

FROM THE REGISTERS

Baptisms

Nov 20th **Jake Derek Cross**
Dec 4th **Jack Philip Evans**

Weddings

Funerals

December 6th **Nesta Nesanwy Stansby**
December 9th **Elizabeth Rooney**

FLOWER ROTA

Jan 1st Christmas
Jan 8th Fiona Ablett & Maureen Woolley
Jan 15th Fiona Ablett & Maureen Woolley
Jan 22nd Avril Lamond
Jan 29th Avril Lamond

MAGAZINE CONTRIBUTIONS

The deadline for the next magazine is **Thursday 19th January 2017**
Please send all copy to:

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& Distribution: Peter Bean: 01625 582073

Large format copies of the magazine are available.

Rector Writes

January 2017

I am still enjoying the experience of everything being new, having moved into the Rectory at Nether Alderley in October last year. To be given responsibility for two ecclesiastical parishes that comprise Great Warford, Nether Alderley, part of Alderley Edge, Birtles and Over Alderley is a great joy for me. The challenge to me as a Christian priest is to find the best way to be true to the mystery and the wonder of the Gospel of Christ in this place.

The Christian belief is that God has been revealed in Jesus Christ who lives in all those who put their trust and faith in him, and that the Holy Spirit is God's active presence throughout creation.

After 28 years as a parish clergyman, I know that no amount of analysis and planning can account for the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of a parish and within the parish church. Even so, over the next few months I will be seeking to discern the meanings and the purposes and the signs in this place.

As the minister at St.Mary's Church and St.Catherine's Church I must be nurturing, encouraging and sustaining of faith with those who have a long lifetime of faithfulness to Jesus Christ. I must also take responsibility for the parish church – in partnership with the Churchwardens and Parochial Church Council - to ensure that it remains healthy, and welcoming of all who are seeking Jesus Christ. And in the name of Jesus Christ I must affirm and be alongside all who feel themselves distant from God, or who run away from God, or who wrestle with God

Between the two parish churches in Nether Alderley and Birtles, you have plenty of times of worship every Sunday: 8am, 9.45am, 11.15am and 6.30pm; and at Morning Prayer Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. I look forward to seeing you in church.

Revd Jon Hale

DIARY FOR JANUARY 2017

Sun.1st First Sunday after Christmas
 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 First Sunday after Epiphany
 8.00am Holy Communion at Alderley
 9.45am Family Service at Alderley
 11.15am Holy Communion at Birtles
 6.30pm Holy Communion at Alderley (said)
 Thurs 12th 10.00am Holy Communion

Sun. 15th 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
 Thurs 19th 10.00am Holy Communion at Alderley

Sun 22nd Third Sunday after Epiphany
 8.00am Holy Communion at Alderley
 9.45am Mattins at Alderley
 11.15am Holy Communion at Birtles
 4.30pm Christian Unity —CTIA at St. Mary's
 Thurs 26th 10.00am Holy Communion at Alderley

Sun 29th Fourth Sunday after Epiphany
 8.00am Holy Communion at Alderley
 9.45am Holy Communion at Alderley
 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.

ROTA FOR JANUARY 2017

SIDESPEOPLE / LECTORS / WARDENS

D'T	TIME	SIDESPEOPLE	LECTOR	W'N
Jan 1 st	8.00am	(at Birtles)		
	9.45am	Mrs W. Liddle & Mr Geoff Hilton	Mrs W. Liddle	MP
	6.30pm	Mrs A Robinson	Mr P Reynolds	PR
Jan 8 th	8.00am			HW
	9.45am	Mr A Claridge & Mr J Ratchford	Miss C. Mowforth	MP
	6.30pm	Mrs J. Bean	Mr P Bean	PB
Jan 15 th	8.00am			RA
	9.45am	Mrs J Martin & Mrs G. Beeley	Mrs A Davis	MP
	6.30pm	Mr G Barrie	Mr P Reynolds	PR
Jan 22 nd	8.00am			PB
	9.45am	Mr s Welsh & Mr G. Woolley	Mrs J Lee	MP
	4.30am	Mrs A Robinson	-----	JY
Jan 29 th	8.00am			HW
	9.45am	M Stonehewer & Mrs E Jackson	Mr T Fones	MP
	6.30am	Mr M Dyer	Mrs J Youatt	JY
Feb 5 th	8.00am	(at Birtles)		
	9.45pm	Mrs W. Liddle & Mrs R Dyas	Mrs W Liddle	MP
	6.30pm	Mrs A Robinson	Mr P Reynolds	PR

Thomas Becket – the Archbishop who died at Christmas-time

Thomas Becket was the medieval equivalent of a public-school educated son of a wealthy banker, who eased his way into the ruling elite and quickly worked his way to the top. His assured manner and ready talents were noticed by the King, and Becket was brought into the royal circle. He and Henry II became close friends, hunting and partying together. Thomas was even appointed the King's Chancellor.

All was going fine until King Henry needed a new Archbishop of Canterbury, and decided that Becket was a sound and loyal choice. Thomas was therefore ordained priest one day, and consecrated archbishop the next. What the king had not expected was that his favourite courtier would take his vows so seriously.

For Becket was transformed. He adopted an austere lifestyle and began wearing simple clerical dress. But of more concern to the king was that when Church and State came into conflict, instead of siding with the king, Becket sided with the Church. The once strong friendship between the two men was sorely strained so much so that Becket had, in 1164, to flee into exile in France.

He returned to Canterbury in due course, but the rift had not healed. The story goes that Henry was so angered with him that he shouted: 'Will no one rid me of this turbulent priest?!' It might have been a rhetorical question born of anger, but four knights took him at his word.

On 29th December 1170, they arrived in Canterbury and barged their way into the cathedral. Once inside they found and murdered the archbishop at a spot still remembered as The Martyrdom. Becket offered no resistance, and died with dignity. Within three years he had been acclaimed saint and martyr. Henry II did penance for his outburst, and a shrine to Becket was set up in the cathedral and became a major, and for the monks, lucrative focus of pilgrimage.

At the Reformation the ornately decorated shrine was dismantled and, according to the official story, Becket's bones were disposed of. But rumours persist to this day that the relics were saved, and are still hidden in the Cathedral crypt.

Start the day with Bible reading and prayer on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Morning Prayer is an opportunity to meet for Bible reading and prayer at the start of the day.

It's held at 8.45am on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday in alternate weeks in the two churches of the Nether Alderley with Birtles benefice.

Morning Prayer will not be held in the week of Sunday 29th January.

Date	Where to come for Morning Prayer at 8.45am
Tuesday 10 th , Wednesday 11 th & Thursday 12 th January	St.Catherine's Church
Tuesday 17 th , Wednesday 18 th & Thursday 19 th January	St.Mary's Church
Tuesday 24 th , Wednesday 25 th & Thursday 26 th January	St.Catherine's Church

COLLECTION TOTAL

Week ending	Envelopes	Misc Cash	Standing Orders	Total
6 th Nov	196.30	123.55		319.85
13 th Nov	400.60	74.80		475.40
20 th Nov	245.85	86.49		337.34
27 th Nov	359.00	44.00		403.00
TOTAL	1201.75	328.84	715.00	2245.59

This year, boxes of dated gift aid envelopes will be replaced with the undated variety but I would like to encourage everyone to consider giving by standing order. You don't have to search for cash on Sunday morning when attending church and if you feel awkward about not putting "something" on the offertory plate, an empty green envelope will suffice. I can recycle it if left unsealed! Please contact me if you would like to join the increasing numbers who have "signed up" to this way of giving.

Donald Henderson Tel 01625 584008 or email orchardmain@ntlworld.com

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Happy New Year to everybody.

The Christmas Coffee Morning was again well supported. We had many visitors who were not necessarily 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 achieved around £990. This included monies taken on behalf of the Jubilee committee on the produce stall They also helped in many ways. One of the things the Jubilee Committee do is to finance our lovely Christmas trees. £700 of the monies raised have gone to the PCC to help with our running deficit.

A **Bridge Drive** is organised for Monday February 13th. in the church hall starting at 1.30pm. Tables will be £26.

Please tell your friends. We need to advertise this. necessary. Some people who have habitually had a table are no longer able to do so, so we need some new blood!!

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

On Thursday January 26th we are planning a lunch out to the Lambing Shed Chelford, meeting at 12.30pm. Details later.

Janet Adamson (01625 583320)

WALKING

A group of friends from St Mary's are going for a walk on the 4th February 2017. The details are given below and anyone interested is welcome to join the group. If you do come along, you do so at your own risk as walking can be a hazardous activity. Children and / or dogs are also welcome but you have to take full responsibility for them. It is advisable that you have appropriate footwear and clothing with you to cope with any weather and ground conditions that might be met.

Dunham Town

Park in the village, Woodhouse Lane

Starting at 10.00 am prompt from Woodhouse Lane, Dunham Town (turn right before Dunham Massey car park)

Grid ref: SJ 740 870 Post code:WA14 4SB

Length: 6 miles

Grade: Flat 59 m ascent over varied terrain

Further information: Packed lunch with drinks needed. Contact Jamie Smith 01625 585245 mob 0779 60 40 99 (In the event of poor weather conditions being forecast, please make sure I have your contact details in advance of the day)

(continued)

*When I consider your heavens the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,
what are mere mortals that you are mindful of them,
human beings that you care for them?*

Science is certainly helping us to understand, and indeed, control more and more of the world in which we live, but there is far more to the universe than its immense size, age and complexity. We are discovering a universe that is 10-15 billion years old and of immense size. But where is the universe? Where do we exist? And why do we exist? With global problems of violence, injustice and division, and our own personal fears and needs, we could be excused for asking whether there can be any meaning or purpose to human life.

But Charles Kingsley, broad church priest and university professor, said that no doubt God could have created a ready-made world, but it had turned out the Creator had done something cleverer and more valuable than that, in creating a world so endowed with potentiality that creatures 'could make themselves'

If God is the creator of the whole universe then we may expect God to be revealed in both scientific exploration and within the experience and deliberations of followers of the Christian faith.

The major barrier is that while science is falsifiable – can be proved or demonstrated to be right or wrong – theology is non-falsifiable – we cannot prove or disprove the existence of God.

This is a step of faith.

My belief and the general feeling is that Christianity and science are both sincerely seeking truth about the universe and life; both are trying to make sense of the world in which you and I live. Science in the western world developed within an understanding of an ordered world created by God, and this order was fundamental to all scientific investigation.

It is therefore of no surprise that a universe created by God would provide pointers to the creator through the discoveries of modern science

The results of both the physical and biological sciences are providing evidence and questions about the origin of the universe and of life to which one answer might reasonably be God.

This is a step of faith.

Approximately one third of the people living in this world have taken that step of faith and found the truth of God

Report of a Salt of the Earth lecture By John Weaver

by Terry Fones

The lecture from a friend of mine who recreated Wilfred Thomas journey through the empty quarter. When we were reading the report of Thomas's original lecture in 1931 in the same lecture theatre we found that Lord and Lady Stanley were there .

The salt of the earth network was started by the Rt Revd Keith Sinclair, Bishop of Birkenhead. It celebrates the importance of salt in the life of the world. Glenyse and I have attended a number of the events which cover lectures and an annual service in the Cheshire salt mines. The last lecture was by John Weaver, who began by telling us his journey from Geology to Baptist Minister.

His lecture subject this day was:

Does Science have all the answers to questions of life, the universe, and everything? And, if so, is the Bible irrelevant?

We were asked if we thought that Science is wrong when it suggests things that contradict what the Bible says, for example, when geologists suggest that the Earth is 4.66 billion years old, and cosmologists suggest that the universe is 13-15 billion years old.

John decided there are two extremes "I believe science so there is no need for religion" or "I believe in a literal interpretation of the bible."

The common ground must be that they are both searching for the truth.

Popular thought says that during the medieval period the world was governed by superstition largely driven by religion. From medieval Christian theologians we learned about God from what we observed in nature but nature did not contradict our views of God, it revealed and broadened our understanding.

This led to discussions on the views of many "experts both scientific and Religious such as whether Darwin's theory of evolution came into direct conflict religion but decided it actually put God back into the world as an active participant

Another interesting topic is the view of *Roger Penrose*, who with John Wheeler discovered black holes, and who with Stephen Hawking in 1970 postulated the big bang explosive beginning of the universe. Speaking about the development of human life and in particular the brain he said he "cannot believe that true intelligence could actually be present unless accompanied by consciousness." He then went on to maintain that intelligence cannot be properly simulated by algorithmic means.

One scientist said on the birth of his son that if an engineering draughtsman had to draw up the blueprint of a single sperm the paperwork would fill all the rooms of an average house.

We can all remember amazing natural events such as birth or sunsets or fantastic views and science can explain these away but we considered the words of Psalm

BRIDGE DRIVE

This has been organised for Monday February 13th in the Parish Hall starting 1.30pm. Tables will cost £26.

Please tell your friends, we rely on you to spread the word.

Let me know if you would like a Table. Jamet Adamson

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.

It is only your generosity, kindness and valuable help that enables us to make our already beautiful Church "special" during Advent and Christmas. Thank you so much.

Michael Penlington

NETHER ALDERLEY 200 CLUB November draw winners

1 st prize	Margaret Worthington
2 nd prize	David Mogg
3 rd prize	Harold and MD Cataquet.

Congratulations to all the winners

Your cheque or standing order gives you a chance of being the winner.

Forms can be found at the back of Church and in the Parish Hall Kitchen.

A total of £2000 has now been handed over to St Mary's treasurer, towards the day to day running costs of the Church.

Historical Quote from 'The Victorian Parson'

by Barry Turner

'At Nether Alderley in Cheshire, where the family of Revd. Edward Stanley took over the family living in 1805, he found that his predecessor had rarely bothered to turn up for Sunday service. He had his Clerk on watch for congregation and when, as invariably happened, nobody appeared, the Parson stayed at home.'

THANK YOU

My grateful thanks to 'The War Graves Photographic Project' who kindly donated photographs of all the WW1 soldiers who appear on our Roll of Honour.

The man who created Greenwich Mean Time

The British mathematician and astronomer Sir George Biddell Airy died 125 years ago this month. Not a household name, he nevertheless had a long-term effect on everyone's lives by establishing Greenwich as the location of the prime meridian, through calculations made using an immensely accurate telescope he invented called the Airy Transit Circle.

Greenwich Mean Time became legal time in Britain in 1880, and was adopted in principle as the basis of universal time in 1884.

Sir George was not so much a brilliant scientist as a meticulous engineer and a self-taught expert in many areas, including theology. His wife Ricarda, who he met on a walking holiday and proposed to after two days, was the daughter of the Rev Richard Smith, private chaplain to the Duke of Devonshire. After being initially rejected by Mr Smith, because of his limited means and prospects, he persisted in his suit for six years until he was successful.

Sir George was elected president of the Royal Astronomical Society four times, for a total of seven years between 1835 and 1864. No other person has been president more than four times.

He was famous (or notorious) for the care and foresight with which he planned his life. He made a careful note of everything that occurred in his life or interested him, and never threw anything away. These records still exist.

Are you between the ages of 18 and 30 years old?

STEP FORWARD and consider ministry in the Church of England.

Serving God is one of the best things you can do with your life and there are many ways you can carry out this calling.

If you are a Christian aged between 18 and 30, might God be encouraging you to consider ordained ministry in the Church of England?

A day conference for people aged 18 to 30 is on Saturday 4th February 2017 11am to 4pm at Bishopthorpe Palace (the home of the Archbishop of York), York YO23 2GE.

Go to www.stepforwardanglican.org.uk Book your place online now.

BIG CHURCH DAY OUT is Friday 2nd and Saturday 3rd June 2017 at Capesthorpe Hall.

Go to <https://bigchurchdayout.com/north> to find out more!

ALDERLEY EDGE BIBLE STUDIES 2016 / 2017

Why do bad things happen to good people? A Problem of Suffering in the Book of Job

led by Philip Alexander

All welcome: all you need is an enquiring mind (and a Bible!)
We meet on the first Monday of the month EXCEPT those starred **

Mon 9th
January St Philips
Parish Rooms The Voice of Experience 2
Job and his Three friends
The Second Cycle of Speeches

Mon 6th
February St Philip's
Parish Rooms The Voice of Experience 3
Job and his Three friends
The Third Cycle of Speeches

Mon March 6th
Parish Rooms The Hymn to Wisdom
Job's concluding defence

Further dates

Monday May 8th, Monday 5th June, Monday 3rd July

MEETING TIME: 7.30pm – 9.30pm
CONTACT: Loveday Alexander (0161 439 7946)