

St Matthew's News

The Parish of Edgeley and Cheadle Heath



Sunday Service Times

Sunday 1st December

10:30^{am} *Whole Parish Worship*

All Other Sundays

9:30^{am} *Formal Service*

11:15^{am} *Less Formal Service
(with children's groups)*

Image: Aleksandr Kutsayev;FreeDigitalPhotos.net

links to Facebook and Twitter can be found on our home page

www.edgeleyandcheadleheath.org.uk

I would think that by now you're all ready for Christmas. All the presents bought and possibly wrapped. The tinsel and lights out ready to decorate the tree. The food in the fridge or freezer. Friends invited to join in the festivities. And the only thing to wait for is to finish work, the kids to break up from school, and then the fun can start. That might be you.

But if you're like me, none of that is true. I've possibly done one or two things on my list, but the majority of it is still to be undertaken. And the whole lot just weighs heavy. Planning for future events can be daunting.

At St. Matthew's we have big plans. Plans to create a church building that will become a great shared space for our local community. Plans to make our present building more flexible. Plans to build facilities that can be used for the benefit of the local area. We'll see some of those plans coming to completion in the next months. Others will

take years to accomplish. Those plans really are daunting. Huge.

It's very easy to be so caught up in the enormity of the task ahead that

we miss the reason we began in the first place. It's so easy to see the plans and to forget why we are planning. That's true of our plans at St. Matthew's, but it can also be true of our celebration of Christmas.

So can I invite you to stop what you're doing? Take a deep breath. And join us as we refocus upon the reason for the season. As we use this Christmas time to remember that God loved the world (that includes you and me) so much that he gave his one and only Son. As we reflect on that great gift in the next weeks it will put all those other plans into their proper context.

Take care and God bless through this season and in the New Year.



David the Vicar

Details correct at going to press.

*Check our website, Facebook, Twitter
for changes and info about events in and around the parish.*

Introducing... Mary

I am living in wonder tonight, gazing at the face of my newborn son. Can you feel my love and my joy, even here in this bare place? All of these months, I have felt anxiety and fear, joy and amazement. I knew I was carrying the most special child but I have worried about what people would think of me; what would my parents think; what about Joseph?

Yet I need not have worried: this sweet man also heard the voice of the Lord and gathered me to him, kept both me and my child safe, even on the long journey to Bethlehem, where my child was born this night.

At the moment I am reading the book of Isaiah and I am in wonder at the life my son has in front of him, that he will fulfil all the promises that my God has made for us. Tonight, I feel both young and old, recalling these words of prophesy echoing through history.

My son: my little one, so warm and snug yet with such a journey

in front of you. I will always be there to watch over you and pray for you. You will belong to the whole world, the whole universe, but tonight you belong in my arms. I will love you and nurse you; I will play with you and smile at you. I will pick you up when you fall; I will care for your every need. I am your mother and I will always be with you. Wherever your journey takes you, I will be there, even to the darkness that is to come. One day, my heart will break – but not today. Today, it is the first day, the start of a celebration that will shake the very stars! You are here amongst us; the day has come at last.

So, as I lay my baby back in his manger, I dream my dreams for him. Above all, my dream is for my son to be remembered, for him to live on in the hearts, minds and souls of his people.

Will you remember him this night?

Pam Robinson



Shining a Light on Torch Trust(4) the Christian organisation with a vision for people with sight loss



Torch Trust has been working with blind and partially sighted people for 53 years. Based in Leicestershire, the organisation has an amazing history and an international reach. This time we hear about Torch groups. In this final article, we explore its work in Africa.

TORCH IN AFRICA

Around sixty Torch Fellowship groups meet in Malawi and across the border in Mozambique, to encourage and support blind and partially sighted people who are literally the poorest of the poor. There are frequent droughts and famines; and blind people are especially vulnerable to robbers taking even the little they have. Many are victims of the widespread eye disease known as River Blindness.

Every year Torch International Leader Janet Stafford makes extended trips to Malawi, doing her best to visit many of the groups, distributing aid and

bringing Bible teaching and spiritual encouragement, holding clinics to distribute basic medical items. She spends time in Torch House in Malawi, too, where Bible portions and other Christian literature in Braille and giant print is produced by national staff in a number of African languages.

All the services Torch offers are open to people of any faith or none. To know more, email info@torchtrust.org or visit the website www.torchtrust.org.

The Torch quarterly magazine is available on the table at the back of church. **Lin Ball**

December Events

Details of all Christmas events are available on the website, on leaflets and in this magazine. They will also be promoted on the Facebook Page and Twitter throughout December.

Have fun taking part in any or all of the activities and remember: God is for life, not just for Christmas. We look forward to seeing you in January.

Happy New Year!

Christmas Fair

Our Christmas Fair, held on Saturday 23rd November, was a great success. Thank you to everyone who helped, donated and came along.

This year, we had several craft stalls from our community alongside our traditional cakes, raffles and tombolas. The Irish coffee was a huge hit, as always. Children enjoyed their visit to Santa,



as well as painting faces – and toast! We were



proud to support Cancer Research UK, who had a very successful day with us.



To remind people about the reason for the season, we invited everyone to follow the trail of stars which led them to the



nativity scene, where they were encouraged to write prayers and leave them in the manger. These prayers were offered up during

both services the next day.

The Christmas Fair raised just over £1,000, which will help us as a church and to continue our growing support to our local community. Huge thanks go to all involved.



Pam Robinson



Team Talk

Here's what's happening in the ministries this month:

Social & Community: A big *thank you* to all who are willing to give their time and effort at this very busy time of year.

As we look to the future, we are hoping to run another first aid course for the community in the New Year, so watch this space for dates.

Discipleship: In the autumn the **Alpha Money Course** took place over four lunchtimes in church. Attendance was modest and composed entirely of church people, but everyone agreed that the course was both helpful and enjoyable. In the near future we will consider how we will run the course in a modified form, and how we can attract a wider audience.

The **homegroups** have finished their sessions on 'Praying with the Psalms' and have moved on to the epistle of James. In December we are planning to have three sessions on Advent themes. Anyone who doesn't usually come to a homegroup but would like to make this short

course part of their Advent devotions will be very welcome at any of the groups. Watch out for further details in church.

Children & Young People:

At **Toddle Time** we are a volunteer down but we have had an approach from one of our neighbours; we hope that she will be keen to stay. We are in discussions with Stockport College to see whether we can provide some extra placement opportunities for the students on childcare study courses. Please pray for both of these opportunities.

Bubblegum Christmas with local Year 6 children and Drop 'n' Shop: we need volunteers for both of these outreach projects, so that we can provide the best that we can as a church.

The Light Party at Stockport Baptist Church was a success, despite the small number of children attending (11).

We have the plans for **Sunday Club's** involvement in this year's carol service, so prayers for a consistent group of children would be great.

Communications:

Linda begins her internet sabbatical in December. Arthur has kindly stepped in to run the website, Facebook Page and Twitter feed. Pam will edit the January magazine so please send articles to her this month.

We are all a-twitter at the news that St Matthew's has reached the magic 500 number - 503 followers on Twitter, to be precise! This means that people from Australia to Zambia know all about our activities here in the Parish of Edgeley and Cheadle Heath.

Drop & Shop

We'll have the kids whilst you do the shopping on **Saturday, 7th December!** Only £1 per child. 1-3.30^{pm}. **Register by 1st Dec.**

Join us for **Christmas Carols around the pubs of**

Edgeley and Cheadle Heath.

Meet at St Matthew's at 7^{pm} on **Fri, 20th December.**



The Wellspring

We are collecting gifts for The Wellspring. We need parcels to the value of £2 containing: toiletries/socks/gloves/chocolates, etc. Please label Male or Female.



Introducing Mary Image: Jomphong; FreeDigitalPhotos.net

What's on in December

Sunday 1st

First Sunday of Advent

10:30 Whole Parish Worship

Lead: David ~ Preach: Lucy

12:30 Bring & Share Lunch

at Mark & Sara's

Monday 2nd

13:00 Stockport Sling Meet

in church

Tuesday 3rd

8:30 Home Group

13:30 Socially Yours *in church*

19:45 PCC *in the Vicarage*

Wednesday 4th

10:00 Holy Communion

19:30 Christmas Remembrance

Service with Turners

19:45 Home Group

Thursday 5th

19:30 BFG *in the Vicarage*

Friday 6th

9:30 Toddle Time *in church*

13:00 Bubblegum Christmas

in church

19:00 Choir Practice *in church*

Saturday 7th

8:30 Prayer Breakfast *in church*

10:00 Saturday Café *in church*

13:00 Drop 'n' Shop

at Stockport Baptist Church

Sunday 8th

Second Sunday of Advent

9:30 Holy Communion

Lead: Julie ~ Preach: David

11:15 Morning Worship

Lead: David Brown ~ Preach: David

13:00 & 13:45 Baptism Services

Tuesday 10th

8:30 Home Group

13:30 Socially Yours

Christmas Meal *(NOT in church)*

Wednesday 13th

Magazine articles due

10:00 Holy Communion

19:45 Home Groups

Thursday 12th

19:30 Mothers' Union

Christmas Party in church

Friday 14th

9:30 Toddle Time *in church*

19:00 Choir Practice *in church*

Saturday 14th

10:00 Saturday Café *in church*

with Sponsored Carol Singing

in aid of St Ann's Hospice

General Synod

Lois Haslam's report is now available to read on the website.

Sunday 15th

Third Sunday of Advent

9:30 Holy Communion

Lead: David ~ Preach: Heather

11:15 Holy Communion

Lead: David ~ Preach: Heather

200 Club Subs Due

Tuesday 17th

8:30 Home Group

Wednesday 18th

10:00 Holy Communion

14:00 St. Matt's School Service

19:45 Home Groups

Friday 20th

9:30 Toddle Time *in church*

19:00 Carolling round the pubs
meet in church

Saturday 21st

10:00 Saturday Café *in church*

Sunday 22nd

Fourth Sunday of Advent

9:30 Holy Communion

Lead & Preach: David

11:15 All Age Signed Carol Service

Lead: Lucy ~ Preach: David

Tuesday 24th Christmas Eve

16:00 Christingle

23:00 Midnight Mass

Wednesday 25^h Christmas Day

10:30 All Age

Christmas Celebration

Sunday 29th

9:30 Teen Breakfast (TBC)

in the vicarage

9:30 Holy Communion

Lead: Peter ~ Preach: Sue

11:15 All Age Service

Lead: Heather - Preach: David B^{rown}

Looking ahead

Sunday 5th January

10:30 Whole Parish Worship

Lead: Sue ~ Preach: David

November Funeral

*Gladys Webb, Sylvia Owen,
Landon Murkin, David Stirling*

November Baptism

*Will Jackson, Harvey Skinner
Amelia Allsop-Brown*

November Wedding

*Peter Manders
& Natalie Coward*

Website: edgeleyandchaddleheath.org.uk/

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