

The real father of Christmas in my opinion is St Joseph. The name Joseph in its Hebrew form means 'Jehovah increases'. We can see in the life of the Old Testament Joseph, son of Jacob who was sold by his brothers into slavery and is better known to us for his coat of many colours, a man whose name matches his life. God worked through Joseph to assist the people of Israel through seven years of famine and offer them protection in Egypt. Successive Pharaohs somewhat changed their situation to one of slavery and oppression. God again raised up a man to do his will, this time Moses would lead the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land.

St Joseph most certainly reflects the example of his forefather Joseph and as his name suggests God brings blessings through him. St Joseph is a good and just man who even when thinking that St Mary has been unfaithful would not wish her to be punished, in other words stoned to death but rather would call off the betrothal discreetly. St Joseph heeds the words of the angel given to him in a dream making St Mary his wife and thus giving protection to her and the child she carries. He makes sure Roman law is conformed to and travels to Bethlehem for the census. St Joseph is by his wife's side seeing that the Christ child is safely delivered and that Jewish law is conformed to by Jesus' circumcision and later his presentation at the Temple. When the going gets tough and Jesus' very life is threatened by Herod Joseph takes his wife and child to safety making the long and difficult journey to Egypt.

The parallel with Joseph and Moses is not lost. St Joseph is the protector, provider and defender of his family. It is through St Joseph's care and diligence as well as his generosity and compassion in following the will of God that a second Moses was able to come out of Egypt. Christ leads his people from the slavery of this life to the freedom of the life eternal. The manna which fell from heaven during the wilderness wanderings of Israel can be interpreted through the lens of the Eucharistic – Christ gives us our daily bread on which to feed in the Sacrament of the Altar. The wooden pole topped by a bronze serpent and held aloft for the people to see and be saved from their diseases and live is seen as a forerunner of Christ being lifted up on the cross for our salvation. St Joseph is the real father of Christmas and deservedly so as his example of discipleship is of great encouragement to all of us. His trust in God and the sacrifices he made for his family show just how God can work through us when we cooperate with him. St Joseph's protection of Jesus allowed him to thrive and develop into the man that redeemed the whole world. It is often on the sacrifices of others that we stand. St Joseph is a reminder to give thanks for those who have sacrificed for us and allowed us to thrive and be the people we are.

**James**

## DIARY FOR JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2015

### **Sun. 18th Second Sunday after Epiphany**

8.00am Holy Communion at Alderley  
9.45am Holy Communion at Alderley  
11.15am *Mattins at Birtles*  
6.30pm Evensong at Alderley

Thur.22nd 10.00am Holy Communion at Alderley

### **Sun. 25th Third Sunday after Epiphany**

8.00am Holy Communion at Alderley  
9.45am Mattins with Sunday School at Alderley  
11.15am *Holy Communion at Birtles*  
6.30pm Evensong at Alderley

Thur.29th 10.00am Holy Communion at Alderley

## **February**

### **Sun.1st Presentation of Christ in the Temple**

8.00am *Holy Communion at Birtles*  
9.45am Holy Communion at Alderley  
11.15am *Family Service at Birtles*  
6.30pm Evensong at Alderley

Thur.5th 10.00am Holy Communion at Alderley

### **Sun.8th Sexagesima**

8.00am *Holy Communion at Alderley*  
9.45am Family Service at Alderley  
11.15am *Holy Communion at Birtles*  
6.30pm Holy Communion (said) at Alderley

Thur.12th 10.00am Holy Communion at Alderley

### **Sun.15<sup>th</sup> Quinquagesima**

8.00am Holy Communion at Alderley  
9.45am Holy Communion at Alderley  
11.15am *Mattins at Birtles*  
6.30pm Evensong at Alderley

Thur.19<sup>th</sup> 10.00am Holy Communion at Alderley

### **Sun.22nd First Sunday in Lent**

8.00am Holy Communion at Alderley  
9.45am Mattins at Alderley with Sunday School  
11.15am *Holy Communion at Birtles*  
6.30pm Evensong at Alderley

**COFFEE** is available in the Parish Hall after the 9.45am Service.

At the end of the Morning Service coffee and biscuits are provided by a stalwart group of volunteers in the Parish Hall. Donations will be given to charity.

### **COLLECTION TOTALS**

<b>Week ending</b>	<b>Gift Aid Envelopes</b>	<b>Non-Gift Aid &amp; Misc Cash</b>	<b>Standing Orders</b>	<b>Total</b>
Nov 2 <sup>nd</sup>	346.30	40.40		386.70
Nov 9 <sup>th</sup>	510.00	117.38		627.38
Nov 16 <sup>th</sup>	384.00	69.00		453.00
Nov 23 <sup>rd</sup>	323.19	42.65		365.84
Nov 30 <sup>th</sup>	425.00	48.40		473.40
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1988.49</b>	<b>317.83</b>	<b>490.00</b>	<b>2796.32</b>

### **2015 DATED ENVELOPES**

If you have not yet picked up your 2015 boxes, they are in the magazine rack at the back of church. Please do not use any 2014 dated envelopes as you may have a new number. If you have any queries, please call me on 01625 584008

**Donald Henderson**

### **NETHER ALDERLEY 200 CLUB**

#### **November draw winners**

1<sup>st</sup> prize            Mrs J. Currie  
2<sup>nd</sup> prize            Mr D Mogg  
3<sup>rd</sup> prize            Mrs E. Fairhurst

Congratulations to all the winners

Next draw, 4th January, 2015

## SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Happy New Year to everybody! A quieter time after the Christmas festivities.

The Christmas Coffee Morning was again well supported. We had many visitors who were not regular church goers. The Barnby Choir bring a strong back up support. Thank you to everybody for whatever you did to help.

This year we showed a profit £750 after expenses. The Barnby Choir love coming to sing in what they call our 'Treasured Church' so beautifully decorated.

These monies will go direct in to the general church account, the aim to try to offset the on going general expenses in a small way.

On January 28<sup>nd</sup> the 'Tea Party' people and friends are planning to go out for lunch to celebrate the New Year. We think we will go to the Wilmslow Garden Centre which suits everybody well. Lifts as required. We shall I am sure have tea somewhere late February. If there is anyone who would like to join in please let me know. It is fun and chatty!!!

A **Bridge Drive** is organised for Monday February 9<sup>th</sup>.in the church hall starting at 1.30pm. Tables will cost £26.**Please tell your friends. We need to advertise this. Everybody's support is necessary.**

Let me know if you would like a Table or know anyone who would be interested

**Janet Adamson Tel: 01625 583320**

## ST MARY'S WALKING GROUP

**Saturday 7th February – 10.00am start prompt**

**Walk:** Hatchmere

**Starting Point:** Meet Barns Bridge Gate carpark SJ 542716

**Map:** OS Explorer 267

**Length:** 6 miles, easy

**Further info:** Bring drinks and packed lunch  
Jamie Smith 01625 58752475



St. Mary, Alderley now has two websites!



We have a new website for the daily running of our Church

– please visit:

**[www.alderleychurch.co.uk](http://www.alderleychurch.co.uk)**

Our original website, which has been running for 7 years, is now dedicated to the Heritage of St. Mary's and includes its history, Information about its beautiful furnishing, events for visitors and also welcomes family history enquiries.

**[www.stmarysaldерley.com](http://www.stmarysaldерley.com)**



## **STOP PRESS – CAROL SINGING**

A big thank-you to all our hosts and to all our singers. We raised £1170 over 2 nights carol singing and a session at Woodlands Court. The money has been split evenly between the 'NSPCC' and 'The Children's Society'.

We also received a separate donation of £160 for the above charities.

**In 20 years we have raised just over  
£19,000 for various charites**

## **THANK YOU**

Many, many thanks to everyone who so kindly donated to the Candle Fund, stripped their gardens of evergreen or assisted me in the preparation of the Church for Advent and Christmas.

## **Celebrating 175 years of the Penny Post...**

In January 1840 – just 175 years ago – the penny post was established throughout the UK and, as we know from Dickens and other novelists, letters flowed freely to and fro several times a day. It was a golden age of communication.

Sadly, this facility has now disappeared: recently the Royal Mail reported that it is struggling to deliver to every house just once a day for a price of 62p – over 150 times more than in 1840 (1p = 2½ old pennies). That's not quite as bad as it seems, of course: a penny in 1840 would be equivalent to about 35p now. Never mind; we now have another golden age of communication, featuring the mobile phone. Mobiles are as ubiquitous nowadays as the penny post was in 1840, and it is hard to believe that it was only 30 years ago that the first mobile phone call was made in the UK – by comedian Ernie Wise, who called Vodafone's head office in Newbury from St Katharine Docks in London on New Year's Day, 1985.

Quick off the mark as always, it was in the same month (just over a fortnight later) that British Telecom officially retired the much-missed iconic red telephone box. Maybe a bit too quick off the mark, because there are still vast tracts of Britain without a reliable mobile phone signal. Not so golden after all!

## **NEWSPAPER CUTTINGS – 1913 /14**

### **CROWDS FLOCK TO CHURCH**

#### **In the Hope of Seeing Premier**

“The Premier this morning left Alderley Park, where he has been the guest of Lord Stanley, en route for the South. Large numbers of people visited Alderley yesterday in the hope of seeing Mr Asquith walking or driving. Both services at Alderley Church were crowded, but the Premier did not attend, now did he go out at all. No unpleasant incidents occurred during his stay but London detectives and police kept watch night and day.”

### **MR ASQUITH’S VISIT TO LORD STANLEY**

Mr Asquith arrived late last night at Alderley Park on a visit to Lord Stanley. He was expected this morning, and a number of people who assembled to greet him were disappointed. Every precaution is being taken to prevent any unpleasant Suffragette incident during the Premier’s stay in Cheshire. Mr Asquith left the London train some miles from Alderley. During his last visit to Alderley Park, Mr Asquith read the lesson at Alderley Church to a crowded congregation.

### **ALDERLEY CHURCH CLOSED**

The fine old Cheshire church at Alderley is now closed as a precaution against suffragists. The church contains many memorials of the Stanley family of Alderley Park. Among other interesting features a very old Bible is included.

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### **Dedication of Books**

At the morning Service of Nine Lessons and Carols five books were dedicated in thanksgiving for the contribution made by individual parishioners to St Mary’s Church. The books are all of excellent quality; there are two contemporary leather books - a Bible and a Prayer Book all hand stitched, the other three are antiquarian - a George I Prayer Book dated 1715, a Victorian Prayer Book and a 1684 edition of Hooker’s Ecclesiastical Polity. Beautiful book plates have been made by a former resident of Alderley Edge and now Calligrapher to the Royal College of Arms, Margaret Morgan. The parishioners remembered for their contributions were Sheila Hine, Nigel Morton, David Watkins, Albert Dodd and Glyn Davis.

## RINGING OUT THE FAITH

*(written by Miss Winifred Dawson, former member of the choir for 60 years plus)*

You will hear them on Sunday mornings, Sunday evenings and Tuesday nights - St. Mary's bells pealing across the fields, hedges and lanes of the parish of Alderley. Swinging high in the sandstone tower, ringing out their message loud and clear. Ringing across the years in joyful times and sad. In semi-darkness, by torch and candlelight when storm and power cuts plunged the church into gloom.

Of the six bells ringing today, five date from 1787 and the sixth from 1847. They rang in days long since gone, the days of Quebec and Waterloo, days of national rejoicing and thankfulness and of sorrow. In our own day, at the end of the European War and the War in the Far East; on great state occasions, the Coronation, the Queen's Silver Jubilee. Royal weddings, for television broadcasts and for the release of Terry Waite from captivity. They have rung for countless St. Mary weddings with a joyous clamour; they have rung for the passing of our loved ones, muffled, solemn, measured. They have rung each Christmas to remind the careless and the unaware of the greatest gift ever given to our world. They have rung on New Year's Eve, their sound going out across dark fields to the farthest bounds of the parish, welcoming in the New Year under starlit midnight skies with a message of hope for the coming year, and many anxious, troubled hearts have heard and listened and been filled again with belief and expectation. They were silent only through the years of the War, 1939—1945, when the sound of church bells would have heralded invasion by enemy forces. A silence which was broken only once, when they rang after the evacuation from Dunkirk of so many thousands of British and allied troops, and the nation gave thanks to God for their safe return.

All down the generations, men and women, young and old, have climbed the twisting, worn stone steps to the ringing chamber. Many a nervous boy and girl has taken the sally in trembling hands for the first time, under the patient and watchful eye of the Captain of the Tower. And so has started out on a life-time of campanology, ringing out the faith, and they will go on doing so, Sunday after Sunday, year after year; on days of national rejoicing or national mourning. The old grey tower which shelters the bells, and which itself bears on its south wall the scars of musket and cannon ball, some say from the time of the Civil War, will continue to resound to the clamour high above.

The following prayer now hangs on the wall of the ringing chamber. It was offered up every Sunday during the years 1951—1960 by the then Rector, Kenneth Parsons, who climbed the steps to the assembled ringers before each service. *"O Lord, may the sound of these bells cheer the sick, comfort the sorrowful, warn the heedless and call all willing hearts to prayer and praise".*

## **Herbert Asquith – Prime Minister 1908 – 1916**

**&**

## **Venetia Stanley (22 August 1887 – 3 August 1948)**

Venetia was a British aristocrat and socialite best known for the many letters that Prime Minister Herbert Henry Asquith wrote to her between 1910 and 1915. She was the youngest daughter of Edward Lyulph Stanley, 4th Baron Sheffield and Stanley of Alderley.

Venetia met Asquith through her close friendship with his daughter, Violet. Asquith, who enjoyed writing letters to women in high society, began his correspondence with Venetia in 1910. However, Venetia was just one of several women who received Asquith's letters until 1912, when she went on a trip to Sicily with Asquith, Violet and Edwin Samuel Montagu, a Liberal MP who was one of Asquith's protégés. It seems that on this trip, both Asquith and Montagu fell in love with Venetia.

During the next three years, Asquith wrote more and more frequently to Venetia, even during Cabinet meetings. Venetia seems to have written to Asquith almost as often, but Asquith apparently destroyed Venetia's letters on a regular basis to maintain confidentiality. At the same time, Montagu was attempting to court Venetia and unsuccessfully proposed marriage to her in 1913. Venetia liked Montagu but did not reciprocate his love. Also, Montagu had to marry within his Jewish faith in order to keep his inheritance. Although Venetia was from a freethinking family and was not a devout Anglican, conversion to Judaism seemed too great a barrier.

He also sought her advice on how to deal with his political colleagues and even on questions of military strategy in World War I. The letters he wrote to her during Cabinet meetings are often the only minutes of those meetings that exist and a crucial source of historical information on the formation of British strategy during the war. Although Venetia was intelligent, well-read and keenly interested in politics, she apparently felt overwhelmed by Asquith's demands. As a result, she finally accepted Montagu's proposal on 28 April 1915 and wrote to Asquith of her decision on 12 May. After converting to Judaism, Venetia married Montagu on 26 July 1915.

It is recorded that Asquith made frequent weekend visits to Alderley Park during these years and usually attended St.Mary's on a Sunday morning reading the occasional lesson.

## **Remembering Sir Winston Churchill – more than an eloquent voice**

Fifty years ago, on 24th January, Sir Winston Spencer Churchill died aged ninety. He was buried at Bladon church, near Blenheim Palace, the Spencer family seat. Every year hundreds of visitors still come to the grave, many of them from overseas, to remember a remarkable man and leader of men.

A soldier (in the Boer War), and then a controversial politician, he held several important offices of state, but it wasn't until 1940 that his unique gifts, both of leadership and oratory, became widely recognised. When Neville Chamberlain's government was replaced by a wartime coalition - a 'national government' - Churchill was appointed prime minister. From the first time he rose to his feet to address a tense and anxious House of Commons it was clear that a remarkable personality had assumed high office. At the end of his first wartime broadcast a few days later the whole nation knew that it had found its voice.

Churchill's wartime oratory was unique, both in its impact and its eloquence. Although showing no academic prowess at school, and without the advantages of a classical or university education, he revealed an absolute mastery of the rhythms and cadences of the English language.

Whether it was after Dunkirk, when invasion seemed imminent - 'we will fight them on the beaches . . . we will never surrender', or in the aftermath of the Battle of Britain - 'never in all the field of human conflict has so much been owed by so many to so few' - his words breathed courage into a beleaguered nation.

He was precisely the right man for those potentially catastrophic days, urging the nation to 'blood, sweat, toil and tears', but promising in the end victory for justice and freedom.

**ROTA FOR JANUARY 2015**  
**LADY SIDESMEN / SIDESMEN / LECTORS**

DATE	TIME	SIDESMEN	LECTOR
4 <sup>th</sup>	9.45am	Mr G.Hilton & Mrs J. Martin	Mrs E. Jackson
	6.30pm	Mrs A. Robinson	Mr P.Reynolds
11 <sup>th</sup>	8.00am	Mr H. Wright & Mrs B. Essayan	
	9.45am	Mrs W. Liddle & Mrs G. Beeley	Miss S. Vardon
	6.30pm	Mr A. Dodd	Mrs A. Dodd
18 <sup>th</sup>	8.00am	Mr P. Bean	
	9.45am	Mrs R. Dyas & Mr P. Welsh	Mrs J. Lee
	6.30pm	Mr P. Reynolds	Mr P. Reynolds
25 <sup>th</sup>	8.00am	No Service	
	9.45am	Mr G. Woolley & Mr M. Wilkinson	Mrs S.J. Wilkinson
	6.30pm	Mr G. Barrie	Mrs F. Robinson
<b>Feb</b> <b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	8.00am		
	9.45am	Mr J. Stephenson & Mrs J. Adamson	Mrs W. Liddle
	6.30pm	Mrs A. Cobb	Mr P. Bean

**FROM THE REGISTERS**

***Holy Matrimony***

Thu 11th Dec      Anna Piotrowska and Barnaby Cox  
Sat 20th Dec      Gemma Monk and Alexander Hamer  
Tues 23rd Dec     Catherine Mogg and Thomas Atkinson

**FLOWER ROTA**

Jan. 4th            Christmas  
Jan.11th            Fiona Ablett & Maureen Woolley  
Jan. 18th            Jean Lee  
Jan.25th            Jean Lee

**MAGAZINE CONTRIBUTIONS**

The deadline for the next magazine is **Thursday February 19th 2015**  
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Large format copies of the magazine are available.