a clerical collar in the street in Dinard makes me feel like a clergyman. Wearing a cassock alb and chasuble to celebrate Holy Communion at St Bart's makes me feel like a priest. But I do love the summer, when I can walk across the beach barefoot, in shorts, enjoying the sunshine as if I'm a tourist here on holiday.

So if this Christmas you are going to add to your wardrobe, what might you buy and how will your choice of clothes affect how you feel

when you wear them ? Police, soldiers, chefs, supermarket workers in our local Hypermarché, all wear uniforms to distinguish them from other folk. So are we truly what we wear ?

But beware - scripture teaches us to be on our guard against wolves in sheep's clothing (Matthew 7 v15).

Gareth Randall



Wise Words

Quotations and quips, submitted by the late Donald Soum.

Saving is a very fine thing. Especially if your parents have done it for you.

Winston Churchill

Science is organised knowledge. Wisdom is organised life.

Immanuel Kant

Inside every older person is a younger person wondering what the hell happened.

Cora Harvey Armstrong



Quotations of the month

'It is better to light a candle
than curse the darkness.'

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

Christmas Day 2015



Lancashire Jokes 12/12

In a Manchester pub, a local was asked if he'd lived there all his life.

"Not yet !" came his quick reply.

Lorraine Atkinson



Signs of the times 9/9

These play on words were sent to us by Geoff Scott

In a Chicago Radiator Shop:

"Best place in town to take a leak."

And the best one for last

Sign on the back of another Septic Tank Truck:

"Caution - This Truck is full of Political Promises"



Quickies 2 - 3/5

A further series from our Church Warden, Bill:

On a shop door

Half-day closing -

All day Thursday



Readings in church

December 4th

2nd Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 11 v1 - 10

Psalm 72 v1 - 7

Romans 15 v4 - 13

Matthew 3 v1 - 12

December 11th

3rd Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 35 v1 - 10

Psalm 146 v4 - 10

James 5 v7 - 10

Matthew 11 v2 - 11

December 18th

4th Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 7 v10 - 16

Psalm 80 v1 - 8

Romans 1 v1 - 7

Matthew 1 v18 - end

December 25th

Christmas Day

Isaiah 62 v6 - end

Psalm 97

Titus 3 v4 - 7

Luke 2 v8 - 20



Diary dates for December, 2016

17th December 17.00 Carol Service

24th December 17.00 Crib Service

25th December 11.00 Christmas Day



Verse of the Month

Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come before him. Worship the Lord in holy splendour.

1 Chronicles 16:29



Book of Common Prayer

'Quotation of the month' - 8/20

Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord; and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of thine only Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen

Third Collect for Aid against all Perils

Evening Prayer



Prayer of the month

O my God,
grant that I may so wait upon thee,
that when quick decision and action are needed
I may mount up with wings as an eagle;
and when under the direction of thy will
and the needs of people
I have to keep going under pressure,
I may run and not be weary;
and in times of routine and humble duty,
I may walk and not faint.
For all my fresh springs are in thee,
O God of my strength.

George Appleton (1902 – 1993)



Prayer focus

Incarnation