

Consider

Christ Church Aughton Parish Newsletter

No 539 ~ December 2018

Curate's reflection . . .

'Follow the Star'

"Wherever you are this Christmas, you are invited to follow the star and to be with Jesus" The Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby

AS the Advent season approaches primary schoolchildren will be busy preparing for their Nativity plays ~ for many it's the highlight of the school calendar. I always remember going to see my daughter Lydia in one of her Nativity plays; entitled 'Follow the Star'.

As the narrator she retold one of the greatest stories ever told. Transporting the audience back 2,000 years ago to the squalor of a borrowed stable where Jesus the Son of God was born. The magi, better known as the three wise men, followed a miraculous guiding star to a town called Bethlehem where they paid

homage to the infant with gifts of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh.

When we watch a nativity play it's easy to get wrapped up in the cute factor, seeing the children dressed as angels, shepherds and of course the odd sheep, donkey. Seeing

Lydia certainly brought a tear to my eye, but to only view the nativity story through the lens of cute and fluffy would be to misinterpret the

power and impact this story can have on our lives.

In following the star we discover that the birth of Jesus was surrounded by scandal, poverty and mystery. God chose the most unlikely people to reveal his plan to save the world sending his son



Jesus to live among us to experience the mess and chaos of life.

We read in Matthew's Gospel 1:23:

"The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"

(which means 'God with us').

As the preparations for Christmas get under way it's easy to feel under pressure striving to have the 'perfect' Christmas. Follow the star doesn't ask for you to be perfect, it says come just as you are to take the life-changing Christmas journey.

Whatever range of emotions Christmas 2018 holds for you I invite you to take time to follow the star and discover the best gift, God's unconditional love for you. We would love to welcome you to Christ Church this festive season and to share the best gift of Christmas ~ Jesus the gift of hope, love and new life.

Wishing you the peace of the Christ Child and every blessing  for 2019.

Christmas Services

Sunday 9th December 10.45am

Join us for our annual

Toy Service

This is your opportunity to give Christmas presents for children and young people from less fortunate backgrounds.

Good quality toys and cosmetics for teenagers are especially welcome. Please wrap these gifts and attach a label to

December 2018

Sunday, 2nd December

8.15am: Holy Communion

10.45am: Holy Communion

4.00pm: St Michael's, Aughton

Wednesday, 5th December

2.00pm: Holy Communion in the Ministry Centre

Sunday, 9th December

8.15am: Holy Communion

10.45am: Parade Toy Service

4.00pm: Evening Prayer

Sunday, 16th December

8.15am: Holy Communion

10.45am: Family Service

4.00pm: Christingle

Sunday, 23rd December

8.15am: Holy Communion

10.45am: All-Age Nativity Service

6.30pm: Nine Lessons and Carols

Monday, 24th December

11.15pm: Holy Communion

Tuesday, 25th December

8.15pm: Holy Communion

10.00am: Christmas Day Family Service

Sunday, 30th December

8.15am: Holy Communion

10.45am: All-Age in the Ministry Centre

Sunday, 6th January, 2019

8.15am: Holy Communion

10.45am: All-Age Epiphany Service

4.00pm: St Michael's, Aughton

Wednesday, 9th January

2.00pm: Holy Communion in the Ministry Centre

Sunday, 13th January

8.15pm: Holy Communion

10.45am: Parade Service

4.00pm: Evening Prayer

Sunday, 20th January

8.15pm: Holy Communion

10.45am: Family Service with Baptism

4.00pm: St Michael's, Aughton

Sunday, 27th January

8.15pm: Holy Communion

10.45am: All-Age Service

4.00pm: Holy Communion

show the age group and gender the present would be suitable for.

Sunday 16th December 4.00pm

Christingle Service

Start your family Christmas with a child friendly service. We will be joined by our newly formed school signing choir.

A special collection will be taken for the Children's Society. Come dressed in something orange. This service will be followed by a tea party in the ministry centre.

Sunday 23rd December 10.45am

Join us for our all age scratch

Nativity Service

Come dressed as a nativity character and help us retell the greatest story ever told.

Sunday 23rd December 6.30pm

Nine Lessons and Carols

A traditional carol service by candlelight. A time to ponder and reflect on the real meaning of Christmas. This service is followed by coffee and mince pies.

Christmas Eve 11.15pm

First Communion of Christmas

Christmas Day

Holy Communion 8.15am

All age service 10.00am

Join us as we celebrate the greatest present on Christmas day. Come in your Christmas jumpers and bring your presents for us to see.

Forthcoming events

Girlie Night In

Our next 'Girlie Night In' is **Friday, 14th December 7.45-10.00pm**. Our theme is 'all wrapped up'. Bring along one of your Christmas presents to be professionally wrapped. We will be entering into the festive season with mince pies, mulled wine and sing along. All ladies welcome. Entry is free. Donations (hats, scarves, sleeping bags, nappies) to the Ark Skelmersdale.

On **Friday, 18th January** 'Girlie Night In' will be three years old.

To celebrate we will be hosting a Chinese evening including food 7.45-10.00pm.

Beer and Carols at Table 49

Each Monday, a group of friends from Christ Church meet at Wetherspoons in Ormskirk at Table 49, to host an open discussion on contemporary issues from a Christian perspective.

On **Monday, 17 December** to mark the festive season, table 49 will be hosting Beer and Carols at 7.30pm.

Epiphany Party, 6th January

After all the Christmas parties why not kick off your 2019 with our Epiphany party on **Sunday, 6th January** from 10:45am. We will be remembering the visit of the wise men from the East with their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

This will be an all age interactive service followed by a bring and share lunch in Ministry Centre to which everyone is welcome.

News

Café Vista Christmas hours

Café Vista will be closing for Christmas on **Thursday, 20th December**. It will reopen on **Tuesday, 8th January 2019**.

Sarah writes:

A big thank you to all our volunteers who work hard to ensure that our Church, Ministry Centre and Cafe Vista offer a warm welcome and hospitality. Enjoy your well deserved rest over the festive period.

Growing roots at the Oaks

On Wednesday evenings between 8.00-9.30pm a group from Christ Church are meeting at **The Royal Oak Pub** in Aughton.

The group provides an open and honest conversation about things that matter where all perspectives are welcome. The format is simple: a beverage, conversation, and God. Come bring your questions, bring a friend, and pull up a chair. Be ready to engage with people of varying religious traditions, philosophical perspectives and life experiences.

You'll be able to share your own wrestlings and thoughts while learning something new along the way, and hey ~ there's likely to be a good craft beer you haven't tried yet!

Christ Church School

Our Headteacher Mr Kennedy writes

WOW! What a very busy and exciting start to the year it has been.

We started October with our Harvest Service in Church led



by all of the children. It was so nice to be joined by so many of our parents, families and friends for what was a truly enjoyable Service. It also showed the wonderful community spirit in school as we collected gifts for the foodbank and many of our families joined us for a coffee morning after the Service to raise money for Macmillan.

The children across school have been very busy this term learning about their first topics of the year. To support their learning in class our children go on many exciting visits. Year 6 enjoyed a visit to Ormskirk High School to watch a fantastic production by the children of Ormskirk High School.

It was lovely to see our former pupils performing on the day as well. Year 6 have also visited the cathedral and synagogue in Liverpool as part of their R.E studies and visited the Battle of the Atlantic War Rooms.

At our school we enjoy lots of outdoor learning and take every opportunity to be in the outdoors. At the start of November a group of year 5 and 6 children went to compete in team initiatives.

The event was held in the woods at the Beacon and all the children worked as a team to solve problems.

They worked so well on the day and completed all their challenges in the fastest times to win the event.

In addition, our Reception children enjoyed a fantastic autumn walk learning lots about the season; whilst Year 3 went onto the school field to replicate Roman army battle manoeuvres.

Year 3 are also currently enjoying the

challenge of learning to play the ukulele and preparing for a special Christmas concert at school and to go out into the community to entertain others.

Our school Value this term is compassion. It is such an important value for everyone to show in the world today especially as we approach Christmas.

Our children show this in so many ways, but in particular, it was pleasing that everyone in school joined together to raise money for Children in Need and the disaster in Indonesia, showing their support and compassion to people around the world who really need our help.

After so many wonderful events so far this year, we are now thinking ahead to all the exciting things that lie ahead in December and preparing for Christmas.

All of our children in school are now preparing to celebrate this very special time of year through nativities and Church services which as always will be so special for everyone involved.

Christmas is soon approaching, so on behalf of everyone at Aughton Christ Church C of E Primary School, I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very 'Merry and Peaceful Christmas and a Happy New Year'.

Bell Ringers

Well done Mark on getting your first quarter peal at your first attempt. We rang 1260 changes of Grandsire doubles for 'ringing remembers'.



We are looking for two

new bell ringers, preferably 30 to 50 years in age, though we are that short we'd take anyone !

Scout Group

Annette Marshall writes:

The Beavers have had a visit to Ormskirk Fire Station and enjoyed getting one of their Leaders  soaking wet!

The Cubs have had an evening at Ormskirk Tennis Club and have been working towards the Scientist Badge. The Scouts have visited Woodvale Air Field as part of the Air Activities Badge and have taken part in activities to celebrate Diwali as part of the International Award. The Explorers have been climbing to Awesome Walls, visited Blackpool Illuminations and made and fired rockets at the HQ.

One Beaver team, three Cub teams and seven Scout teams took part in the District Orienteering Competition which was held at Bispham Hall and run to British Orienteering standards. Three of the Scout teams came 1st, 2nd and 3rd! Well done to all who took part.

The Scouts and Guides are holding a quiz night at the Scout and Guide HQ on **Saturday, 2nd February 2019**. Tickets are £10 and include hot pot and dessert. 7.00pm for 7.30pm start. Teams of 6 to 8. Bring your own drinks and nibbles

Tickets available from **Lynn Seddon 577 930 or Jeff Roberts 575 708**

From the Registers

FUNERAL

8th November: **ADELAIDE FAZAKERLEY**
of Sherwood Avenue, Aughton

Christmas ponderings

In Luke's Gospel 2:19 we read that 'Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.

Enjoy and ponder the poems!

Another take on a famous poem by Victoria Hagrem-Smith

'Twas the night before Christmas and all through God's house

Not a creature was stirring not even a mouse.

(Well maybe a mouse there's a lot of those in God's house!)

The children were nestled all snug in their pews

While visions of santa obscured all their views.

Parents were anxious, has everything been done?

Was it going to be good, will the children have fun?

The presents were wrapped, well most anyway,

The food was prepared, the turkey all ready on its roasting tray.

Granny and Grandad had all been collected,

they'd toured the kitchen, the living room; it had all been inspected.

With it all organised, and nothing left undone, there's only one thing for it, a glass of wine and an early night won.

But the children are fractious too early for bed,

Let's do something else; exciting they said.

So here in this church, in the darkness and cold,

Begins a new wonder, a story to be told.

Not of turkeys, nor stockings, nor chimneys, nor elves.

But of everything important, for saving ourselves.

For the child in our story grew up like us all,

to become the greatest leader ever to rule.

The wonder of Christmas is not what you think,

'Tis the coming of Christ and our greatest link

To God our Father who loves us all

And promises to catch us if ever we fall,

Our prayer for you dear children and Co is that this Christmas night

when you get up and go,

that you will take with you a bit of the wonder

Of Christ in your hearts to continue to ponder.

And that maybe someday when the business is done,

You'll remember that Christ came for you to have fun,

To live life abundantly and to help others too

And to build a world that's not just for you.

So let's celebrate this wonderful night

All the things that are important

All the things that are right.

For our families and friends, for all those we know,

For making this world; for sunshine and snow.

But most of all for Christmas Eve, for sending your son.

An unknown author

Christmas is a present, not a past.

Christmas should not be just a historical date to remember, but a gift to be lived.

When you decide to love those around you, that day is Christmas.

When you take the first step to be at peace with a loved one, that day is Christmas.

When you meet someone who asks for help and you assist them with all your heart, that day is Christmas.

When you take time to talk to someone who is lonely and sad, that day is Christmas.

When you understand that resentment can be transformed by forgiveness, that day is Christmas.

When you let go of something to give to someone who needs it more than you, that day is Christmas.

When you realise that love, service and authentic concern are the best gifts, that day is Christmas.

When you decide to live with joy and hope rather than surrender to fear and sadness, that day is Christmas.

Christmas Message

from the Bishop of Liverpool

In the dark, small hours of the night, the time when our sleep is most disturbed as sombre thoughts invade our minds, a child is born. No ordinary child. A child born to banish the darkness and shining a light of hope into all our hearts.

On that night, fearful shepherds gathered around the child to worship him in wonder before going out to tell others. Shortly afterwards the child would be visited by wise people from the East, again worshipping him before heading off to share the news. And throughout his life Jesus would be encountered by many who reflected in wonder and then shared what they had seen.

Was there a common thread?

Of course. Everyone who encountered Jesus was transformed. Transformed in different ways. The shepherds found strength. The Eastern sages had their intellectual curiosity satisfied. The blind were given sight. The outcasts received friendship. The hungry fed. The poor given hope.

They were transformed. How were they transformed? An encounter with Jesus transformed them. How do we

know they were transformed? Because they stepped up and spoke about that transformation. In other words they had an inner journey of encounter and an outer journey of proclamation.

Over the last year in the Diocese we have been developing our Rule of Life. I have been talking about both the inner and outer journey. The inner journey where we Pray, Read and Learn as we try to deepen our faith, and widen our understanding of what it means to know Jesus and to act as he did. The outer journey where we put that action into practice ~ we Tell, Serve and Give.

In these ways we show what it is to be a disciple of Christ, part of a transforming movement that longs to make a bigger difference so that more people know Jesus and there is more justice in the world.

Because the world is longing for that justice. From the massive political uncertainties and conflicts between nation states, to the fearful parent wondering how they will feed their child. We see darkness surrounding us, we have our own pressures, the fears and stresses of the world engulf us. In such a world we need hope.

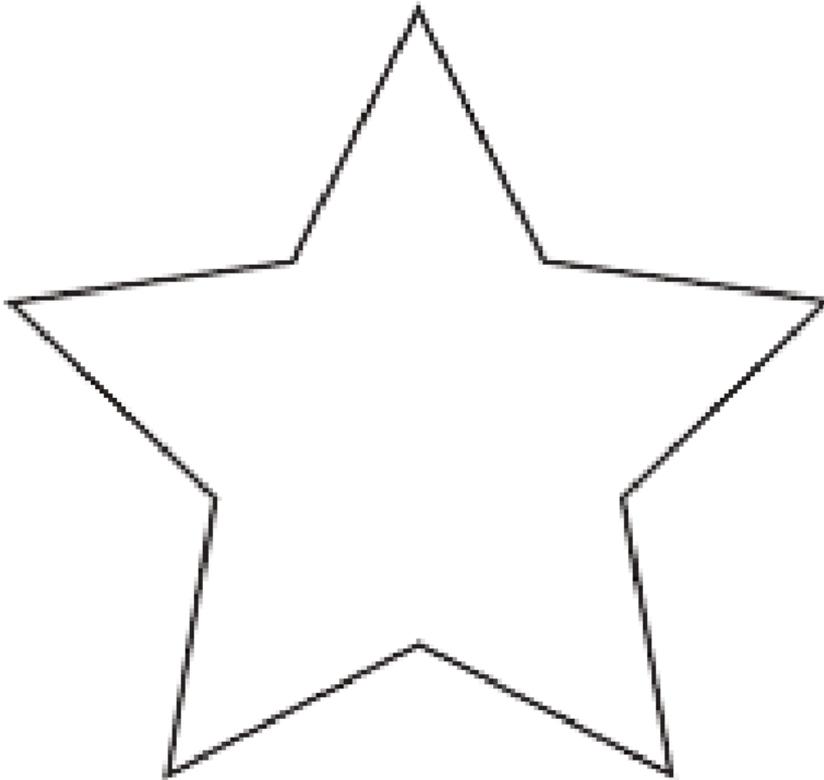
Some seek for hope in luxury, in the excessive commercialism of Christmas. Expensive presents, lavish parties, over-indulgence. Attempts to find release from the day to day. But as people of faith, we find hope in Jesus. In the precious Christmas gift who transformed the lives of those he encountered. Who can, and is, and will, and wants to transform you, and me.

I pray for you, friends, that you seek hope in Jesus, I pray that you encounter that living and transforming Jesus ~ and I pray you tell others about that Jesus in word and action, this and every day.

‘Follow the Star’

It is indeed the season to be jolly~to celebrate~to exchange gifts~to attend parties~to entertain family. But for many , it is also a season where loss, loneliness, pressure and sadness become overwhelming. This can make Christmas a bittersweet experience. If you would like to remember a loved one or ask God for guidance this Christmas, cut out the star below, write a message and bring it up to the Ministry Centre before **21st December**.

We would be happy to add it to our Christmas tree in church



Ministry Centre Office

This is open Monday to Friday,
9.00am-1.00pm. For any information, including requests for baptism and thanksgiving services, weddings, funerals and room bookings, call in or ☎ 424 530,
or email: ChristChurchAughton@gmail.com

Curate: **Rev Sarah O'Donoghue** ☎ 07847 931323