

Isles of Scilly



Methodist Church Circuit

IN TOUCH

December

2009



January

2010

Chairman of the District

Revd. Steven Wild M.A.

Minister

Revd. Charles R. Gibbs (422406)

Local Preachers

Barbara Hasler Len Michell

Nell Didlick Gordon Bird

Christopher Savill

Circuit Stewards

Mrs Christine Savill (423563)

Mr Mervyn Bird (423117)

Mrs Beryl Read (422977)

Mr Len Michell (422409)

Circuit Treasurer Mr Christopher Savill (423563)

Circuit Meeting Secretary Mrs Rose Didlick

Church Stewards St. Mary's

Mr Philip Lethbridge Mrs Claire Jenkins

Mrs June Lethbridge Mrs Sue Williams

Mrs Beryl Read

St. Martin's Mr Derek Perkins

St. Mary's

Treasurer Mrs Sue Williams (422605)

Church Council Secretary Mrs Beryl Read

Property Secretary Mrs Mary Ratcliffe

Organist Mr Len Michell (422409)

St. Martin's

Church Council Secretary Mrs Jackie Perkins

Church Treasurer Mr Alan Terry

Organist Mr Rodney Ashford (423109)

Connexional Link Person Mrs Beryl Read (422977)

Gift Aid Secretary Mrs Stephanie Bird (423117)

Some thoughts from the Manse

As you receive this edition of 'In Touch' I expect you will be preparing for your Christmas festivities, so I take this opportunity to ask you the question, **'What have we done to Christmas?'**

I noticed that, even here on the Isles of Scilly, Christmas cards were on sale from the end of October. Here, just like in other parts of Britain, we are well and truly 'caught up' in the spend all you can, eat all you can, and for some, drink all you can celebrations that we claim brighten up the months of winter darkness.



Sometimes I almost despair at what we have done with God's gift of the Christmas story, and I can only conclude that John in his Gospel is quite right when he writes **'He was in the world, and the world was made by Him. . . . The world did not recognize Him!'**

Why is it that our Christmas celebrations have so little to say about God sharing in all that makes us human? And why is it that some 2000 years after The Word became flesh we today seem to have settled for a time of celebration which seems to have much to say about 'party, party, party', . . . but has little to say about the inner security and the gift of lasting peace, which is the real message that the story of Christmas can bring to our world today.

The Gospels of Matthew and Luke are where we find the traditional story of Christmas which we love so much. I, just like you, have been brought up from my childhood to enjoy the celebrations of Christmas. I, like you, have childhood memories of church nativities with angels and with the wise men bringing their gifts to the baby Jesus. For as long as I can remember each year I have listened to the story of Mary giving birth to her first child in a back-street stable and I, just like all of you, have enjoyed the giving of gifts, the hustle and bustle of the preparations and all the food and the drink that goes with it.

But, as the years have gone by, I have become more and more

aware of what I now consider to be 'The Tragedy of Christmas' . . . the great 'Missed Opportunity' for us and this world to make a fresh start in our lives today.

But I am indeed truly thankful that the words from John do meet my inner needs. For there, almost hidden away by all that Christmas has become is that deep and profound message of hope given to this world in the opening verses of John's Gospel. **'THE WORD HAS BECOME FLESH'**. In Jesus, God has shared in all that makes us human! We now can be quite sure that our loving God knows all that we may face upon our journey. He knows our doubts and our fears and today, in the power of His Holy Spirit, He offers to all His gifts of forgiveness, reconciliation, lasting peace, and His promise that 'in Jesus' He can and will make all things new!

Have a wonderful Christmas! Continue to love one another and think again about that helpless baby born in a stableFor in Him God has shared in all that makes us human.

Yours in His service *Charles R. Gibbs*

DO NOT MISS THIS SPECIAL EVENT

Thursday 31st of December

From 10pm a buffet supper will be served at the Manse, by invitation of Rev and Mrs Gibbs.

(please let Rev Gibbs know if you are coming by the 24th)

Followed by a 40 minute

SPECIAL WATCHNIGHT SERVICE

STARTING AT 11.15pm

*We thank God for all that is past and
trust Him for all that is to come!*

***START THE NEW YEAR IN FELLOWSHIP
WITH ONE ANOTHER!***

News from St Martin's

With most Church members favouring an Autumn holiday, October and early November always see a depleted congregation. However, some people took their break a little later than usual, so the Church Council meeting had almost one hundred percent attendance. It was good to learn that St Martin's Chapel finances are in good shape and further improvements to the building can be readily funded. In addition to regular weekly giving, as a church we are blessed with good support for fund-raising initiatives and some donations from regular holiday makers.

The united Service of Remembrance was held at the Chapel this year, with Revd. C. Gibbs leading worship. He invited a visiting Anglican vicar to conduct the Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial where the poppy wreath was laid by a member of St Martin's coastguard team. Having failed to cross to St Martin's on the previous Sunday because of weather conditions, Charlie was relieved that the seas of Saturday November 7th had abated, to allow his attendance at what is a special time for large and small communities nationwide.

As the people of St Martin's were saddened by the death of Mrs Barbara Clarke, so they were cheered by the return home from mainland hospitals of Rosie and baby Graham. Rosie and Ian, their families and friends have experienced such an anxious time since Graham's very premature birth in mid July. We thank God for answered prayers and continue to hold this little child in our thoughts.

As we look towards Advent and Christmas, we send our good wishes to all readers of In Touch.

Heather



A Christmas smile!

When Santa Claus talks to children, he always has to be ready for anything. In one store he asked a little boy; 'Well, and have you written me a letter to tell me what you would like for Christmas?'

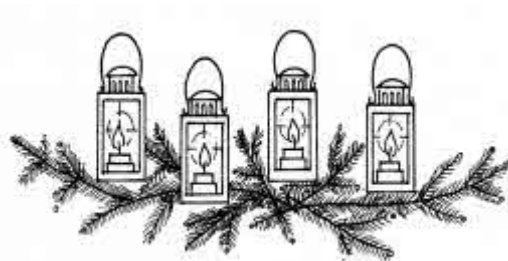
'Didn't you get my e-mail?' came the reply.

A Christmas Prayer

Lord, as I enter into the fast-paced season ahead, help me walk slowly and quietly. Let me stop and listen to the angels sing of the greatest news ever told. Let my heart, mind and soul join the chorus. "Glory in the Highest!! The Messiah has been born!"

Among all the bright sparkling lights and cheery holiday tunes, let my spirit travel once again towards Bethlehem to honour and worship Jesus, my King, The Prince of Peace, the Lord of Hosts, Mighty Counsellor, Son of God, the Lamb. All Your love, mercy and power somehow made flesh in the tiny form of a humble baby born in a manger. Let me worship the only one who is worthy to take our sin away and open the gates of all eternity!

Anon



Forgotten?

Gifts to buy and cards to send,
Shopping lists that never end,
Time's so short, so much to do,
There's no room for such as You.
Laden down with gifts galore
As we rush from store to store;
Who's the next one on the list?
Is there anyone we've missed?
In the corner, half forgotten,
Lies the Son of Man begotten.
Born into this world's dark night,
He offers us His gift of light.
If there's no room, will we reject Him?
With hands so full, can we accept Him?

Author unknown

The Twelve Days of Christmas

When we hear 'The Twelve days of Christmas' we tend to think of the song of that title. But do you know its origins and meanings?

It is more than just a list of 12 silly gifts. Between 1558 and 1829 it was illegal to be a Catholic in Britain and they were prohibited by law from practising their faith either in public or in private.

The Twelve Days of Christmas was written as one of the 'catechism songs' to help young Catholics learn the basics of their Christian faith. In short, it was a memory aid. Since the song sounded like rhyming nonsense, young Catholics could sing it without fear of imprisonment as the authorities would not know it was a religious song.

- ❖ '*On the first day of Christmas my true love gave to me, a partridge in a pear tree*'. The 'true love' mentioned in the song doesn't refer to an earthly suitor but to the One who loves all people, God. The 'me' who receives the presents refers to every person willing to receive what the Greatest Giver has to offer. The 'partridge in a pear tree' was Jesus Christ who died on a tree as a gift from God.
- ❖ The '*two turtle doves*' are the Old and New Testaments – another gift from God.
- ❖ The '*three French hens*' were faith, hope and love – the three gifts of the spirit that abide. Our faith is what sustains us. Hope is what we receive as a result of our faith. God's love is forever.
- ❖ The '*four calling birds*' were the four Gospels, which sing the song of salvation through Jesus Christ.
- ❖ The '*five golden rings*' were the first five books of the Bible.
- ❖ The '*six geese a-laying*' were the six days of creation.
- ❖ The '*seven swans a-swimming*' were seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- ❖ The '*eight maids a-milking*' were the eight beatitudes. They are eight statements reminding us of the virtues Christ taught and the way to implement them.
- ❖ The '*nine ladies dancing*' were nine fruits of the Holy Spirit.
- ❖ The '*ten lords a-leaping*' were the Ten Commandments.
- ❖ The '*eleven pipers piping*' were the eleven faithful disciples.
- ❖ The '*twelve drummers drumming*' were twelve points of the Apostles' Creed.

This is reproduced from the magazine of Trinity Methodist Church, Royton. We thank them for allowing us to use it.

Methodist Church Library

In the August issue of 'In Touch' I reviewed a book about Susannah Wesley borrowed from our library of Christian literature, housed in the Methodist Church hall. As librarian, I had hoped to arouse interest in the books available and that one was borrowed soon after. Sadly my request for other reviews has not borne fruit so far! With the work currently being done to the hall the books are not accessible for a while. However, I still hope to gain an increase in borrowing in due course. The collection is rich in important religious texts which deserve to be read and will help us to explore our faith.



There is a strong biography section and again I want to recommend one of its titles. It is by a well known author from times past, H. V. Morton, famous for his books in which he travelled 'In the Steps', chiefly of Jesus Christ and of St Paul. In this book '*Women of the Bible*' he gives us excellent pictures of females who took great roles in Biblical times, often much against the practice of their days, when they were expected to be 'seen and not heard'! Strong women of the Old Testament times predominate in the stories, but of course, for us today, the lives of those known to, or impacting on, the life of Christ for good or evil, are of even greater significance.

The author's reflections are, I believe, as relevant today as when they were first published seventy years ago! When the library is re-installed in the hall this book will be placed in the section called 'Biography'. Good reading friends! Please let us have your recommendations!

Gwen Clarkson

Another Christmas smile!

At Christmas, friends come and go but relatives tend to accumulate.

When good goats become good gifts

In 2004 the best-selling Christmas presents in the UK were iPods and goats. The Methodist Relief and Development Fund (MRDF) asks why the goats are going out of favour.

When iPods hit the top of the best-selling Christmas gifts list in 2004 there was no surprise. But when they were joined by goats, a few eyebrows were raised.

As a nation we fell in love with the non-commercial nature of alternative giving schemes, and over 43,000 'virtual' goats were given that Christmas. Five years on it feels as if the romance may have faded. Arguments about the transparency of such schemes have divided the charity sector against itself, leaving the rest of us wondering if it really is possible to buy a truly ethical gift.

A recent argument against the many virtual gift catalogues available has been that the popularity of certain gifts can lead to an over-supply of unwanted animals which can contribute to environmental problems such as deforestation. However, MRDF has successfully promoted an alternative giving scheme over the last two years and deliberately chooses gifts that have been requested by its overseas partner organizations. This ensures that the items in its catalogues go to people who really need and want them, in the context of a project that is committed to environmental sustainability.

For instance, the goats featured in MRDF's catalogue for Christmas 2009 are locally sourced in Ethiopia. They are kept by the local community as a source of nutritious milk. Alongside the training and support provided by MRDF's local partner, they will help give women an alternative source of income for years to come.

Anna Rogers, MRDF's Communications Officer, says: "We are working hard to make sure that people who choose something from our 'Extraordinary Gifts' catalogue know exactly what they are buying. When you buy an Extraordinary Gift from MRDF you can be confident that the item is needed and will make a real difference to the life of someone living in a poor community – as well as delighting the person you give it to."

To find out about MRDF's all-new 'Extraordinary Gifts' collection for Christmas 2009, visit www.mrdf.org.uk or phone 020 7224 4814 to request a catalogue.

Who was Good King Wenceslas?

The historical St Wenceslaus was Duke Vaclav of Bohemia. He was born around 907 near Prague and was brought up in the Christian faith by his grandmother although the rest of his family were pagans. He became king when he was 18 and believed in putting his faith into action which made him unpopular with many Bohemian nobles. He was murdered on September 28th in 929 or 935 (sources differ) by his brother who wanted to supplant him as 'Prince of Bohemia'. He was later canonized because of his saintly life.

He is the patron saint of the Czech Republic and, since 2000 his Saint's feast day on September 28th has been a national holiday.

The popular Christmas carol was first published in 'Carols for Christmas-tide' in 1853. The words were written by John Mason Neale (1818 – 1866) and were based on a legend about the saint. The significance of the Feast of Stephen (December 26th) is that that day traditionally was when people gave gifts to those less fortunate than themselves. The tune to the carol is that of a traditional Scandinavian spring carol.

Anne



Christmas Quiz

Unscramble the letters to find things associated with Christmas.



The answers are on page 16.

1. TEEOTLSMI
2. EMENMACIT
3. ORASCL
4. YTEKRU
5. EKARCCSR
6. YLOHL
7. VIITTNYA
8. STENSERP
9. GDDPUIN
10. HSIGTL
11. TKGSCION
12. DASCRI
13. GLLOYEU
14. SPEARIT
15. MMOTNPAEI
16. WNNASOM
17. ERFREIT
18. NOCAROETIS
19. NISTEL
20. BSAUELB

A passage found in Mrs M. E. Ryder's papers to her daughter Sue Ryder

I needed the quiet, so he drew me aside,
Into the shadows where we could confide,
Away from the hustle, where all day long,
I hurried and worried, when active and strong.

I needed the quiet though at first I rebelled,
But gently, so gently my cross he upheld
And whispered, so sweetly of Spiritual things,
Though weakened in body, my spirit took wings
To heights never dreamed of when active and gay,
He loved me so greatly he drew me away.

I needed the quiet, no prison, my bed,
But a beautiful valley of blessing instead.
A place to grow richer, in Jesus to hide
I needed the quiet, so he drew me aside.

Contributed by Mary Ratcliffe



Birthday Greetings

Our best wishes for December birthdays go to Margaret Crane, Louis Asten, Keith Grossett, Pauline Jackson Cocking, Margaret Jones, Steve Ottery, Gladys Perkins, Merryn Smith and Josh Smith.

We also send greetings to those with January birthdays – Gordon Bird, Stephanie Bird, John Goody, Martin Parker, Anthea Roberts,

Margaret Smith, Tony Thomas, William Thomas, Nathan Thomas and Liz Turner.

We hope you all have a wonderful day and if we have missed anyone we send you our greetings too.

A New Year Resolution

Take time for ten things

1. Take time for WORK

It is the price of success

2. Take time for THOUGHT

It is the source of strength

3. Take time for PLAY

It is the secret of youth

4. Take time for READING

It is the foundation of knowledge

5. Take time for PRAYER

It washes the dust of Earth from your eyes

6. Take time for your FRIENDS

They are the source of happiness

7. Take time for LOVE

It is the only sacrament of life

8. Take time for DREAMING

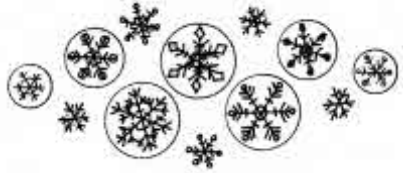
It draws the soul up to the stars

9. Take time for LAUGHTER

That helps to carry the burden of life

10. Take time for PLANNING

Then you will also have time for the first nine things



Yet another Christmas smile!

A small boy came home from school after being given a part in the Nativity play. 'I'm going to be one of the Three Wise Guys' he announced!

Love (Romans **12**: vv 9-16)

9. Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil, cling to what is good.
10. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honour one another above yourselves.
11. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord.
12. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.
13. Share with God's people who are in need. Practise hospitality.
14. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.
15. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.
16. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

Comment:

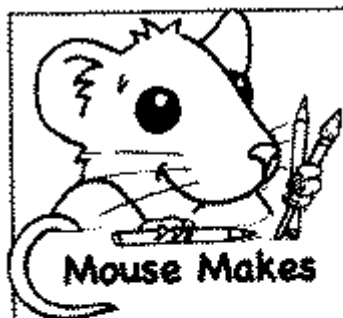
We're looking at this great list of exhortations through the lens of the opening words, 'Love must be sincere' (i.e. unfeigned and not hypocritical). The next exhortation (or encouragement) is (v 10) 'Be devoted to one another in brotherly love'. And, coupled with that, 'Honour one another above yourselves'. So, how can our love be more sincere? Answer: in the way we treat one another in the body of Christ - by being devoted to one another, honouring one another above ourselves.

Someone once spoke in my hearing (I can't remember who, where or when) about having done a study on the number of times Paul uses the phrase, 'one another'. The number of times is huge. There's one simple answer to the question, Why? It's this: because how we are 'with one another' speaks volumes to those who are outside the church as well as those who are inside. 'By this shall all men know that you are my disciples.'

Prayer:

Father, I pray that that Your Church may grow in its likeness to Christ, and that we may, as your family, see one another as You see each of us - adopted into your family through, and bought with the price of, the redeeming blood of Christ.

Taken from www.standrewsbookshop.co.uk/pages/1589.htm and contributed by Mary Ratcliffe



Mouse Makes

Glue this sheet to a piece of thin card and carefully cut out around the stable shape. Colour in and hang on the Christmas tree. Add glitter for extra sparkle.

Away in a manger,
no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus
laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky
looked down where he lay
The little Lord Jesus
asleep on the hay.

Read the Christmas
story in **Matthew**
1:18-25 and
Luke
1:26-2:20



PRAYER CHAIN

In the first instance please contact Charlie Gibbs (422406) and then please phone me, Mary Ratcliffe (423030). I will then pass on the prayer request to the first name in each of the groups.

Mervyn & Stephanie Bird **423117**
Sue Williams 422605
Keith & Sam Grossett 422503
Merryn & Vicki Smith 423360

Claire Jenkins **423546**
Neil & Rose Didlick 422838
Margaret Snowball 422896
Gordon & Fiona Bird 422550
Sonia Crompton 422854

Barbara Hasler **422208**
Margaret Crane 422596
Len & Sylvia Michell 422409
Pamela Thomas 423115
June Lethbridge 422404

William & Tricia Thomas **423144**
Peter Laverock 423692
Beryl Read 422977
Gwen Clarkson 423106

For the Prayer Chain to be effective it is essential that requests are forwarded to the person in the column beneath your name, if that person is not available please ring the next person on the list.

Some dates for 2010

- December 31st 2009** *11.15pm* Watch-night Service
(refreshments will be served at the Manse from 10pm)
- January 10th** *10.30am* United Covenant Service at St Mary's
Chapel (followed by lunch)
- January 15th** (pm) New Year's party on St Martin's
- April 1st** *4pm* Carreg Dhu Gardens. Picnic tea followed by Maundy
Thursday outdoor all-age event.
- April 2nd** *10.30am* Good Friday Hymns and readings at St Mary's
Chapel
6pm Good Friday hymns and readings at St Martin's
Chapel
- April 4th** *10.30am* Easter Celebration Service at St Mary's Chapel
6pm Easter Celebration Service at St Martin's Chapel
8pm Easter Special Songs of Praise Celebration at St
Mary's Chapel
- April 15th** *6.30pm* Circuit Rally at St Mary's Chapel (with the Revd.
Lord Leslie Griffiths from London)
- May 6th & 7th** *7pm* St Mary's. Fellowship and Study led by the
Revd. Professor Peter Stephens
- May 9th** *10.30am* All-age Worship, St Mary's led by Revd. Gibbs.
Guest preacher Peter Stephens
6pm St Martin's Celebration Service led by Revd. Gibbs.
Guest preacher Peter Stephens
- May 16th** *10.30am* All-age Worship at St Mary's led by Revd. C.
Gibbs
12noon - 12.30pm St Mary's Annual Church meeting
followed at 12.45pm by a Bring and Share Lunch.
- May 23rd** *8pm* Special Pentecost Songs of Praise at St Mary's Chapel
- June 20th** *8pm* Special Celebration Songs of Praise at St Mary's
Chapel
- July 18th** *8pm* Special 'Sankey Hymn' Songs of Praise at St Mary's
Chapel
- August 15th** *8pm* Special 'Holiday Songs of Praise' at St Mary's Chapel
- September 5th** *6pm* St Martin's Harvest Thanksgiving

- September 6th** 6pm St Martin's Harvest Sale of produce and supper
- September 19th** 10.30am St Mary's Harvest Thanksgiving
8pm St Mary's Special Harvest Songs of Praise
- October 3rd** 11am St Martin's Special 'Harvest of the Sea' Thanksgiving
- October 10th** 6pm St Mary's 'Harvest of the Sea' Thanksgiving (followed by fish & chip supper)



From the Editorial Team

We wish all our readers whether on Scilly or the mainland a joyful Christmas and a peaceful New Year. We hope you will make a New Year resolution to contribute to *In Touch* during 2010.

Anne Gurr manda.gurr@btinternet.com

Val Parker martinandval.parker@virgin.net

Mary Ratcliffe maryratcliffe@live.com

Some of the material in this issue has come from www.parishpump.co.uk and www.methodistchurch/momentum. We thank these websites for providing material for magazine editors to use.

Visit our Circuit website www.scillymethodists.co.uk

Diary Dates for December

- 4th 7.30 pm, The Manse, Friday Fellowship (Who were Mary and Martha of Bethany?)
12th 7.30 pm, Concert, St Mary's Methodist Church
19th 6.30 pm, St Martin's Christmas Tree Party, Reading Room
21st Musical evening, Parish Church
22nd Carol singing
24th 11.00 pm, Midnight Communion, St Mary's Methodist Church
25th 10.30 am, Family Service, St Mary's
31st 11.15 pm, St Mary's, Watch-night Service preceded by refreshments in the Manse from 10.00 pm

Diary Dates for January

- 15th (pm) St Martin's New Year Party
15th 7.30 pm, The Manse, Friday Fellowship (Who was Moses?)
22nd 7.30 pm, The Manse, Friday Fellowship (Who was Daniel?)
29th 7.30 pm, The Manse, Friday Fellowship (Who was the Samaritan woman at the well?)

Answers to the quiz

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. Mistletoe | 2. Mincemeat |
| 3. Carols | 4. Turkey |
| 5. Crackers | 6. Holly |
| 7. Nativity | 8. Presents |
| 9. Pudding | 10. Lights |
| 11. Stocking | 12. Cards |
| 13. Yule log | 14. Parties |
| 15. Pantomime | 16. Snowman |
| 17. Fir tree | 18. Decorations |
| 19. Tinsel | 20. Baubles |

SERVICES FOR JANUARY

St Mary's

3rd	9.15am	<i>Leader:</i> Neil Didlick <i>Preacher:</i> Revd. Charlie Gibbs <i>Holy Communion</i>
	11.00 am	Revd. Charlie Gibbs
	6.30 pm	Len Michell
10th	10.30 am	United Covenant Service
	6.30 pm	Revd. Charlie Gibbs
17th	9.15 am	<i>Leader:</i> Neil Didlick <i>Preacher:</i> Barbara Hasler
	11.00 am	Revd. Charlie Gibbs
	6.30 pm	Mr Trevor Adams
24th	9.15 am	<i>Leader:</i> Mervyn Bird <i>Preacher:</i> Revd. Charlie Gibbs
	11.00 am	Revd. Charlie Gibbs <i>Holy Communion</i>
	6.30 pm	Gordon Bird
31st	9.15 am	<i>Leader:</i> Beryl Read <i>Preacher:</i> Revd. Charlie Gibbs <i>Holy Communion</i>
	11.00 am	Neil Didlick
	6.30 pm	Len Michell

St Martin's

3rd	11.00 am	Christopher Savill
10th	10.30 am	United Covenant Service (on St Mary's)
17th	3.00 pm	Revd. Charlie Gibbs
24th	11.00 am	Barbara Hasler
31st	3.00 pm	Revd. Charlie Gibbs <i>Holy Communion</i>

Park House

3rd	4.00 pm	Revd. Charlie Gibbs
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DECEMBER SERVICES

St Mary's

6th	9.15 am	<i>Leader:</i> William Thomas <i>Preacher:</i> Revd. Charlie Gibbs
	11.00 am	Barbara Hasler
	6.30 pm	Gordon Bird
13th	9.15 am	<i>Leader:</i> Beryl Read <i>Preacher:</i> Barbara Hasler
	11.00 am	Revd. Charlie Gibbs
	6.30 pm	Len Michell
20th	10.30 am	<i>Leader:</i> Mervyn Bird <i>Preacher:</i> Neil Didlick
	6.30 pm	Carol Service
27th	10.30 am	<i>Leader:</i> Beryl Read <i>Preacher:</i> Revd. Charlie Gibbs

St Martin's

6th	11.00 am	Neil Didlick
13th	3.00 pm	Revd. Charlie Gibbs <i>Holy Communion</i>
20th	3.00 pm	Carol Service
27th	11.00 am	Christopher Savill

Park House

6th	4.00 pm	Revd. Charlie Gibbs
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