



ST GILES HORSPATH PARISH MAGAZINE

December 2010/January 2011

From the Vicar:

And is it true? And is it true,
This most tremendous tale of all,
Seen in a stained glass windows hue,
A baby in an ox's stall?
The Maker of the stars and sea
Become a child on earth for me?



In this wonderful and famous poem *Christmas*, John Betjeman captures the spirit of Christmas and all the things we love and hate about this time of year: bringing in the holly and the ivy to decorate our homes and churches, the smell of the Christmas tree with its chocolates, baubles and magical fairy lights, the hazy candlelight of midnight mass, the lights and delights of shopping for gifts despite the stress and lack of cash, throwing caution to the wind and enjoying those treats we have denied all year and the pile of presents just for me waiting to be opened on Christmas morning.

In the midst of all this, John Betjeman asks a most profound question.: *And is it true?* In the midst of everything he is asking us to stop and think about what lies at the heart of all that we do and say during this period. For if our answer to this question - *And is it true?* Is either a resounding or a faltering "Yes", then suddenly all our priorities change. The giving of gifts, the decoration, the going to midnight mass, the celebrations, the card writing, the family moments, all become just peripheral to this truth beyond compare.

And what is this truth? This truth that lies at the heart of Christmas, the reason why we do what we do and yet at the same time makes everything seem rather silly and vacuous in comparison? This truth is that God, the Creator of the stars and sea, the all powerful, incomprehensible God, has become a child. He has entered into our funny, silly fallen world and become one of us, and as a result, human life has changed. It is no longer separated from God but become a place of encounter with our Emmanuel, it has become holy.

But God enters not only into the joys and wonder of human life and experience but also into its problems and pain. The child is not found in the palace of a king but in the squalid stable as an outcast. Yet even here God is with humanity and through his life and death as a human being he enters into our very darkness and lights a spark of hope and forgiveness by his very presence.

This is the truth that is beyond compare, that God has given and continues to give the ultimate gift of himself. A gift which for us brings joy, peace and fullness of life beyond comprehension. And yet too often we are content to ignore or squander what has been given and prefer to take the bath salts, the inexpensive scent and hideous tie instead.

May you receive more fully that gift beyond compare not only this Christmas but in every day of your lives hereafter, and so live in the fullness of the Christmas peace and joy which only he can give.

Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and peaceful New Year.

- Emma

CHURCH SERVICES IN DECEMBER AND JANUARY

5 th December	The Second Sunday of Advent	
	11.00 am	Parish Communion with Baptism of Phoebe Wiggins
	5.30 pm	Time Out at Horspath Methodist Chapel
12 th December	The Third Sunday of Advent	
	8.00 am	Holy Communion
	11.00 am	Parish Communion
	12.15 pm	Blessing of the Christmas tree on the green
	3-4.30 pm	Messy Church at Horspath Methodist Chapel
19 th December	The Fourth Sunday of Advent	
	11.00 am	Crib Service with Horspath Nursery
	3.00 pm	Carols by Candlelight
24 th December	Christmas Eve	
	11.30 pm	Midnight Mass
25 th December	Christmas Day	
	11.00 am	Christmas Communion
26 th December	The First Sunday of Christmas	
	9.30 am	Holy Communion Service for the Cluster at All Saints' Cuddesdon
2 nd January	The Epiphany	
	11.00 am	Parish Communion
	5.30 pm	Time Out at Horspath Methodist Chapel
9 th January	The Baptism of Christ	
	8.00 am	Holy Communion
	11.00 am	Parish Communion with renewal of Baptismal vows
	3-4.30 pm	Messy Church at Horspath Methodist Chapel
16 th January	The Second Sunday of Epiphany	
	11.00 am	Family Service with Baptism
23 rd January	The Third Sunday of Epiphany	
	11.00 am	Morning Worship
30 th January	Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas)	
	10.00 am	Cluster Communion Service at St Mary's Garsington



*Horspath Village Carol Service
takes place in St Giles' church
on Sunday, 19th December
at 3pm, followed by refreshments*



Christingle Service for the Family and Young at Heart

Come and hear the story of the Christingle, sing songs and raise money in aid of the Children's Society.

Sunday, 9th January at 3 pm in Horspath Methodist Chapel to make the Christingles and have tea and 4 pm in St Giles for our service.

For those aged between 10 and 16 - Young Explorers meets every fourth Sunday from 3.00-4.30pm to chat, chill out and explore their faith at Garsington Rectory. The next meeting is on 23rd January. For more information contact Emma on 361 381.



FLOWER ROTA FOR DECEMBER

Sundays	5th Advent II	Janet Madden Rebecca Madden-Waite
	12th Advent III	Gill Gray Carol Cuthbert
	19th Carol Service	Muriel Walker Bob Walker
	26th	Nell Gray Penny Mercer

CHURCH SERVICES FOR JANUARY

2nd	Nesta Long Friends of St Giles
9th	Brian and Carol Lowe
16th	Janet Madden Rebecca Madden-Waite
23rd	Gill Gray Carol Cuthbert
30th	Muriel Walker Bob Walker

There will be no flowers in the church during Advents II & III.

Will all helpers and friends please come on **Sat. 18th Dec.** to decorate

the church with flowers and greenery for the Carol Service and Christmas.

HORSPATH SENIOR RESIDENTS' CLUB

Wed. 1st December: Shared tea. 2.00 pm in the village hall. There will be a prize for the *Best Worn Christmas Hat*. Names and money will be taken for the New Year lunch at this meeting. Cost £6.00. Partners are welcome.

Wed. 19th January: Call My Bluff in the village hall. 2.00 pm.

Wed. 2nd February: New Year Lunch. 12 noon for 12.30 pm in the village hall.

The committee wishes you all a Happy Christmas and best wishes for the New Year.

Oxfordshire Association for the Blind

Please continue to give me your used postage stamps for the OAB. Thank you.

- Sheila Dandridge, 10 Church Road, Horspath

HORSPATH GARDENING CLUB

We welcome anybody interested in any aspect of gardening to our evenings. We meet on the second Tuesday of each month in the Methodist Chapel beginning at 8.00 pm, with refreshments at 9.00 pm.

Tuesday, 14th December: *Inspiration from Flowers, Gardens, Textures and Colour.* Ros Crouch will show us her embroidery that has had the natural world at its heart. An evening with mince pies and Christmas cheer.

Tuesday, 11th January 2011: *Ancient Varieties of Wheat and Sustainable Agriculture.* John Letts will talk about growing old varieties of wheat, how it is used for bread making and thatching. A chance to try some of his bread.

For further information, contact Sheila Frankum on 872793.

Friends of Horspath

Since our first meeting in September there have been a number of activities and events organised for the village in response to those who attended the meeting.

- A very successful **cake decorating** class has been set up in the village hall, running on a Monday evening. If you are interested contact Mary Medland (872779).
- The first **walk** was held on **Sunday 17th October** led by Peter Ewart. The next walk will be on 12th December; meet at the church at 2.00pm for a 4-mile local walk as the afternoons are getting shorter.
- A **village quiz** was held in October in the school hall which was very enjoyable. The hall was full to capacity and also raised money for St Giles.
- The first meeting of a **singing group** was held early in November with a workshop as well as discussion about further meetings. The first events will be carol singing on Tuesday, 21st December and for those who wish to take part in the church carol service on Sunday, 19th December. In the new year more workshops will take place. For more information contact Barbara Walton (873456)
- A large social event took place on Friday, 5th November in the form of a **Bonfire Party** with refreshments, entertainment and a Guy competition. Despite the awful weather it was very well attended and it made a very enjoyable social occasion. It also raised £865 for St Giles and our thanks go to Roelof Kramer for the use of the field and garage and to all who sponsored the event.
- The group that offered to look into **events** for the future met in October and initially helped with the bonfire party, but also discussed events for 2011 with ideas for Easter, coffee mornings in the church, the possibility of a summer concert and BBQ and Village Fete in June (Saturday, 18th June). Please take note of the date as we do not want to clash with other events if at all possible.

If you have ideas to help build our village community, please contact any of the PCC members or Sheila Frankum (872793).

Wheatley Choral Society



'Siyahamba!'

Wheatley Choral Society presents a Christmas concert with an African flavour.
Featuring festive music from Africa alongside traditional favourites
and audience carols

Saturday, 11th December at 7.30 pm, St Mary's Church, Wheatley

Tickets on the door: £8 (free for under 16s) or phone 01865 872250

Refreshments are available for purchase during the interval

Published by the Horspath Parochial Church Council. Subscription for the year £2.00. Single copies 15p each. Items for inclusion in the magazine should be left with Mrs Rosemary Goss at College Farmhouse, Manor Farm Road (tel: 874574) or email chris.goss@dsl.pipex.com by the 20th of the month, please.