

The Bishop of Lincoln's letter:

Christmas - No Time to be Happy?

At no other time of the year do so many wish so often for so many other people to be happy. Cries of "Happy Christmas" fill the cold winter air as seasonal greetings are shared with family, friends - and complete strangers. Why?

Well, one reason is that because Christmas marks the birth of Christ, we say "Happy Christmas" to everyone just as we wish everyone to be happy on their particular birthday. Jesus is "Everyman" so on His birthday we wish for everyone to be happy.

Also, just as we wish people "Happy Easter" because the resurrection of Christ is something which should gladden everyone's heart, so the good news of God incarnate as the Babe of Bethlehem should lift the spirits of everyone we meet.

However, we are left wondering whether the majority of people who wish each other "Happy Christmas" actually have the true meaning of Christmas in mind when they do so. Is it not just a figure of speech or a way of speaking? We have got to say something, so "Happy Christmas" will serve as well as anything else.

Yes, it is a sort of mantra or social convention, but that should not lead us to conclude that it is totally vacuous or meaningless. The clue is in the word itself.

"Happy" has a history. It derives from the Nordic word "hap" which means something which occurs by chance. So when we wish one another "Happy Christmas" we could just be saying "be lucky". But then we are reminded that some modern versions of the New Testament use the word "happy" to translate a Greek word which is usually rendered as "blessed" - so "blessed are the peacemakers" becomes "how happy are those who make peace".

This gets much closer to what Christians mean by "Happy Christmas". To be happy is not merely about being lucky. It is about being blessed by God with the gifts of love, acceptance and forgiveness which are ours by grace rather than chance.

"Happy Christmas" is not just a greeting: it is a prayer - a prayer for God's blessing to be on those we meet at a time of year when we especially remember how God in Christ came to meet us.

So may you all have a very happy and blessed Christmas.

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Copy Deadlines for the January edition.

Would all contributors note the following?

If at all possible, electronic copy is greatly preferred - it reduces the editing task enormously.

Hard copy (i.e. hand/typewritten items, photographs, etc) should be left in the Magazine file in the clergy vestry by Sunday December 13. Electronic copy (physical) (floppy disc, data pen, CD-ROM) should be saved as *.rtf (text files) or *.jpeg (image/graphics) if at all possible and placed in the same file as above by the same date. Electronic copy (email) should be sent in the same formats as above to davidrowett@aol.com by December 13th

These dates are non-negotiable, I fear! Type Early For Christmas!

All you need is love....

There will have been one or two folk, who, on scanning the St. Paul's order of service for Chad Varah, will have experienced a frisson of anxiety (or anticipation!) as they noted a contribution to the proceedings from the editor and founder of that well-known Church of England publication 'The Erotic Review'. Those acquainted with Chad's autobiography or with the history of the Samaritans will have been unsurprised: one of his pet causes was for greater openness and honesty about That Sort Of Thing, in that he had seen first hand the misery and even tragedy that a conspiracy of silence could cause.

However, the way in which this, and other contributions, developed will have deeply disappointed anyone wishing to sign themselves 'Disgusted of Tunbridge Wells'. Chad's championing of the Christian cause of honest, deep, human relationships, which were themselves images of the divine love, was what came over rather than a banner headline for the News of the World. One line in particular made sense to me – that we love for the sake of love. If we get something back, then that is an unlooked-for bonus. What must come first is the giving of unconditional — that is, no-strings-attached — love for the other.

I've no doubt that The Run Up To Christmas (as we must now call the Holy season of Advent) will see the usual run of semi-silly programmes about (eg) the Search for the Star (as if that 'proved' anything), not to mention a storm in a teacup somewhere about whether belief in the Donkey is necessary for salvation (remember that Mark, John and Paul get on perfectly well without the Christmas story) and a tabloid witch-hunt about 'winterval'. But it would be a great pity if they were to take the edge off the significance of the story of Christmas, that in it God is to be seen making that unconditional offering of love to the human race, beginning in the story of the manger and ending — or perhaps beginning again — in the Great Three Days of Easter. For in defiance of all those nightmare petty godlings of hell-fire religion, in the heart of God is to be found, not wrath, nor cold contracts, but a burning fire of love which pours itself out to us — and demanding nothing back, yet longs for everything we are.

Happy Christmas (when it gets here)



Fr David

Events at The Ropery Hall

The local charity Katie's Concerts will be bringing the 2008 season at Ropery Hall to an end with their own version of Dickens' 'A Christmas Carol' on Saturday, December 20.

Christmas Art Fair at The Ropewalk

More than 30 northern Lincolnshire artists, selling contemporary art and Christmas gifts, will be taking part in this annual pre-Christmas event at The Ropewalk on Saturday, December 6.

Paintings, prints, cards, textiles, jewellery, ceramics and decorative glass, by artists from The Ropewalk as well as others invited from throughout the area, will on sale along the corridors of the Maltkiln Road building between 11am and 4pm. Admission is free.

For more details go to www.the-ropewalk.co.uk

Beat the Crunch!

The UK-based international development agency Christian Aid is offering supporters an Advent email with daily tips to help beat the credit crunch this Christmas, and benefit the planet and its people at the same time.

The handy hints and tips, which will be emailed daily from the 1 December 2008 until Christmas Eve, "are designed to help consumers save cash, cut their carbon emissions and have some Yuletide fun," says the charity. Hints include "giving the gift of time" – in an increasingly busy world, says the agency, you can give someone you love some time off by presenting them an IOU for babysitting, walking the dog, washing the car, etc.

Another idea is more car sharing: why not log on to www.pickuppall.com and find someone heading your way home for Christmas. Making Christmas decorations from found or recycled materials is another possibility, says Christian Aid. There are also tips include how to cut costs on food, fuel, fashion, entertainment and more. Those interested can register for the daily advent tip at: www.christianaid.org.uk/advent

On November 19th. A demonstration on making everlasting Christmas crackers was given by Mr. Deidre Alcock and her daughter Kerry. She showed us how to construct them using tubes from kitchen rolls (gone are the days of toilet rolls -health and safety!!!!) And a bigger version using Pringle tubes (now we have a good excuse for eating them). She also used gold foil crinkled paper, ribbon and festive decorations which were most effective. Memories were taken back to twenty ears ago when members attended classes taken by Barbara Abbey in Providence House and it

turned out that she had been Deidre's tutor 10 ears ago in Brigg. An entertaining demonstration with lots of asides including jokes- one especially for our group:-

'An atheist was running through the jungle pursued by a bear. The man shouted to God to save him but was denied this because of his beliefs. So the man asked God to make the bear a Christian instead. At this the bear stopped and got on his knees to pray 'For what I am about to receive may the Lord make me truly thankful.....'

After this a Faith Supper was enjoyed by everyone and the raffle won by amongst others Shirley Smithson, Pat Smith and Diane Askew.

The group was saddened at the loss of one of its founder members, Ruby Tong, who had been a member for 48 years. In those days it was called 'Young Wives' Not long ago we were helping her celebrate her birthday and she attended meetings regularly until recently when illness prevented her. Her family were pleased that so many of the group had attended her funeral and served the refreshments and said how much she had enjoyed coming to the meetings.

A reminder that the **Christmas Celebration** is on **17th December at 7.30pm**. As Christmas heads towards us at frightening speed, a reminder, too, that we have once again offered to produce the Christingles for the Christingle service on the Sunday before Christmas, and that many hands make light work.... And finally, we hope (all being well) that the new Altar frontal will be dedicated at the 9.30 Parish Eucharist for the Feast of the Epiphany, which is on January 4th



Memorial Service for Rev'd Dr Chad Varah CH

On Wednesday 12th November, Fr. David and I, together with our wives and John and Elizabeth French were present in St. Paul's Cathedral at the National Memorial service for Chad Varah. David and I were seated on the second row at the dome altar, and Viv, Sue, John and Elizabeth were a couple of rows further back. We all had a splendid view. The music was magnificent – I'd swap some of the echo for our rather dead-pan building. The variety of things Chad got up to in his life was reflected in the choice of readings, and the people to read them, including Joanna Lumley, and the highly personal and at times amusing address was delivered by Lord Palumbo of Walbrook. The Lord Mayor of London and a representative of The Prince of Wales were also present, as were among others, Carol Vorderman and Jeffrey Archer.

Your clergy joined the procession to and from their places, and it was amusing to see Fr. David in full choir habit of cassock, hood, scarf and a surplice without a bit of lace in sight!

Fr Alan.

Tradition....

Lovers of the musical 'Fiddler on the Roof' will remember the song 'Tradition' — which is by way of a largely irrelevant introduction to this article.

As many St. Mary's folk are aware, a small working party is looking at our worship patterns, and to date have done some thinking about baptisms and the shape of the Family Service. But one thing which the group wondered — and it is 'wondered', we don't know — is there a wish for a 'Traditional Language' Eucharist?

We know the BCP Evensong is appreciated by many, and although the BCP Communion Service is unwieldy, the version of it which appeared in 1928 (and was for many years what people understood as 'A Prayer Book Communion') has been revised and placed in the main volume of 'Common Worship'. The thought is that perhaps one Sunday 8.00 per month might become a traditional language Eucharist, if that were something which would be found helpful.

Naturally the 8.00 Sunday 'regulars' are those likely to have the most to contribute to the discussion — but all observations are invited. Please pass your thoughts on to the clergy or wardens.

Operation Christmas Child - Shoe Boxes – 2008 Campaign

On behalf of the charity Samaritan's purse - a huge thank you to all of you who decorated and filled shoeboxes with gifts for children in the poorest parts of the world and also to those who gave money for the same purpose.

On November 10th a volunteer from the sorting and packing centre in Grimsby collected 132 boxes from St. Mary's Church, as well as boxes from Trinity Methodist Church and from the Salvation Army Citadel before moving on to Broughton. I imagine that those boxes are now on their way to destinations in Eastern Europe or Western Asia, their journey funded by your financial contributions.

I have sometimes been asked whether the boxes actually reach areas where they are most needed and I reply that I am sure they do. It is largely to prevent anything from holding up their safe, smooth passage that there are rules about what you can pack into the boxes. Also I know of people who have travelled with the distribution lorries to their destinations. It is quite a simple system. Boxes from this area are collected in a secure warehouse in the Grimsby area, the contents checked and money removed and banked. Then the boxes are packed into lorries and despatched to their planned destinations.

Vera Atkin is already knitting for the 2009 campaign and before finishing I must make special mention of Amy Dubois who is a "shoebox fanatic" and has once again filled nearly two dozen boxes. However - I repeat - a huge thank you to EVERYONE who filled a box and to your families and friends who joined in your efforts.

Rosemary Lamert - on behalf of your PCC mission Committee



St. Mary's Ladies' Group.

The second October meeting took the form of a visit to Cote Hill Farm in Market Rasen owned by Michael and Mary Davenport. They have been farming and milking cows there for almost thirty years. The cows are milked twice a day by Michael and Mary makes the cheese from the morning milking. For the last two years Michael has won first prize in the Lincolnshire Dairy Herd Competition with his milk. The cows graze on clover rich pasture and are fed grass and maize silage during the winter which are all grown on the farm.

The ladies were shown the milking parlour and taken into the dairy to see the cheese being made. For this they had to don the delightful blue hairnets and overshoes!!

The milk is taken straight from the cows through into the cheese vats to be mixed with vegetarian rennet and left to turn into curds and whey. The

curds are then hand crafted into either Cote Hill Blue which has a blue veined soft creamy

texture or Cote Hill Yellow Belly which matures over 12 weeks into a deliciously soft aromatic cheese. A cheese tasting session followed and the ladies were given the opportunity to buy the cheeses and free range eggs which turned out to have golden yellow yolks-delicious!!

On November 5th. it was thought that members would be attending bonfire parties but we were pleased that 54 members came to enjoy a Beetle drive. All that could be heard was the clattering of dice on the tables whilst the ladies competed to be the first to complete a Beetle(some rare species appeared in the boxes as the evening progressed!!)Audrey Cole got the highest score not quite achieving the possible 468!

Appropriately Hot Dogs were served in the 'interval' when spots were beginning to appear before the eyes. Mary Mc.William, Jill Fraser and Angela Duke won the raffle.



**The ladies getting ready
to visit the milking parlour**

While Rob and David produced an industrial sized curry, the young people put together a Eucharist for All Saints' Day and then we all pondered on the journey home. Two years ago on our first residential we'd been rained off from Malham Cove, so this became a 'must'. A short detour round Scaleber Force, a nice little waterfall somewhere above Settle (don't ask me where), brought us to Malham, and what had previously been seen as a major climb, after the previous two day's ascents, was regarded by all and sundry as a gentle stroll involving no more than a few hundred feet of climbing, hardly worth mentioning....

And in accordance with Alan's strict instructions (since we had a fair number of the choir on board, and choral evensong was at 6) we rolled back home, past swarms of drumlins (nasty things, especially if they bite you) to the news that the weather had been foul in Barton, and that everyone had been feeling sorry for us, despite the fact that we actually spent most of our (day) time in sunshine.

So our thanks to Jenny for all the organising, and Rob for sorting out the transport and driving down hair-raisingly narrow lanes, and to Amanda for the basic research which got us there in the first place. And to E1W's indomitable spirit, which now has a hit-list of mountains firmly in its sights. Anyone care to sponsor us?

Christmas Bazaar

Our thanks to all those who gave so generously of their time, effort and money on November 15th. A jolly morning was had by all, to the tune of about £680.

We also thank members of the local business community for their support, particularly Greendale Florists, Crisp 'n' Fresh, Curtis Hair Studio, Tastee Foods and Benson's Butchers.

From the PCC Secretary.

The PCC minutes from September (subject to the November PCC being happy with them) are now available on request for any interested readers....

Retreat 2009 @ Wydale Hall

St John's Ermine, Lincoln is holding a retreat at Wydale Hall on the weekend of September 11th – 13th and have invited us to join them: there are a half-dozen or so spare places.

Wydale Hall is situated at the head of a valley nine miles inland from Scarborough and is a very special and holy place to be. The retreat is a silent retreat (silence is maintained in the public rooms of the house, but retreatants may speak in the grounds or in their own rooms) and is led by Fr Stephen Hoy, Vicar of St John's. All rooms (you can choose a single or double room) have ensuite facilities and access for people with mobility difficulties is available on the ground floor and to the first floor. The cost of the retreat is ?150, to includes transport, all meals and refreshments and your accommodation for the weekend.

If you would like any further information, have a word with David, or look at the St. John's Ermine website: www.stjohnthebaptistparishchurch.org.uk where you'll find more details and a timetable.

A series exploring alternative views on Christianity will spearhead Channel 4's winter season of programmes.

In what the broadcaster described as the most ambitious religious programming commission in its history, the series will feature eight hour-long documentaries presented by personalities including Michael Portillo, Ann Widdecombe, Rageh Omaar and Cherie Blair.

In the first programme author Howard Jacobson examines the nature of Jesus's Jewishness and Christianity's fraught relationship with its Jewish origins. Omaar fronts a documentary on Christianity's relations with Islam and the bloody legacy of the crusades. Playwright Kwame Kwei-Armah explores how Christianity was exported "at the barrel of a gun" and scientist Professor Colin Blakemore examines how the scientific revolution undermined the centuries-long Biblical view of the world. For the final instalment, Mrs Blair looks at the challenges faced by Christianity in the 20th century and asks whether, as a world religion, it has a future.

Aaqil Ahmed, a Channel 4 commissioning editor, said: "This series is an ambitious and comprehensive exploration of key chapters in the history of Christianity. Authored by a range of distinctive voices, the series will examine the impact and legacy of Christianity on Britain and the world.

The Travelling Christmas Crib - 2008

For the sixth year the crib figures are journeying round Barton and area during this month. This year, a slight shift in the type of household offering to host the figures means that there are more without young children than with them. Grandparents often volunteer in order to trace the Nativity story with visiting grandchildren but several households have volunteered for the sake of fellowship. The figures usually have some adventure. One year we lost sight of one of the angels for a while. Last year they found their way into the St.Peter's Court Carol Service and one year they visited a primary school on the Wolds. This year they will take part in a Trinity Church Sunday School session.

Please remember the figures and their reminder about refugees, asylum seekers and homeless people, especially in the current world political and economic climate. Also remember the figures as symbols of inter-church fellowship and cooperation and of the approaching Christmas festival!

Rosemary Lamert

St Mary's Bell Ringers Up-date

**Lincoln Diocesan Guild of Ringers:
North Branch AGM & service at St. Mary's.**

Saturday 24th January 2009

15-00	Ringling
16-15	Service
17-00	Tea in the Church Hall
18-00	Formal business meeting
19-30 approx.	Ringling until 20-30

Members of the Congregation are warmly invited to attend the service — and the tea!

D J Kitching, Publicity Officer, St Mary's Church Bell Ringers



Are we REALLY this high up?

Friday saw us heading over to Langdale, to be greeted by dramatically snow-covered mountains, complete with pointy bits. A rising gale and sleet showers as we went up Pike o'Blisco halted us at about the 600m level (that's 2000 feet in old money), to great lamentation from some of the group, but there

is photographic evidence of E1W gathered valiantly just beneath the summit, with snow-topped mountains (and the RAF) below us. Unsurprisingly, when we got back to base, the spaghetti bolognese hardly touched the sides.

Saturday took us for a more gentle expedition to Horton-in-Ribblesdale, better known as the starting point of the Three Peaks Walk (an attempt on which is being urged on us by Tom Smith). Avoiding the temptation to stay all day drinking tea in the Pen-y-ghent café, we strolled over the mountain before returning to the café a few hours later. ('Strolled' is perhaps not quite the word – Mike Harding persuaded a friend to tackle it by promising that the local fell rescue ran a bothy at the top, in which they sold beer, cooled by the mountain winds. When they got to the top to find only a heap of stones, Harding claims his friend's comments were so pungent they shocked a bunch of soldiers climbing the mountain as an exercise).



At Penyghent summit

E1W Head for the Hills.

An eventful journey was delivered by a Satnav which took us to places so remote even Postman Pat hadn't called, and led to the priest-in-charge, who had sneakily bagged the front seat in the minibus, being forced to hop out of his warm environment to open (and close) sundry gates, then navigate his way back across cattle grids without breaking an ankle. Arrival at the bunkbarn was accompanied by a certain sense of 'Oh!!!' when we discovered that (a) reaching it involved travelling down roads technically less wide than our vehicle, (b) the tapwater was brown because it came from a spring, and (c) the accommodation was, should we say, 'cosy' (for example we were to learn that David's snoring would waken the dead, and that, while many people can use the power of their voice to shatter a glass, Abbygayle's giggle could clean one) as twelve people tried to fit into a space about the size of St. Chad's chapel.



Now, who's on washing up?

But (one quick risk-assessment later) we survived, and occupying what was basically one large room (with curtained shelves for sleeping on) at least meant we kept warm, even if the shower was a chilly twenty yard walk away, and the loo militantly unheated (but at least no-one hung around in it longer than necessary).

The End of the Road for the Wayfarers(?)

The final session of the Wayfarers House Group took place on 31st October, with sadness, but with thanks (and a couple of cakes!).

The group has been ably led by Rosemary Lamert, with scholarship, humanity and humour, for many years. We started by studying the Emmaus Course in 1999, so we called ourselves the Emmaus House Group, meeting every Friday afternoon, with occasional gaps for holidays, etc.

Eventually we moved on to study various books and characters of the Bible and decided to change our name to the Wayfarers (travellers, especially those who make a journey on foot) but also 'On the Way.' We have used the York Lent Courses, which we have found very helpful, and we were joined by others for the sessions. Always each member brought his/her own knowledge, experience and thoughts to the meetings.

We had the privilege of leading some of the Second Sunday Evening services, the last one, based on St. Benedict on his special day, July 11th, being the most memorable.

Reflections of group members include:

- fellowship and support during convalescence, which will be remembered with affectionate thanks;
- welcoming friendship to a newcomer to Barton, which was greatly appreciated;
- enjoyable fellowship which accompanied the studying;
- looking forward to Friday — and preparing for it, because we sometimes had some searching questions to tackle!

We went out with a 'bang' in twelve weeks of looking at Galatians, learning so much about the core of Christianity and how controversy can put belief into question — both in Paul's time and in our own.

So many, many thanks go to Rosemary for her meticulous preparation and inspiring leadership. We must also thank Evelyn Brown, who hosted the group so well, along with Woody and Sara (her very friendly dogs)., and latterly Fluffy the cat. Woody loved to be part of the group, with his animal-way of talking as he waited patiently for a biscuit.

Finally, who out there would like to be Wayfarers too (or Wayfarers II), or find their own name for a wonderful journey?

The Children's Society

The objective of The Children's Society is to make childhood better for all children in the UK.

By the time you start reading this, The Children's Society will have launched a pioneering pilot project in partnership with the Church of England. Working with dioceses in Birmingham, Coventry and Worcester and Lichfield, the project will focus on the effects of destitution. Destitution is defined as an extreme state of poverty, whereby a person is completely lacking in resources or means of support. We'll be working with asylum seeking children, families and young people.



'These families are living in extreme poverty on our doorstep. The Children's Society will do much to help alleviate the suffering these families are forced to endure.'

Bishop David Urquhart
The Bishop of Birmingham

In 2007-8...

- We spent **£29.7m** on our work with children and young people.
- We raised **£2.3m** through our partnership with The Co-operative which, over two years, will help improve the lives of over 12,000 children.
- **34,000** people contributed to The Good Childhood® Inquiry.
- **1,500** schools signed up to our My Life4Schools website resource.
- We saw a **17% increase** in our locally-based children's services.
- We had a **310% increase** in media coverage, heightening awareness of our vital work.
- After 20 years' hard campaigning, the Government finally agreed to make young runaways at risk on the streets a national priority.
- Our 74 shops contributed a gross profit of **£1m** to our work with children – an **increase of £300,000** on last year.
- 219,636 people visited our website to find out about our work, a **21% increase** on last year.
- Over **10,000** **volunteers** contributed to our work with children.

Mothers' Union Notes.

On November 19th, Elinor opened the meeting with notices and then prayers. The bible reading from Amos 5 v 14, 15, 21 to 24 was read by Iris Ward. Elinor then introduced our speaker the Rev Alan Wright whose subject was psalms one in particular being psalm 72. This was an "interactive" talk as we had to join in with the reading of the psalm and then sing two hymns which were based on psalm 72. These were " Hail to the Lord's anointed" and "Jesus shall reign where'er the sun ".

Psalm 72 is classed as a "royal" psalm relating to the enthronement of an Israelite King. As Alan spoke he explained how by breaking the psalm into sections it explained how a king should rule his people after being given the "Divine Right" from God "The King of kings". He should rule justly and wisely. In some of the verses it refers to what is to come, such as kings from far away bringing gifts, as there are many references in the Old Testament about the coming of The Messiah. The last two verses could have been added later putting the spotlight back on God, a very fitting ending to this psalm. Alan was thanked by Iris for a very interesting and enjoyable talk .

Dec. 3rd 9.30am MU Eucharist & Admission of new members, please bring your books .

Dec. 17th 2pm Carols and readings (with St. Peter's School). Please bring wrapped parcel value £1.

One in four young people from across all religions are being bullied because of their religious beliefs. That is finding of a report by Beatbullying, the UK's leading bullying prevention charity, published today. The report also addressed the bullying of atheists.

"There is little or no support, few outlets and limited provision provided for young people to talk about their faith. Almost half of young people do not talk about religious or faith issues at all" the report says.

The initiative, Beatbullying, which produced the report runs Interfaith bullying prevention programmes, funded by the Government, to divert the behaviour of those using faith as a reason to bully their peers.

From the Registers.

Baptisms.

November 9th

Cameron Mark Beedham, son of **Claire Ann Sanders & Richard Paul Beedham**.

Alesha Louise Garth, daughter of **Vikkilea Garth & Daniel James Walters**.

November 16th

Chloe Mae Beevers, daughter of **Carole Deborah & Simon Christopher Beevers**.

Isabella Katie Holmes, daughter of **Laura Jane & Kevin Andrew Holmes**.

Marriages.

None in November.

Funerals.

November 3rd

Allan Alexander MacVay.

November 11th

Cyril Curry.



Services at the Willows & Eagle House

Wednesday 17th December 2pm Eagle House — Carol Service.

Sunday 7th December 2-30pm The Willows.

Tuesday 23rd December 6pm The Willows Carol Service.

Thank you

I would like to thank everyone at St Mary's for a wonderful birthday party on Sunday 9th November. The fellowship and love we shared was really wonderful. Again - thank you all.

Sylvia Chambers.

If you would wish to support The Children's Society by becoming a box holder or would like more information, please contact our Church Representative, Margaret Searle, on 634556.



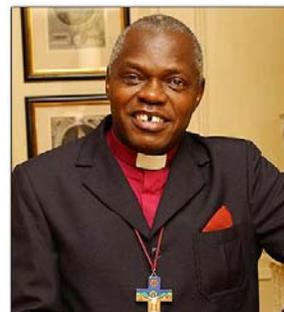
To existing box holders, please note that either Mike or Margaret will contact you in the normal way regarding the collection.

Church leaders are being encouraged to help make 2009 'a year to remember' for young people and the Church with the launch of an interdenominational Year of the Child.

A group of Children's Advisers from across the Church of England's dioceses, alongside representatives from the Methodist Church and other denominations and agencies, identified widespread interest in making a distinctive Christian contribution to this anniversary. In light of this enthusiasm, the network plans to promote 2009 as an opportunity for local churches to review the work they do with and for children and young people, and to do more to recognise and celebrate their contribution in the life of the church and society.

The Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu, said: "In the lead up to the Year of the Child 2009 it is my hope that individual churches and Christian denominations throughout the country will opt in and make available the resources needed to make it a success.

"Young people all over the country need to hear the words of Christ's love for them in all manner of ways. So too, we the Church need to hear afresh God speaking to us through the life and witness of children. Come and join the celebration, be challenged and inspired."



Dr John Sentamu

Inspiration and resources are at www.yearofthechild2009.co.uk. Early next year Church House Publishing is due to release 'Through the Eyes of a Child', a book drawing together a range of contributions on children's theology to help extend the legacy of the Year of the Child.

December Diary

- Mon. 1st 10.15 am Toddler Time.
 Tue. 2 7.00 pm United Prayers at St. Augustine's
7.30 pm Confirmation at St. Mary's Wrawby
 Wed. 3 9.30 am Said Eucharist (MU Corporate).
 7.30 pm Ladies' Group.
 Thu. 4. 2.00 pm Worship review group meet at David & Viv's.

December 7th - Second Sunday of Advent.

- 8.00 am Said Eucharist.**
9.30 am Parish Eucharist.
11.15 am Sunday Club.
2.30pm. Service at The Willows.
4.00 pm Hospice 'Tree of Lights' service.

- Mon. 8 10.15 am Toddler Time.
 Tue. 9 7.00 pm Said Eucharist
 Wed. 10 9.30 am Said Eucharist.

Sat 13 - Town Band Christmas Concert in Church.

December 14th - Third Sunday of Advent – 'Gaudete Sunday'

- 8.00 am Said Eucharist.**
9.30 am Parish Eucharist.
4.00 pm Baptisms.

- Mon. 15 10.15 am Toddler Time.
 10.15 am Home Communion at St Peter's Court
 11.00 am Home Communion at Victoria House
 7.00 pm Churches Together carols at St. Peter's Court
 Tue. 16 7.00 pm Said Eucharist for wholeness & healing.
 7.00 pm Churches Together carols at Victoria House.
 Wed. 17 9.30 am Said Eucharist.
 2.00 pm St. Peter's School/MU Carol Service.
 2.00 pm Churches Together carols at Eagle House.
 7.30 pm Ladies' Group Christmas Celebration.
 Thu 18 Christmas Home Communion
 2.00 pm Bowmandale School Carols.
 Fri 19 10.00 am Castledyke School Carols.
 6.00 pm Brigg Nativity Play.

December 21st - Fourth Sunday of Advent.

- 8.00 am Said Eucharist.**
9.30 am Parish Eucharist.
4.00 pm Christingle.

- Tue. 23 2.00 pm Home Communion at The Willows
 6.00 pm Churches Together carols at The Willows.
 For Christmas Services, please see the separate calendar.

December 28th First Sunday of Christmas.

- 8.00 am Said Eucharist.**
9.30 am Parish Eucharist.
4.00 pm United Carol Service at St. Augustine's.

Tue. 30 2.00 pm Wedding.

Wed. 31 9.30 am Said Eucharist.

January 4th - First Sunday of Advent

- 8.00 am Said Eucharist.**
9.30 am Parish Eucharist (*with Trinity Methodist*

Church).

- 6.00 pm Sung Evensong for the Epiphany.**

Morning Prayer is usually said at 9am Monday-Thursday in the St. James' Chapel.

Christmas Week At St. Mary's.

- December 21st 4.00 pm Christingle.**
December 24th 9.30 am Said Eucharist of Christmas Eve.
6.30 pm Christmas Carol Service.
11.30 pm The Midnight Mass of the Nativity.
December 25th 8.00 am The Eucharist of Christmas Dawn
(The shepherds' mass').
9.30 am Family Eucharist of Christmas Morning.
December 28th - First Sunday of Christmas.
8.00 am Said Eucharist.
9.30 am Parish Eucharist.
4.00 pm United Carol Service at St. Augustine's.