

I should like to start by thanking everybody for the warm welcome my wife, Diane, and I have received from you all. You have made it easy for us to settle in and to learn the ropes of a new parish, and we're looking forward to working with you while James is away.

We are pleased to be adding Alderley and Birtles to our string of parish locums. Some have been in our home diocese of Europe (Tangier, Milan and Brittany) ; others have been elsewhere (whether as near as Alderley Edge, two years ago, or as far away as the Southern Alps of New Zealand). Certainly locums are an interesting way of recycling old clergy. They have all been enriching experiences for us, and we are sure this one will be too.

This feels like a well-timed locum period, covering as it does the seasons of Lent, Passiontide and Easter. This means that we shall be following together the events of Jesus's life, starting with his temptation in the wilderness, then moving on with a mixture of popularity and opposition, leading up to the agony of Good Friday and culminating in the joy of Easter. I look forward to re-living this sequence with you and entering once more into the events that open up for us the salvation that is in Jesus and show us a way of life that is a blessing to ourselves and to others.

To help us make good use of the season of Lent, Churches Together in Alderley is organising a series of bible studies based on the book and musical *Les Misérables*. These will take place over five weeks at Alderley Edge Methodist Church with a choice between a morning and an evening session, starting on Monday 23 February at 11 a.m. and Tuesday 24 February at 7.30 p.m. As St Mary's isn't having a Lenten study group of its own, please make full use of this opportunity.

May God bless us all as we enter again with faith and hope into this holy season.

John Murray

## DIARY FOR MARCH 2015

### **Sun.1st      Second Sunday in Lent**

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      Third Sunday in Lent**

8.00am      Holy Communion at Alderley  
9.45am      Family Service at Alderley  
10.30am     *Holy Communion at Birtles*  
6.30pm      Holy Communion at Alderley

Thur.12th    10.00am      Holy Communion at Alderley

### **Sun. 15th    Fourth Sunday in Lent—Mothering Sunday**

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

Thur.19th    10.00am      Holy Communion at Alderley

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

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.26th    10.00am      Holy Communion at Alderley

### **Sun.29th    Palm Sunday**

8.00am      *Holy Communion at Alderley*  
9.45am      Palm Sunday Service at Alderley  
11.15am     *Palm Sunday Service 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>
Dec 7 <sup>th</sup>	237.00	36.20		273.20
Dec 14 <sup>th</sup>	337.00	74.00		411.00
Dec 21 <sup>st</sup>	654.30	202.83		857.13
Dec 24/25	928.66	535.84		1464.50
Dec 28 <sup>th</sup>	159.00	8.00		167.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2294.96</b>	<b>856.87</b>	<b>515.00</b>	<b>3687.83</b>

<b>Week Ending</b>	<b>Gift Aid Envelopes</b>	<b>Non-Gift Aid &amp; Misc Cash</b>	<b>Standing Orders</b>	<b>Total</b>
Jan 4 <sup>th</sup>	242.95	41.70		284.65
Jan 11 <sup>th</sup>	236.70	25.82		262.52
Jan 18 <sup>th</sup>	228.00	38.50		266.50
Jan 25 <sup>th</sup>	360.75	42.75		403.50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1068.40</b>	<b>148.77</b>	<b>825.00</b>	<b>2042.17</b>

### **'WANTED'**

The Church urgently requires a replacement folding Wheelchair in good working order and a powerful Vacuum cleaner.

Please contact the Wardens—Fiona, Peter or Michael .

## **SOCIAL COMMITTEE**

We held a **Bridge Drive** on Monday February 9<sup>th</sup> as planned. It was a successful afternoon making a profit after expenses of £348.60. This money is set on side to help buy the much needed vacuum cleaner for the church, if we cannot find one elsewhere. Thank you to everybody who helped.

We now plan to have a **Soup and Cheese Lunch** on March 11<sup>th</sup> basically for the Tea Party people and all who are interested. It will be held at Alderley Cottage, using Helen's kitchen, 12.00 pm for 12.30pm. Please let me know if you would like to join in,

### **The Willows Nursing Home**

The **Willows Nursing Home** is going to hold an **Easter Bonnet Day**. Has anyone got a Straw Hat or a Sun hat, surplus to requirements? We plan to decorate them. Many of the residents enjoy taking part in activities. I help with some of them. We are also looking for people prepared to visit occasionally. A different face around the home is so welcome.

## **ST MARY'S WALKING GROUP**

**Saturday 11th April – 10.00am start prompt**

**Starting Point:** Aldlington Road Car Park  
Bollington



**Map:** OS Explorer 268

**Grid Ref:** SJ 930781

**Length:** 7 miles with some short hills

**Further info:** Bring drinks and packed lunch

**Contact:** Terry Fones 01625 820738

Please note this is a week later than normal due to Easter



## **Women's World Day of Prayer**

**Friday 6th March 2015**

**2.00pm**

**at St. Pius Church, Alderley Edge**

Women's World Day of Prayer is a global, ecumenical movement of informed prayer and prayerful action, organised and led by Christian women who call the faithful together on the first Friday in March each year to observe a common day of prayer and who, in many countries, have a continuing relationship in prayer and service.

The service is written by a different country each year and that country then becomes the focus of the world's prayers on the day itself, which begins as dawn breaks over the islands of Tonga in the Pacific and continues across each continent until the last services of this special day are held back in the Pacific, on the islands of Samoa, circling the world in prayer for 36 hours.

The origins of Women's World Day of Prayer date back to the 19th century when Christian women in the USA and Canada initiated a variety of cooperative activities in support of women's involvement in mission, at home and abroad.

The service for 2015 has been written by the Christian women of the Bahamas.

### **OASIS**

Thank you for your generous response for Christmas Treats. Together with donations from friends and family every family attending the Christmas Lunch went home with a gift for Christmas Day. There were a lot of tears. The need continues for clothing and bedding. If you can help please leave donations in the basket at church or in the big greenhouse at the back of Shortacre not outside exposed to the elements .I have had to do a lot of drying out !

Thank you for your continuing support and my best wishes for 2015.

**Anne Robinson (01625 584377)**

## THANK YOU

Many, many thanks to everyone who so generously donated to the Candle Fund and the decorations, stripped their gardens of greenery and helped in the preparation of the Church for Advent and Christmas. Also my grateful thanks to everyone who so kindly helped in January to clear away the decorations.

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 all so much.

**Michael Penlington**

## POSITION OF RECTOR'S SECRETARY

This position currently held by Judy Swales is to become vacant when she retires in June 2015.

### EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST IN THE POSITION

should be referred to the WARDENS in the first instance.

Please consider if you or someone you know might be a suitable candidate



## MOTHERS' UNION



## "Arighi Bianchi"

**Speaker: Nick Bianchi**

Wednesday 15th April at 2.00pm

All Welcome

## **Choir Jumble Sale 2015**

For various reasons we will not be holding a Jumble Sale this year. However we are quite willing to receive any items that anyone wants to donate and these will be sold at the 'Reading Room', Over Alderley Jumble Sale on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March at 12 noon.

Any left over goods will be collected by Canon Wyatt's team from Salford (St Paul's and Christchurch) with whom we have had continual contact for 40 years.

**Noni Watkins. Tel: 01625 583336**

## **NETHER ALDERLEY 200 CLUB** **December draw winners**

1 <sup>st</sup> prize	Mrs I Jamieson
2 <sup>nd</sup> prize	Mr G Woolley
3 <sup>rd</sup> prize	Mrs I Jamieson

Congratulations to all the winners

## **NETHER ALDERLEY 200 CLUB** **January draw winners**

1 <sup>st</sup> prize	Mrs Joyce Davis
2 <sup>nd</sup> prize	Mrs Fiona Ablett
3 <sup>rd</sup> prize	Mrs Joyce Davis

Congratulations to all the winners  
Next draw, 1st March 2015

This list of winners proves that if you buy a double ticket you have a double chance of winning!! Don't forget .....the more subscribers we have the greater the amount of prize money we can pay out!

A cheque for £219.12 has been paid to the Treasurer. This was the profit from the first three months of the 200 Club!!

## **Easter Flowers**

If you would like to make a donation towards the cost of the Lillies and Easter Flowers in Church in memory of loved ones please place your donation in an envelope with your name and the names of those to be remembered clearly written on the outside. Envelopes to be handed to Michael Penlington or placed in the appropriate box just inside the entrance to the Church. Cheques to be made payable to; 'Alderley Church Flower Fund'

A list of loved ones to be remembered will be put in Church and published in the Parish Magazine.

## **Decoration of the Church for Easter**

We shall be decorating the church for Easter on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> April from 10.00am Your help and gifts of foliage will be greatly appreciated. Please contact Michael Penlington (01625 530084) if you have foliage or wish to help.

## **Christmas Quiz 2014**



Thank you to all the participants, due to your generosity we made enough to support the purchase of the Christmas Trees for Church.

Congratulations to Ian & Liz Brocklehurst on winning the quiz – your £20 M&S voucher is on its way to you!

Answers can be found at [alderleychurch.co.uk/xmasquiz](http://alderleychurch.co.uk/xmasquiz)

Be prepared for the 2015 quiz!

## Social Group Outing to Wilmslow Garden Centre

28<sup>th</sup> January 2015

All roads lead to?? On this occasion we converged from many directions to Wilmslow Garden Centre. Some knew, because they had been before, the short cuts to the restaurant. Others were guided through most sections of the centre, ultimately sighting their destination, where a warm welcome was received. A separate area had been put at our disposal, where we settled down to the specials board and the menu, big decisions?!

We resumed animated conversations ranging from Women Bishops particularly Rt.Rev.Libby Lane; locum ministers; special ref. to Rectors and Rev. John Murray; the weather and many other subjects.

In an amazingly short time we received our meal, considering there were 19 people, all with different orders. No complaints except 'there is too much on my plate'. Service with a smile!

Coffee and more gossip then we all drifted away. Some wandered through the store 'only looking'!!

All eventually retired happy. Grateful thanks to Janet for the organisation of the event.

When and where next time? Watch this space! **John Durnall.**

I received this lovely letter from Victoria at The Oasis Centre last week.

I felt everybody should be fully aware of the wonderful work achieved at the Centre. We all need to realise how necessary our help is to everybody, in whatever capacity, at the centre. St Mary's is the only group who helps them in any great way.

It would be wonderful if everybody could consider giving in some way. The money I collect at the Coffee is one thing, but only concerns a few.

Victoria is really grateful for any dry food stuff. They make up food parcels for people who see them who are really vulnerable. **Janet**

*Hello Janet,*

*Thank you so much for the wonderful and generous donation of £80 from your Social Committee coffee morning. Please thank everyone involved and please let them know what a massive difference your donations make to the way we serve and love the most needy and vulnerable in our Gorton community.*

*God bless you all! Victoria x*

## THE FAIR MAIDS OF FEBRUARY - SNOWDROPS

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



January - snowy, grey, frozen, Winter triumphant; February, cold, frosty, windy, rainy, but with the first signs of Spring appearing in the gardens of our land as the snowdrops appear, pushing aside dead leaves and tough grass. Drifts of fragile white flowers standing up indomitably to all the early spring can bring forth.

Beautiful white little flowers, with markings in shades of green and sometimes yellow. There are over 450 cultivars of galanthus, and all are scented, some more than others, some smelling of honey, some of bitter almonds, some with mossy fragrance. A few days' sunshine will bring the tight buds into flower, and once open, they bloom for several weeks to delight and cheer the winter-weary soul.

Many snowdrops were originally collected in the countries of Asia Minor; some reached this country from the front lines of the Crimean War, where snowdrops grew profusely around the Army camps, and were sent home in bundles to their families by the soldiers serving there.

An old name for the snowdrop is "snow-piercer", but it was the Reverend Francis Kilvert, the Victorian parson, who during his ministry travelled the country with his horse and his sermons and his famous Diary, and who evidently had a keen eye for the wonder and beauty of God's creation, who named this little flower "The Fair Maid of February". This name also refers to an old custom connected with the Feast of the Purification of Saint Mary the Virgin, celebrated on February 2nd, when village maidens would gather bunches of snowdrops and wear them as symbols of purity.

Though everyone is happy to have snowdrops growing and blowing in their gardens, there are even today many country folk, especially those with a trickle of Celtic blood flowing through their veins, who will not countenance the presence of the snowdrop in their homes, believing that this brings ill-luck to the house. One lady of this parish was some years ago presented with a pot of snowdrops and promptly suffered a series of domestic calamities, and she insisted that the snowdrops be removed from her sitting room forthwith.

But in a green, still corner of St Mary's churchyard, the Fair Maids of February stand in drifts under the oak tree, and between the old gravestones, gallant in the cold Spring light, and the long-gone worshippers, now perhaps sometimes looking down from their celestial home at the dust of their mortality lying in the quiet earth, must surely rejoice as they see the Fair Maids of February blooming white and steadfast and beautiful among the old grey stones of an earthly resting place.

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

DATE	TIME	SIDESMEN	LECTOR
Mar 1 <sup>st</sup>	9.45am	Mr S Welsh & Mrs J Martin	Mrs C Stephenson
	6.30pm	Mr A Dodd	Mrs A Dodd
8 <sup>th</sup>	8.00am	Mr R Akester	
	9:45am	Mr A Claridge & Mrs J Adamson	Miss S Vardon
	6.30pm	Mrs A Robinson	Mr P Bean
15 <sup>th</sup>	8.00am	Mr P Bean	
	9.45am	Mr R Akester & Mrs R Dyas	Mrs E Jackson
	6.30pm	Mr P Reynolds	Mr P Reynolds
22 <sup>nd</sup>	8.00am	Mr H Wright	
	9.45am	Mr J Ratchford & Mrs G Beeley	Mrs J Lee
	6.30pm	Mrs F Robinson	Mrs F Robinson
29 <sup>th</sup>	8.00am	Mr R Akester	
	9.45am	Mr G Hilton & Mr M Wilkinson	Mrs S-J Wilkinson
	6.30pm	Mr G Barrie	Mr P Bean
Apr 5 <sup>th</sup>	9.45am	Mr G Woolley & Mrs W Liddle	Mrs W Liddle

**FROM THE REGISTERS**

***Funeral***

Friday 23rd January

Peter Rigg

**FLOWER ROTA**

Mar 1st                      Lent

Mar 8th                      Lent

Mar 15th                     Lent

Mar 22nd                    Lent

Mar 29th                    Lent

**MAGAZINE CONTRIBUTIONS**

The deadline for the next magazine is **Thursday March 19th 2015**

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Large format copies of the magazine are available.