

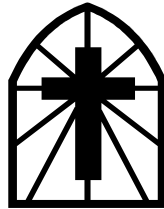
The Mission Statement for :
St. Mary the Virgin, Middleton, Leeds.

Our church will have a doorway into God's house
wide enough to receive all those who need human love, comfort
and fellowship.

Narrow enough to shut out all envy, pride and
intolerance.

With no barrier to children or strangers.

Working together in God's love for the benefit of all.



Church Service Times

Wednesday 9:30am Morning Prayer
10:00 Holy Communion at St Cross

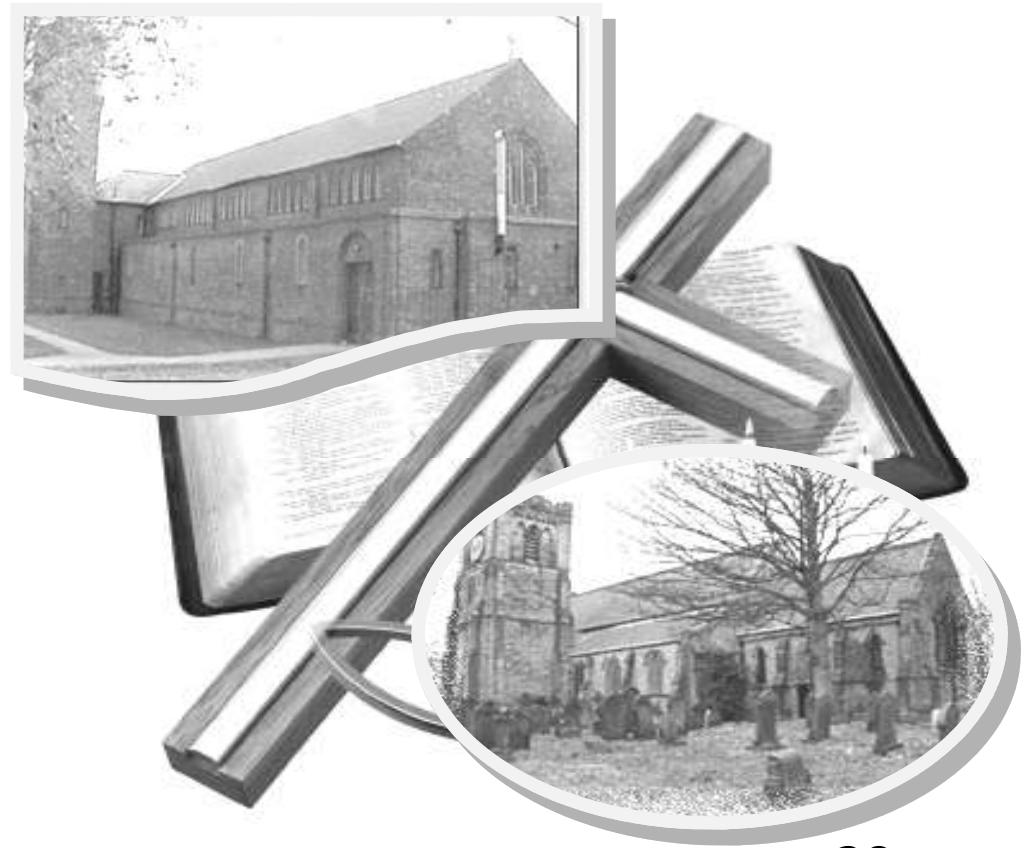
Sunday 8:00am at St Mary's

Sunday 9:30am at St Cross

Sunday 11:00am at St Mary's

Middleton Messenger

**....what's happening in the Parishes
of St Cross and St Mary's, Middleton**



May 2012

30p

Clergy and Officials

PRIEST IN CHARGE

Rev Andy Myers, (0113) 271 6398
St Cross Vicarage, Middleton Park Avenue, LS10 4HT
andrew_myers1@sky.com

ASSOCIATE PRIEST

Rev James Turner, (0113) 277 2681,
JamesJpturner@aol.com

ASSOCIATE MINISTER

Rev. Al Henry

CHURCHWARDENS

St Cross

Mrs Hazel Dawson
0113 2761282
Mr Mark Allotey
0774 8317420

St Mary's

Mrs Christine Topp
0113 2772496
Mr D Askin
0113 2707271
Deputy Church Warden
Mr Paul Travis

PCC SECRETARY

Mrs Elizabeth Bradshaw
0113 2793153

Mrs Andrea Render
0113 2719795

PCC TREASURER

Mr A Collinson
0113 2701565

Church Officials

St. Cross

ELECTORAL ROLL SECRETARY

Mrs Elizabeth Bradshaw
0113 2793153

St Mary's

Mr F Cowburn
0113 2777140

STEWARDSHIP SECRETARY

Pauline Catterick

Barry Locke
0113 2711433
baz@fudgeball.com

VERGER

Mr P Barber,
MOTHERS' UNION LEADER
Mrs J Bayliss
0113 2717695

ST CROSS PARISH ROOM BOOKINGS

Mrs Hazel Dawson
0113 2761282

PAROCHIAL HALL BOOKINGS

Mrs J & Mr A Collinson
0113 2701565

ORGANIST/CHOIR MASTER

Mr Alan Makinson
0113 2712872

Visit our websites at:

www.stmarysmiddleton.org.uk
stcrossmiddleton.or.uk

WEBMASTER

Mr P Smith (01924) 2183217

Printed by 'The Mouse Hole Press' Gang
The Vicarage, Miggy Land, LS10 4HT

Readings May 2012

Sunday 6th May Easter 5

Gen. 22:1-18; Acts 8: 26-40; John 15:1-8.

Sunday 13th May Easter 6

Isa 55: 1-11; Acts 10: 44-48; John 15: 9-17.

Sunday 20th May Easter 7 Sunday After Ascension Day

Acts 1: 15-17, 21-26; 1 John 5: 9-13; John 17: 6-19.

Sunday 27th May Pentecost Sunday (Whit Sunday)

Ezek. 37: 1-14; Acts 2: 1-21; John 15: 26-27; 16: 4b-15.

Church PCC's

You will all know that at the moment, St Cross and St Mary's both have their own PCC, but when the 2 parishes officially join together, we will have just one, with one Secretary and one Treasurer. It is still really important that PCC members attend their own meetings, as well as the joint ones, so that we can continue to build our working relationships for the good of the Parishes. If you are unable to attend, please send your apologies to Andy or your PCC Secretary.

St Mary's PCC has lost some members recently, so if you would like to be involved in the business of the church, to help shape it's future, please have a word with Andy or myself .

We would be happy to let you know what's involved. PCC members are really valued, and you would be able to have your input into the future of the Parish.

Thank you

Andrea Render, St Mary's PCC Secretary



Clergy Letter May 2012 St Cross & St Mary's WORSHIP GROUP

We've been feeling the stirrings of the Holy Spirit in our churches for some time now - challenging us to refresh, renew, restore and revive our vision of what our church could, must and might be in Middleton.

Several members of our community have come to me with new ideas about what we can do to grow our church both in depth and in numbers- how we can reach out to the vast majority of the people in Middleton who vote by their feet and largely seem to be indicating by their lack of presence amongst our worshipping community that we need to change to accommodate their obvious need for new ways of engaging with our great God, new ways which can help them to engage with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

And it's not just "new" people who are giving us this signal – many regulars are indicating to me that they don't come to church as often as they used to not just because life is busy but that Church isn't feeding them.....

We've thought about having an alternative service on Sunday's- late afternoons (perhaps!) - a service which won't be a replacement for our 11am traditional Holy communion but will be an extra – an expression of a new offer on our church menu which can be risky, less formal, more experimental- a place where everyone if they wish gets a chance to participate and decide how we worship - where children and older people get to decide the music; the prayers - and so forth- where there's more discussion and less formal sermonizing by us religious professionals!!

Several of you have come to me with obvious inspirations from the Holy Spirit- about the need for more Bible study- prayer groups – silence- soft music- loud vibrant music for young people... so many different ideas!



Now I think the time has come to get together and sort out a programme in response to all of this.

Therefore if you want to start something new at St Cross and St Mary's – something which will incorporate a response to the feelings of dissatisfaction- or just the personal needs you feel for a more relevant church - or even if you don't feel like this but feel you have ideas to offer – come to our first meeting of our **Worship Group** - which will be on **SUNDAY 13th May 6.30pm at St Cross**– for maximum 1 hour!! – and so everyone has the opportunity to be included we'll arrange other Sunday dates for the group so hopefully there will be one at which you can come.

You don't have to be either a regular worshipper or even have to have worshipped at all... all will be welcome and everyone's contribution valued.

Every blessing

Andy

Confirmation Sunday 22nd April 2012

“Aspire not to have more, but to be more” (Romero)

Our special prayers go to those who were confirmed at St Mary's by Bishop James.



Irene Adams-Vale
Mark Allotey
Josh Brinn
Sarah Carney
Heidi Dawson
Macauley Dawson

What's happening in Middleton Park

As most people know Middleton Park has been given a grant of £1.9 million. This is made up of £1.46 million from the lottery Parks for People programme. £125 thousand from the council and £287 thousand from Wades Charity the owners of the park. So what are we getting for all this money?

A new lakeside centre which includes a cafe, terrace, educational centre, offices for parks staff and most important of all toilets.

A new bandstand/performance area, new and improved entrances, replacing gates and barriers.

Improvements to the Rose Gardens and paths through out the park and woods.

Improved Middleton Park Halt with seating and interpretation boards and lots more.

Anyone coming to the park this month will see the building works going ahead, The Lakeside Centre is due to be finished in August and the landscaping works later on in the year.

The Friends of Middleton Park are again running a full programme of events this year even though there wont be a building to operate from. We are trying to get funding for a temporary container and porta loos.

Events

Teas will be provided every Sunday May till September 2-4

Special events during May and June

Sunday and Monday May 6th and 7th Bluebell walks meeting the 11 and 1 o clock trains at Park Halt

Sunday 13th May Bird walking with Linda Jenkinson 2 till 4

Sunday 3rd June Circus skills workshop

Sunday 10th June Tenderloin Jazz quartet

Sunday 17th June Wildlife Photography

Tuesday 19th June Oddssocks Theatre Company evening performance

For further information see the website www.fomp.co.uk or follow us on facebook Friends of Middleton Park.

Better still, come down on a Sunday afternoon and enjoy your park
Volunteers will be warmly welcomed.



ST MARY'S MOTHERS' UNION

Our next meeting is on Wednesday 2nd May at 1:30pm in the Parochial Hall, for a short service and to make arrangements for our proposed visit to Kays for afternoon tea.

We meet again on Wednesday 6th June at 1:30pm in the Parochial Hall for a short service and talk. Celebrations this coming summer are the Mothers' union A.G.M. which is to be held in Llandudno on 18th June. For those wishing to attend, a coach will be leaving from the Playhouse Theatre at 7:15am at a cost of £15.00. A summer celebration to come and enjoy on 18th July at Wetherby Methodist Church at 7-9pm, and a service to celebrate Mary Summer Day to be held in Leeds Parish Church on 7th August at 10:30am.

Please let me know if you wish to attend any of these events.

June Bayliss,
Mothers Union Leader

+++++

Mothers Union gift for Baptisms

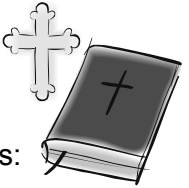
The Mothers' Union at both of our Churches have started new initiatives with the many Baptisms we are privileged to have throughout the year.

Firstly they have started to have a Mothers Union member at every Baptism, to represent the congregations of St Cross and St Mary. Secondly they will be presenting each Baptism candidate or their family with the Gospel of St Mark. The money to set up this venture has been donated and a fund of £200 has been opened. With the Gospel they will also receive a leaflet listing the weekly activities at both Churches as well as a Church magazine. In the very near future the MU will be sending cards to the person Baptised on the anniversary of their Baptism for a period of five years.

Watch this space for other developments in the life of our Churches as our MU's look to how they can support the mission at St Cross and St Mary's.

22 Pat Ainsworth

Thoughts and Reflections



Poverty

Miserable are those who crave more and more possessions:
They will be crushed by the weight and burden of them.
Blessed are those who are ready to do without,
to be empty,
to be nothing,
to be humble and open to receive,
knowing their need of God:
They have found the secret of living, and are rich indeed.



Trust in His timing
Rely on His promise
Wait for His answers
Believe in His miracles
Rejoice in His goodness
Praise Him at all times
Relax in His presence

Never regret a day in your life.
Good Days
Give you happiness
And bad days
Give you experience.
Both are essential in life.
ALL ARE GOD'S BLESSINGS

"To me"

Dear self, today you will
SHINE .
Because GOD loves you .

Don't ask God to
Make your life easier .
Ask Him to make you
A stronger person

CHANGE OR FAILURE - THE ONLY OPTIONS

THE MISMATCH between the excellence of so much that the Church in the UK does and its poor public appeal is not easy to explain. Across the country millions of people provide voluntary care for those in need. Millions more work as paid employees in medical, education, social and public services of every kind. These are intelligent and concerned people, yet only a small proportion attend church. Why so few – there must be a reason?

'Mission-Shaped Church' (Church House Publishing 2004) asked the much same question. It says that the Church touches only 40% of the population; "What of the rest?" it asks, but gives no reply. A church in unremitting decline; which addresses a minority of the population and has no idea how to tackle the rest is in serious trouble. With a continuing loss of around 2% per annum the Church has a half-life of just twenty-five years. If it cannot address the whole nation it may not survive.

Every church in the UK has adopted liturgical and religious practices which reflect its theology and differ only in nature and degree. Terms such as 'high church' or 'evangelical' are used to differentiate between them, which carry pejorative overtones and are the basis on which members decide which to attend. Many clergy and people find in these practices the fulfilment of their faith, which provides them with unchanging satisfaction separated from the world outside. Most churches provide social care for those in need, but this is always secondary to their internal religious affairs. As a former Bishop of Lincoln, Simon Phipps, once put it in his book 'God on Monday' (Hodder and Stoughton 1972) it is as though church and world occupy separate valleys, sending messages to each other when they wish to communicate, but otherwise living apart.

BONHOEFFER feared in the 1930s that the Church would become the custodian of religion rather than faith. This fear has become real in the UK, causing many who come for marriage, a burial or the baptism of a child to start by saying "I'm not religious, but" In those simple words they define the predicament the Church has created for itself and for them. The problem is not lack of public desire for faith, but that the Church has changed commitment to Christ from being a way of life into the pursuit of a self-selecting body of people who enjoy church-based activities.

This departure by the Church from Our Lord's intention is at the root of its separation from people outside. For those who want the faith of the Church but hesitate to join its religious practices it has created a barrier which is hard for many to cross,

JESUS TAUGHT that love of God and neighbour run together; anyone who claims to love God and hates his brother is a liar. His followers are to be like salt, yeast and light, bringing taste, texture and enlightenment within the lump of life. They are to be active in the world as Jesus was active in the towns and villages of Galilee.

St Cross Organisations

Wednesday 6:00pm 7:30pm

Rainbows: Girls aged 5-7

Contact : Nicola Hamilton 0113 2195210

Brownies: Girls aged 7-10

Contact : Michelle Gill 0113 2773525

Guides : Girls aged 10-14

Contact : Jannine Somerside 0113 2713721

KidzKlub

Thursday 5.00pm—6.15pm

In the school hall at Middleton Primary School
(term time only)

Youth Club

Thursdays 5:30pm—7pm

St.Cross Parish Room (term time only)

All welcome

**For more details contact Rev Andy Myers
(0113) 271 6398**

St Mary's Jubilee Party

Saturday 2nd June

Parochial Hall

**Look out
for further**



**next month
details**

Songs from the Shows—Thank You

What a fantastic night we had on our “Songs From the Shows – Take Two” and I’d like to send a big thank you message, as it got a bit manic towards the end of the night, and I am sure there were some thank yous that should have been mentioned.



I would like to thank everyone who donated raffle prizes, (the raffle raised £226) and a special mention for John Oxley and John Earnshaw. Jimmy Topp’s bonus ball fund, which has been used in various ways for the church and other good causes, in this case he helped by giving a donation way back in January, so we could buy material for some of the costumes, as well as donating a cash amount for the Ovarian Cancer fund.

Over £1500 was raised in total, which is amazing, and thanks to everyone who came.

And a big thank you to everyone who was involved in the show. Be it lighting, working behind the bar, in the kitchen, putting out chairs and table, and helping to clear up afterwards.

Linda Chambers



**Never get tired of doing little
Things for others
Sometimes , those little things
Occupy the biggest part of
Their lives.....**

One thing you can do is donate tinned or dried goods to the Church’s ‘Food Cupboard’

There are so many people in need of help with food, that if you can just add a couple of items to your usual shop, or donate your ‘Buy one get one free’ item to help keep our stock up.

See Andy, bring them to church or any of the regular teams if you want someone to collect anything from you.

Many thanks

The Church becomes Christ’s surrogate, the ‘Body of Christ’, when it behaves like him, the suffering servant of the world, continuing his ministry of healing, teaching and feeding. Its mission is not to save itself, but to save the world. The Church must learn afresh to be Jesus-in-and-for-the-world, finding ways in which to present the Good News of the Kingdom to the whole nation.

All its members belong to the royal priesthood which is the Church (1 Peter 2: 9-10). Clergy and people together are to be missionaries of God’s kingdom on earth, just as Jesus preached the same Good News in Galilee. In such a Church the words ‘Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth’ would recover their meaning; no longer a plea for a miracle, but a recognition of our own Christian duty to make the world fit for God and man. Only lay people can address the whole population through their daily meetings with neighbours, friends and colleagues. If the million or so lay people who attend church each Sunday were taught the obligations of faith, that they are to be builders of God’s kingdom wherever they are, the effect would be huge. Church is a means to an end, not an end in itself; it is where the labourers in the vineyard meet for teaching, fellowship and refreshment before returning to their work in the world. Jesus spoke for the tired and anxious when he said, “Come to me all who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest.”

Jesus gave clues to Christian conduct when he spoke of “going the second mile”; of “selling whatsoever thou hast and giving to the poor”; of giving one’s coat to those with none; of visiting him in prison; of searching for the needy in the hedgerows and byways and welcoming them home. Christians are to be recognised by the kind of people they are. Mission takes-off when others watching say, “How I wish I could be like that.”

The aim of every Christian is that the people they meet should reach their full maturity, ‘the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ’. The Lord’s Prayer summarises the work of the Church – to make the world the place where people’s needs are satisfied; where they live in harmony with each other and with God, and are protected from those ills of life which come everyone’s way.

No-one can do everything, but everyone can do something. It is enough that Christians represent Christ in the world and that every good deed counts high in God’s economy, even if it is only a widow’s mite.

CLERGY AND PEOPLE in the parishes strive to reach those nearby, but they do so against a background of virtual silence or bad news from the upper echelons of the Church. It is futile to keep laying the blame for the poor showing of the Church on an unresponsive public or lack of media interest – that way lies disaster. More than 100 bishops and other senior clergy should be able to achieve better public notice than they do. Media attention does not just happen, but has to be cultivated.

Bishops bring few fresh ideas to the Church and often fail to provide parishes with common goals or intentions. Initiatives mounted under their leadership since the Decade of Evangelism began in 1990 consistently failed to stop the slide because they were never true mission for the benefit of the person in need, but were merely misdirected attempts to recruit more members for the Church. The Church's appeal is to a narrow sector of the population and lacks consistency and drive. The decline of the Church is a consequence of poor leadership.

A distinction must be made between the individual responsibility of bishops, which is often good, and their collective responsibility for the Church, which is poor. They have connived in the adoption of religious practices by the Church which have contributed to its loss of public appeal. The traditional independence of dioceses and parishes is inappropriate to the 21st century and has inevitably resulted in loss of unity. Church activities at diocesan level can never be of sufficient scale to invite much media interest.

Theologians and academics have failed to provide the applied theology lay members need to assist their work in the world. Higher committees of the Church which spend their time in interminable discussion about issues which contribute nothing to the mission of the Church should reconsider their functions or cease to exist.

Fewer but larger initiatives are needed, supported by every diocese and church, whose scale and importance would command media attention. This would require some loss of independence by individual bishops; the prize would be renewed public interest in the work of the Church.

Flagship projects launched nationally by the Church would provide 'hooks' on which to hang statements by Church spokesmen about social and moral issues. Church generated jobs for young people; support for cash-strapped voluntary bodies; the

THE CHOICE IS SIMPLE – to carry on as things are and watch the Church slide downhill. Or to accept the truth and have the courage to change. If its leaders cannot pilot the Church towards a fresh realisation of its primary duty towards the world outside, the change will not happen and the Church will continue downhill. Let us hope and pray that sufficient insight and determination remain to begin the process and carry it through to completion, for if they do not the outlook for the Church in the UK is bleak.

Douglas Hollis

kingdom.builders@btinternet.com

©

Text of an article published in the Church Times on 2March 2012

Other articles published in the Church Times also available: as leaflets:

'Mission for Church and People' (13 August 2010)

'Five ideas to change the Church and country' (26 November 2010)

'Thy Kingdom Come' (15 April 2011)

NEW

St Cross Prize Bingo



12pm—1.30pm

Admission £1.00

Tea/coffee 50p

Bingo ticket 20p

We are hoping to make this a regular event so please support it.

2nd, 3rd, 4th, and (5th) Wednesday each month.

We need donations for prizes, e.g.. Bubble bath, wine, gifts, etc, please put in the box at the back of church, or give them to Andy.

All proceeds to church funds.

Sing and Play



Sunday May 20th

12 noon until 4pm at St Cross

Come along , choose your favourite hymn or song, sing a long or just be entertained!

Refreshments available

Proceeds to fund prizes for the Grand Raffle at St. Cross Summer Fair.

DEAR LORD AND FATHER OF MANKIND

“I am really not a hymn writer”, said the American poet who wrote these verses. And few who started to read *The Brewing of Soma* by John Greenleaf Whittier would guess what was coming. It was a long poem, describing at first how ‘soma’, an intoxicating drink, was made to prepare Indian worshippers for their frenzied Vedic rites. By way of contrast, at the end of the poem, Whittier turns to the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Within twelve years of the poem’s publication, these five verses were being used separately as a Christian hymn, and few now remember their origin. Whittier belonged to the Society of Friends, or Quakers, who. More than most Christian groups have discovered the value of meditative silence in their worship of God.

Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
Forgive our foolish ways!
Re-clothe us in our rightful mind,
In purer lives thy service find,
In deeper reverence praise.

Drop thy still dews of quietness
Till all our strivings cease,
Take from our souls the strain and stress
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of thy peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire
Thy coolness and thy balm;
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
Speak through the earthquake, wind and fire
O still small voice of calm.

John Greenleaf Whittier
(1807—1892)

Scoot along to

St Mary's May Fayre

Tombola
& Raffle

Nearly new
clothes

Plants



Cakes

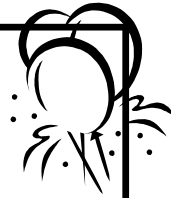
Books

Come and listen to our school choir !!

Admission
20p

**Saturday 12th
May
2pm to 4pm**

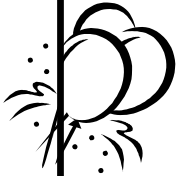
**Middleton Elderly Aid
Queens Diamond Jubilee
St Mary's Parochial Hall**



**Wednesday 13th June
12:00—4:30**

**Buffet + Entertainment
Tickets £5**

**Contact 0113 2721050 for your ticket
and further details**



St Cross Church Flowers

Have you ever thought you would like to have flowers in church to mark special times in your life and been unsure who to ask?

Well, we have a list for those who wish to give for altar flowers at St Cross on special dates and these are open for anyone to choose – but donations are always very welcome for general church decoration.

Interested?

**Please contact Pauline Catter-
ick**

The event was in memory of Anne Crann, with over £1500 being raised in aid of ovarian cancer research, and I'm sure that Anne was smiling down on her talented family and her grandson Sean rocked with the rest of the cast to Grease that had everyone tapping their feet. (his little daughter proudly standing on a chair saying 'that's my daddy!!) But for me and Minnie, the highlight must be Amy Nelson and her beautiful voice - what a star.

There was a really different event the following morning when Bishop James came to St Mary's for the confirmation of Irene, Mark, Josh, Sarah Heidi and Macauley. We were peeking from the back, so had a good view when Macauley was first Baptised at the font by Bishop James who was very enthusiastic with the water!! It was a very special service put together by Andy who really made sure this was special for everyone, as well as getting everything running smoothly—as it did.

There are 'things' appearing at the back of church again, and Minnie is routing through her cupboards, so I guess it must be time for the summer fairs. I know that both churches always rely on the generosity of people to donate all sorts of items to make sure all the stalls are well stocked. So..... all donations will be gratefully received, and makes sure you attend too!!! Fun is always guaranteed at these events.

'Bye for now from Miggy, and all in the Mouse Hole

Birthdays in May

**15th May.....Steve Conlon
17th May Frank Cowburn
18th may Jack Horncastle
28th May Jessie Collinson**



For all those with a May birthday
Happy Birthday to you all.

If we've forgotten you, or you'd like us to send you special birthday wishes, please leave your details in the Mouse Hole or let the magazine team know.

(Remember I like the birthday cake crumbs)



Miggy Mouse Hole—May! 2012

Well, what on earth has been happening with the weather??? We've had heat waves in March, followed by biting winds, more sun than snow and hail. Poor Minnie doesn't know whether to wear her sandals and sundress with her thermals underneath!

We had rather a chilly day out with the crowd on the Walk of Witness on Good Friday. Ian Macintosh was there to carry the heavy end of the cross from St Mary's as we walked with the Methodists to meet up with the others from St Cross and the Baptists at the Middleton Circus shops. For many years we met outside Earnshaws, but now we have the lovely central area, it seems a natural meeting point, BUT it was where all the winds met on that Friday lunchtime! Robin from the Baptists had us all standing closer together, but I'm not sure it helped. We always have some shoppers, or passers-by stopping to listen to the service—which is what it's all about—but I heard 2 ladies say they hadn't come to join in, just to watch the bulldozers pulling down the Middleton Arms!!! That's quite a landmark to have gone now, and I wonder if we will have the new Aldi supermarket there when we meet next year? Not sure how long these buildings take.

We weren't bothered about the weather when we hopped into Wendy Jenkinson's bag, as we knew she was headed for the Parochial Hall and another fantastic night of entertainment in the 'Songs from the Shows-Take Two', and it's a good job there was room in her bag, as the Hall was absolutely packed, as the popularity of these events made it a must be event to see—and we weren't disappointed.

It's hard to know where to start to tell you about all the talent that was on stage that night. Starting with Christine Topp, giving it her all in her nun's costume with songs from Sister Act and the Sound of Music (perhaps she should bless us all more often) ably assisted by other 'nuns' who identities we had to guess at! Then on to Chris Nelson, who is usually a very quiet chap on Sunday mornings,

but was a real crooner on the night. The cast went on to seamlessly move from song to song and set to set—well, it wasn't quiet seamless, but host, Allan Collinson was 'helped' by a magic 'thumbs up' when they were ready—with selections of songs from Chicago, My Fair Lady and others.

Betty Denton



Samantha, Richard, Robert & Joseph Dawson would very much like to thank everyone for their kindness, care and support after Betty passed away, and also for the many beautiful cards they received.

The collection in Church at the funeral raised £367.24 for the RNLI which Betty would have been delighted about.

From the Registers:



Deaths: Ivy Cox; Alan Davis; Betty Denton; Renee Burke; Doris Wadkin; Joyce Burnley; Aimee Costello; Roy Cooper; Walter Silver.

Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them



Baptisms: Riley Gillett; Darcie Platts; Abigail Short-McMahon; Spencer Thomas Grice; Summer Rose Grice; Nala Jade Roche; Macauley Dawson. Jonny Parker; Howell Anderson

Weddings: Gavin Turner & Stephanie Firth



An Obituary printed in the London Times

Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, **Common Sense**, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as:

- Knowing when to come in out of the rain;
- Why the early bird gets the worm;
- Life isn't always fair;
- And maybe it was my fault.

Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you can earn) and reliable strategies (adults, not children, are in charge). His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place.

Reports of a 6-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition.

Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job that they themselves had failed to do in disciplining their unruly children.

It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer sun lotion or an aspirin to a student; but could not inform parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

Common Sense lost the will to live as the churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims.

Common Sense took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home and the burglar could sue you for assault.

Common Sense finally gave up the will to live, after a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap, and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death,

- by his parents, Truth and Trust,
- by his wife, Discretion,
- by his daughter, Responsibility,
- and by his son, Reason.

He is survived by his 5 stepbrothers;

- I Know My Rights
- I Want It Now

- 10 -Someone Else Is To Blame
- I'm A Victim
 - Pay me for Doing Nothing

Worldwide the Christian Church is in excellent health. Europe is the odd one out in the world when it comes to Church growth. So is the game up in Europe, in the UK, in Miggy?. Not according to our new Archdeacon Paul Hooper who said this recently :

We're overstretched, under resourced and weary – the best we can hope for is managed decline and a dignified burial in an empty tomb. A little voice whispers that in my ear too. But no! Christ is risen! Reimagining ministry across the archdeaconry and in each community and context will be a priority in the coming years. But we can't do all that. We're overstretched, under resourced and weary – the best we can hope for is to spread our human resources ever more thinly until we're all run ragged . A little voice whispers that in my ear too. But no! Christ is risen! – “Why do you look for the living among the dead?” May Christ's risen presence fulfil our wildest dreams and cause many new ministries to emerge and flourish.

Fr Andy hasn't given up either and he has already directed us towards a different future, one parish, two parish Churches, but that's not the only difference he calls us to envisage. There is the alternative service and our mission to our community (which has already begun with the Food bank). Let's get cracking, others all around the world are. **So can we.**

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What's missing?
If you know—please check out our
service times !!!!!!!!!!

Thanks for this Hazel

Is Christianity in good health?

The provisional statistics for Church of England attendance for 2010 published recently show an average of 1.7 million people regularly attend an Anglican Church. This is a drop of around 1% on 2009. Baptisms are up slightly though Weddings are up by 4%. There are 1,000 Fresh Expressions of Church active with over 30,000 people attending a Fresh Expression at least once a month. Nationally 85% of the population go to Church at least once a year, 35% on Christmas Day and 20% on a weekly basis.

In Middleton the Anglican Churches can be said to be becalmed, showing some decline and no signs of growth.

The Bigger Picture

That's our view of Christianity. Worldwide the picture is somewhat different. Whilst it is not possible to have an accurate head count most surveys indicate that there are at least 2 billion Christians in the world. That's 2,000,000,000 people or that nearly one out of every three people on this planet is a Christian.

In China, where Christianity is still persecuted in some of the provinces, weekly attendance as a percentage of the population is not far behind that of the UK. On Christmas Day 2011 there were more Christians in Church in China than the whole of Europe. A new Church is opened on average every two days throughout the year and 3,000 seat buildings are very common. In Korea and Brazil congregations can often be in the tens of thousands.

It isn't just the mega churches. In the Indian state of Mizoram, one of the poorest, 83% of the population are Christian! There they have a wonderfully simple way of financing Mission, called a handful of rice. It all began in the year 1914, when a group of women - unable to contribute money to the church as community service - came up with the idea of raising money by collecting a handful of rice from each of their group members. The women then sold the collected rice in the local market. In the sale they raise 80 rupees recent figures show that over 46 million rupees are now raised annually. The money is used to send missionaries to other parts of India. Most homes in Mizoram now have a special rice collecting jar.

Saving Money

You've all seen the adverts about 'switching' your gas and electric suppliers to get cheaper fuel, but sometimes it can be too daunting, or too much of a hassle. Well, if you don't want to change, why not check with your supplier if you are on the best rate, or if they can offer you something better.

Some in our congregation tried this, and were amazed to find better deals given, saving a few hundred pounds over the year, without having to do anything but make a phone call.

When asked why, they reply was 'we don't tell you if you don't ask'!!!!

We can't promise anything, but it's certainly worth the cost of a call (it might even be a free phone) but spread the word and if you know any other ways we can save some money—please share it with us.



Coffee Mornings

First Wednesday of each month

10.30am – 1.00pm

Refreshments are on sale in St. Cross

2nd Wednesday of each month

10:00—12:00

Middleton Methodists Church, Hopewell View

Last Saturday of each month at 8:30am

'Middleton Gentlemen's Breakfast Club'

Middleton Methodists Church, Hopewell View
Guys—come and join us for breakfast and a chat!

23rd Psalm for busy people

The Lord is my pace-setter, I shall not rush,
He makes me stop and rest for quiet intervals,
He provides me with images of stillness, which restores my serenity.
He leads me in ways of efficiency, through calmness of mind,
and His guidance is peace.
Even though I have a great many things to accomplish each day,
I will not fret for His presence is here,
His timelessness, His all importance will keep me in balance.
He prepares refreshment and renewal in the midst of my activity
By anointing my mind with His oils of tranquillity,
My cup of joyous energy overflows.
Surely harmony and effectiveness shall be the fruits of my hours,
For I shall walk in the pace of my Lord, and dwell in His house forever.

By Toki Miyashina
A Japanese woman

Thanks to Alan Makinson who came across this whilst sorting through some of his mothers papers!

Questions



The child sits alone,
a bowl beside her
empty of food.
Feet, weary with walking
bleed into the dust
Eyes devoid of tears, and plagued with flies,
stare at the bare earth –
at the cruel nothingness
of sterile sand, stones,
and the whitened sepulchres of snails.
Where is the mother to feed her?
Where is the father to keep her from harm?
Where is the doctor to tend to her pain?

Where am I?

Most of us love gardening...

Except of course if it's raining! Here's a little gardening you can do from your armchair.

For the garden of your daily living:

Plant 3 rows of peas:

Peace of mind
Peace of heart
Peace of soul

Plant 4 rows of squash:

Squash gossip
Squash indifference
Squash grumbling
Squash selfishness

Plant 4 rows of lettuce:

Lettuce be faithful
Lettuce be kind
Lettuce be patient
Lettuce really love one another.

No garden is without turnips:

Turnip for meetings
Turnip for service
Turnip to help one another.

To conclude, in your garden you must have thyme:

Thyme for each other
Thyme for family
Thyme for friends

**Water freely with patience and cultivate with love.
God Bless and happy planting**