

OUTLOOK



December
2022

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The Parish of St Thomas Mellor

Registered Charity No. 1130414

Email office@mellorchurch.org

Parish Office The Parish Centre, Church Road, Mellor, Stockport SK65LX

For all enquiries and bookings for the Church & Parish Centre

Phone: 0161 484 5079

The office is open Monday to Thursday 9.30am to 12.30pm

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Richard Elliott, Alex Eggeman, David Horsfall,
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Kathryn Maxwell, (Parish Safeguarding Officer)

Diocesan/Deanery Judith Shiel / Mary Heijbroek

Articles for Outlook should be sent to the Editor (preferably by email)
melloroutlooksubmissions@gmail.com
The deadline for the January issue is December 8th please.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR DECEMBER 2022

4 Sun	8.30 am	Holy Communion
2nd Sunday of Advent	10.00 am	Parish Communion
	6.30 pm	Compline (Parish Centre)

5 Mon	7.30 pm	Peter Cunningham Concert (Parish Centre)
7 Wed	10.00 am	Holy Communion (Parish Centre)
10 Sat	7.30 pm	Vintage and the All Stars Band FMPC (Parish Centre)

11 Sun	8.30 am	Holy Communion
3rd Sunday of Advent	10.00 am	Parish Communion
	6.30 pm	Contemplative Evening Prayer (Parish Centre)

12 Mon	10.45-12 noon	Coffee & Chat (Parish Centre)
14 Wed	10.00 am	Holy Communion (Parish Centre)
14 Wed	7.30 pm	Women's Evening Fellowship Christmas Party (Parish Centre.)

18 Sun	8.30 am	Holy Communion
4th Sunday of Advent	10.00 am	Parish Communion
	6.30 pm	Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols

21 Wed	10.00 am	Holy Communion (Parish Centre)
23 Fri		Parish Office Closed until Jan3rd
24 Sat	5.00 pm	Crib & Toy Service
Christmas Eve	11.30 pm	Midnight Mass

25 Sun		
Christmas Day	10.00 am	Parish Communion

Christmas Coffee and Chat 12th December led by the Prayer Group 10.45am - 12 noon

Prayer Group meets every Monday 10.30 to 11.00 am (Parish Centre)

Women's Evening Fellowship meets on the second Wednesday at 7:30pm (Parish Centre)

Toddlers Group meets on Thursday each week 10.00 am to 11.30 am (Parish Centre)

Knit and Natter meets on Thursday each week 10.30 am to 12 noon (Parish Centre)

The Choir practises each week on Friday at 6.30 pm



View from the Plain

The recent introductory articles have all been headed 'View from the hill' – to back up the incessant description of St Thomas as 'the church on the hill' – so here is a view from an alternative location. Hilltops have always been important for sacred sites, and also for practical ones. In ancient cosmology, when heaven and the gods were 'up there' hilltops were nearer to them and a good place to approach the gods; in secular terms, being on a hilltop meant that you could see the enemy coming! While some of the congregation do live high up in Mellor, and profit from the wonderful surroundings and views, many like me live in the suburban areas of Marple Bridge and Compstall. We don't have the views, but we do have better transport services and some shops! Balance is important in our lives, both individually and corporately. We all know how important it is to balance various aspects of our lives – work, family, church and other organisations and leisure. As a church community we need to compromise and try to accommodate everyone and provide a spiritual focus for everyone who comes. Of course, no individual church can offer every sort of worship from tambourines and drums to High Mass – each church must arrive at an identity which it can generally practice. People who wish to attend a church, or try one out, probably 'shop around' as we all tend to do when we arrive in a new place, but we need to be as generous as possible. We also need to be make services as easy to follow as possible for visitors and new arrivals, without 'dumbing down' for the resident congregation who need to grow and develop their spiritual life – another balance to be worked on.

Judith Shiel



Office closure

Please note the Parish Office will close for Christmas and the New Year on Thursday 22nd December at 12.30pm and re-open on Tuesday 3rd January at 9.30am.

A New Vicar

If you wish to see where the PCC are up to in finding a new vicar you can visit 'Chester Diocese Clergy Vacancies' on Google. Click on 'Clergy Vacancies', Scroll down until you get to 'Full Time Vicar St Thomas Mellor,' Closing date 15 Jan 2023. Click on 'Full time Vicar' and scroll down you can click on the 'Parish Profile.'



Have your say on LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

Before the end of November you should receive an A4 envelope with the above label. This is the local Neighbourhood Forum survey asking your opinions about our local area and its future. These will form the basis of a 'local plan', which has legal status. High Lane already has such a plan and it has helped planners understand the characteristics of the area and that has informed planning decisions. Indeed the Local Plans have to be consulted on planning issues, making sure local people's voices are being heard!

More information and an on-line version of the survey can be found on the MMMC website: www.MMMC.org.uk. As well as your views, your help would be welcome too!

BOOK REVIEW

Alternative Advent

Advent – the season of hoping, waiting, looking forward to Christmas with its message of a new beginning and of peace.

‘The Advent of Peace: a Gospel Journey to Christmas’ by Mary C. Grey
(no.104 in the church library)

The book considers the journey through Advent and Christmas and on to Epiphany in the light of Luke’s gospel; which she considers to focus on peace and reconciliation. Peace is needed at many levels – personal, family, social, national and international and also among churches. Bethlehem at the time of Jesus’ birth was a poor place, in a land oppressed by the occupying power of Rome. Now it is part of the small area of the Holy Land belonging to Palestinians. At the 1948 creation of the modern state of Israel the land was divided, with the Palestinian people retaining a smaller area than had originally been suggested. Now Bethlehem is surrounded by the security wall, with checkpoints manned by soldiers, and passage in and out is not easy. Many Palestinian Christians have left to emigrate, leaving a declining number who cannot do so – fewer and fewer Christians remain in the land of Christ’s birth. This is a book well worth reading, to bring past and present together.



‘The Art of Peace’ by David Cole (library no. 105) deals with peace in the heart and mind of the individual, focusing on the practice of silence and contemplative prayer. Silence is not much valued in our culture, surrounded as we are with constant noise, although the practice of mindfulness has certainly become quite popular. Silent prayer may also seem strange as church services are also a series of continuous sounds. Neither is wrong, or the whole answer, but they need to be held in balance. Another useful book to browse through.

PLEASE sign out the books in the spring-clip files when you borrow them.

Judith Shiel



Mellor Birds

Maggie Williams

Alison on Beacon View in Marple nearly got a photograph of a pair of parakeets feeding on the berries of a rowan tree by their home.

Joan C. has had a blackbird return to feed on her pyracantha berries. Apparently during Covid she was kept entertained watching the blackbirds.

Pat and Ann in Mill Brow regularly have several hundred Jackdaws flying down their valley after 3.30pm. They have asked the local RSPB group where they are going to roost, to no avail. Do you know?

They find the Tawny Owls are very noisy when it gets dark. Barn Owls tend to be active at dusk, short eared owls in the day time, and little owls at any time.



The pink footed geese are still flying over from Martin Mere to the Wash at about 9am. They also fly in the opposite direction. Pat says that he thinks for every 5 skeins of geese going to the east one skein will come back to the west. His relative at Wells-Next-The-Sea in Norfolk says she has 80,000 pink footed geese there. On Saturday I went to the organ and oboe concert at Church. John Le Grove was playing the organ spectacularly as is usual and the oboist, Zoe Glossop, was equally good. John, who is a mine of information, was telling me one day after practising that J S Bach, who for him, is the best ever composer / musician was also very caring and gave a present of a linnet, a singing bird, to his wife, Anna Magdalena (1721-1750). They had a devoted, happy marriage. He had 20 children (with his two wives) of which only 10 survived.



Good news is that the Redwings are back from Scandinavia with their red armpits and creamy supercilium-eyebrow, roaming the holly and yew trees stripping them of their berries going 'Zeep zeep'.



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Knit and Natter

Knit and natterers meet on Thursdays between 10.30am and 12 noon in the Parish Centre. Over the last year much has been made:- angels for christenings, hearts for the hospital, an octopus with metre long tentacles, exquisite matinee jackets now called baby cardigans, crocheted rugs, knitted rugs, birds, jumpers etc. We have some very colourful crocheted pram rugs for sale £5 and various coloured baby cardigans for £8. Proceeds go to the Church and Parish Centre. If you would like to make a purchase either come and see us on a Thursday or come to coffee in the Parish Centre on Sundays at 11.15 am and Catherine can help or phone 427 2406. Knit and natterers can often solve ones problems. Whether its how to pick up a dropped stitch or where to buy Lemon Meringue Pie filling with the lemon capsule !!

Panic Buying

Probably the wise and provident among us have already completed the Christmas shopping (and probably the wrapping up too), but for the rest who still have presents to get it's a good idea to think about shopping ethically, so that the producers are rewarded as well as the recipients. Probably also, a lot of us turn to charity Christmas catalogues to choose gifts, which is good, as all charities must need all the help they can get at the moment. However some charities sell goods which are also Fair Traded which is a double bonus. Amnesty International (website www.amnestyshop.org.uk) has ornaments, towels, gift wrapping, bags, socks and tea lights to choose from. Chocolate, food gift sets (oil and vinegar, seasoning, etc.) and socks can be bought from The Leprosy Mission (www.theleprosymissionshop.com) and Oxfam (www.onlineshop.oxfam.org.uk) has socks, jewellery, greetings cards and bags. All these sites are worth a look. The Ethical Superstore (www.ethicalsuperstore.com) is useful at any time of year. It stocks a vast range of groceries, household products, clothing, beauty products and lots of things for children. So Just Shop (www.sojustshop.com) has ethical and Fair Trade gifts and recycled wrapping paper (which you can re-recycle again afterwards!) Traidcraft is probably best known for its tea, coffee, chocolate and so on, but also has clothing, jewellery, cards and gifts (some edible) – definitely worth a browse.

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REVERSE ADVENT 2022

Once again at **Mellor** we will celebrate advent by giving, rather than receiving.

On each of the four Sundays of Advent, we shall collect items which will be given to the **Wellspring** and **Wood Street Mission**. These will then be distributed to many needy children and adults in the area.

27 Nov – Chocolates and Selection boxes

4 Dec – Children's Hats, scarves and gloves.

11 Dec – Toiletries.

18 Dec – Men's underwear. Adult hats, scarves and gloves.

A box will be in Church on each of the Sundays, which will be blessed at the morning service.

Many thanks for your support.



Stockport Food Bank is also having a **Reverse Advent collection**. As you may know, we always have a collection box for the food bank, in the Parish Centre. And we all know how Advent calendars work - you open a window with a chocolate or some other goody every day through December, until Christmas. But, especially this year, we need to remember the families who are struggling to feed themselves. Stockport Food Bank would like donations of long-life food items including milk, juice, tinned food, Christmas treats, snacks and toiletries including soap, shampoo, toothbrushes and toothpaste. But no Christmas puddings or Christmas fayre containing alcohol, and they currently have an excess of pasta and baked beans. So can we suggest a theme each week of December ;

Week 1 - cans and bottles,

Week 2 - dry goods,

Week 3 toiletries and cleaning materials,

Week 4 Treats.

Thank you.



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A Reader's Meanderings

Guy Nicholls

Greetings Gentle Readers. I must say it has been a long time since I typed those words - since relinquishing my position as Editor of Mellor's favourite magazine. I have been extremely flattered by the number of people I have met out and about who have had very kind words to say about my tenure as Editor and their enjoyment of Outlook magazine in general and 'Meanderings' in particular. One kind lady asked me a while ago if I was ever going to write for Outlook again. I thanked her for her concern and told her that because I have written so much about myself, who, after all, is the only person I know much about, I was concerned that I would be repeating myself. "I really don't think that would matter", she replied. "Thank you, kind lady, and I hope you are right." I can assure you that the talent and efficiency which lay behind producing that magazine rested with my darling wife and co-Editor, Anthea, (as did the rest of my very happy and contented married life). Anthea was so bright and clever, she had difficulty coming down to my intellectual level. However, she seemed to think it was worth making the effort. I thank the good Lord for that. In view of what I have just said, I'm sure readers will forgive me for indulging in some personal memories but as my beloved Anthea was *Mrs Editor* of your favourite magazine for so long and was really the power behind its success, you will, no doubt, pardon the

indulgence. Anthea and I met in London in 1968 at a party at a flat in Cromwell Road which she shared with four other girls. One of the other girls, Pippa, worked for El Al, the Israeli Airline Company in publicity and I met her when I got a temporary job with El Al myself. The skill needed to get these jobs was taught me by the kind permission of eight years in the Royal Navy before becoming a professional actor. We had almost a year's training to read and type morse code at a very fast speed. Fifteen of us started, seven of us finished. But typing speed and earphone dictation was one of the best things that happened to me. When acting work was not available, I could be in work in a matter of hours. My agency in Manchester said that firms, mainly law firms, kept ringing to see if Guy was available. As it happened, a lot of the time, he wasn't. Back to our meeting. At the end of the party in Cromwell Road, Bob and I ended up staying the night. Don't panic, Gentle Readers. There was loads of laughter, drinking, pillow throwing in the one huge room all the beds were in. And I assure you, that was it. Bob and I slept on the floor. Honest! However, on the bus back to our flat, my friend Bob asked me if there was anyone there I fancied. I replied, 'Yes. Anthea.' The rest is history. I'll carry on with more of the story if you are interested.





Women's Evening Fellowship

Photographs taken by Margaret Smith. Thank you



Pudding Party

A huge thank you to all those who shared in any way in our Pudding Party last week. The amount raised on the night, taken together with the proceeds of a previous raffle, totalled an incredible £643 for Walthew House Charity a magnificent effort. We have also received many comments about how much people enjoyed the evening which was great - we are after all, a Fellowship!

Another date for your calendars. Wednesday 14th December at 7.30.pm is our annual Christmas Party. Looking forward to seeing you then, Lesley Fatcher

Walthew House Charity for those who are Deaf and Blind in Stockport



Captain Ken

Ken Owen

It was good to note that the PCC Charitable Committee had voted once again to include the Mission to Seafarers, as one of the four included in the Church's Charitable Giving Scheme. It really is a most remarkable charity, providing great help to seafarers and their families, all over the world.



One of the great changes that took place during my sea career, was the improvement in communication, both with the shore and other ships.

In the 1960s I was the 3rd Officer of a lovely cargo liner 'Rhexenor' and bound for Australia. As was always required on our voyages, the ship had to be able to lower a life boat anywhere in mid ocean, leave the crew to sail around, and then return to the ship. On this particular occasion, this was being conducted in mid Indian Ocean, with no other ships in sight.



Ken's painting

Of our four life boats, only one had an engine, and this was the one that the Second Officer was instructed to test. When we had launched the boat, the Second Mate proceeded to steam away from the ship, while our Captain left me in charge on the Bridge while he retired to his room. While he was down, I began to get a bit worried as the life boat headed away from us until she had almost disappeared. I had taken the precaution of noting the compass bearing of her disappearance, and so when the Captain returned to the Bridge, we were able to steer this bearing until we could actually see the life boat again. It seemed that the Second officer had misunderstood his orders as he continued to steam away from us.

This was before the days of VHF radio, so we could only communicate by flags. "Hoist the signal for 'Come back' " said the Captain. I told him, I'd look it up in the International Code book, but he said "Don't be stupid, just hoist C above B, which obviously means Come Back." In the meanwhile a French cargo liner similar to our own ship, arrived on the scene and asked (by flashing Morse code,) if she could be of any help. "Tell her to go away", said the

Captain. But she still hung around, refusing to leave us. It then occurred to me that she would have consulted her International Code book to see what CB meant. I looked it up and discovered it meant 'I have spotted an airship, at time indicated, bearing indicated'. No wonder the French ship wasn't going to miss the fun. We did eventually recover the life boat successfully, but not before the Captain suggested we prepare a straight jacket for the Second Mate.

Later, a good friend of mine was approaching a port in an old banger of a ship with serious engine trouble, and steering problems. In order to advise other ships to keep clear he looked up in the International Code book for 'Please keep clear, I am manoeuvring with difficulty' L A M. He took the flags out of the flag locker and having bent them together, handed them to a seaman to hoist. Unfortunately, the seaman hoisted them upside down, and he found himself flying M A L and approaching a very suspicious warship whilst flying 'Stop your engines or I will open fire.' There's a lot to be said for the VHF mobile phone !

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Congratulations to Tom Hallam, Cameron Major, Josh Poke, Dan Watson, Drew Bickerton and Oli Rogerson for making the cut for the England Lacrosse San Diego squad for Summer 2023.

CRIB and TOY Service Christmas Eve 2022

Please bring a gift to be given to needy children at The
Wood Street Mission.

It is more important than ever that we support these
children in this practical way.

Your support is much appreciated.

Greetings from St. Peters' Hale

As some of you know, this autumn I've been 'on safari' on the distant Cheshire plains of the Church of England (Altrincham, well, Hale actually) as part of a discernment process for ministry in the Church.



A few people have asked me where I've disappeared to, so I thought I'd fill you in at this halfway stage.

The main purpose of a placement is to experience how another congregation organises and expresses their faith and worship, whilst shedding a bit more light on how I might fit into another setting other than our own, let's say 'distinctive' character at St Thomas'. Depending on how this goes, I'll be waiting to hear about the next stages of the process; a series of 'conversations' with Diocesan Discernment teams. In actual fact, it's been very interesting finding out how other congregations have coped with the last few years, and also what their hopes are for the future. Suffice to say we are all dealing with very similar challenges of resources, both institutional and personal. Prayerful and imaginative solutions are being sought all across the diocese, and in many ways we should be encouraged that we are not alone. Besides which, I've always found it a salutary experience to find you have to rely on Gods' grace; and much better to apply patience and a good dollop of hope. (Certainly true for discernment, anyway!) So with a hearty halloo from St Peters' and a good deal of excitement for this season of Advent approaching, I'll look forward to being back up on the Hills in the new year.

God Bless

Clare Jackson

Christmas Eve Crib & Toy Service at St. Thomas' Church Mellor



The timeless beauty of the Christmas story will be told with carols in candlelight. Children are invited to dress as angels, sheep and shepherds.



Time: 5pm Christmas Eve

As there is only one service, numbers are restricted to 200 with free tickets from Eventbrite (<https://bit.ly/3fkeV9b>) or Parish Centre Office.

If you would like your child to have help with costume, the Vestry will be open from 4.15. Presents for children brought by the congregation will be taken to the Wood Street Mission to help make their Christmas special.





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Laughs with Lynda.

I just quit my job at the Helium factory.
I won't be spoken to in that tone.

I'm only familiar with twenty five letters in the English Language.
I don't know why.

I loaned my Grandfather Clock to my friend and he still hasn't
returned it.....
He owes me big time.

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PCC meeting in October

October's PCC meeting was special in that we considered which three charities we would like to support through St Thomas' charitable giving scheme, for this coming year. This was publicised beforehand, in Outlook and in church, and people were asked if they would like to nominate charities. A total of 5 charities were nominated, so PCC members voted and the three chosen for support were the Haematology and Transplant Unit at Christie's Hospital, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Mission to Seafarers. (A decision was already made that we will continue our support to Educaid on an ongoing basis, due to our special link with that charity.) It was also agreed that we will publicise the fund, and details of how people can donate.

We heard that St Thomas' application to become a member of the Inclusive Church movement had officially been accepted, and we will be discussing ways to take this initiative forward in our church.

An important item we discussed was the fact that we're updating our fire safety regulations in church. A survey has been completed, which says the maximum safe limit for the number of people in church is 200. This has implications for well-attended events, most immediately the Crib Service on Christmas Eve. There's never enough room for everyone who wants to come anyway, but we will have to start being strict about limiting the numbers. It was agreed the best way to do this was to make it a ticketed event, through Eventbrite, so we know how many people will attend. Sadly, anyone without a ticket will not be able to come into the church.

Also, this year will be the last one that Chris Mann produces, after over 20 years of hard work and making magic at this special event, and Chris was thanked for all his hard work and dedication over the years. This year's Crib Service will also be a pared-down event, without script and casting, taking the form of a tableau, but this will be publicised beforehand too.

As a Grandma and a member of the public I would like to express our affectionate appreciation to Chris and Co. for the wonderful start to Christmas each year for our grandchildren and the others who attended The Crib Service





Youthful Days in Mellor - 1910 to 1926. T.F. Oldham. Part 3.

Most farms kept pigs, and hens, ducks and geese were much commoner than now, but I can't remember many sheep in those days. One objectionable event was the pig killing, and one often had to endure the pitiful and prolonged squealing which could be heard all over the village. The cereal crops were oats and barley, and swedes and kale were grown for winter feed. I don't think the farmers bought any winter feed; they were very self sufficient and independent. Some of the smaller farmers cut their meadows entirely with scythes, and even where a machine was used, a scythe cut was made around the edges of the field so that the machine could be turned round without the horse trampling down the grass. The farmers were milk producers, and the whole village was supplied by them. No supplies came in from outside, and I don't think milk bottles had been thought of then. The farmers, or their wives, would come round with large cans on milk "floats" and ladle it out in pint measures into their customers' jugs. A number of farmers, the bigger milk producers, would take milk to Marple station every morning in their floats. Their horses would trot down Longhurst Lane, walk slowly up Brabyns Brow and draw up in the station yard, and the large cans would be trundled across the line to the down platform, from where they would continue their journey to the Manchester dairies.



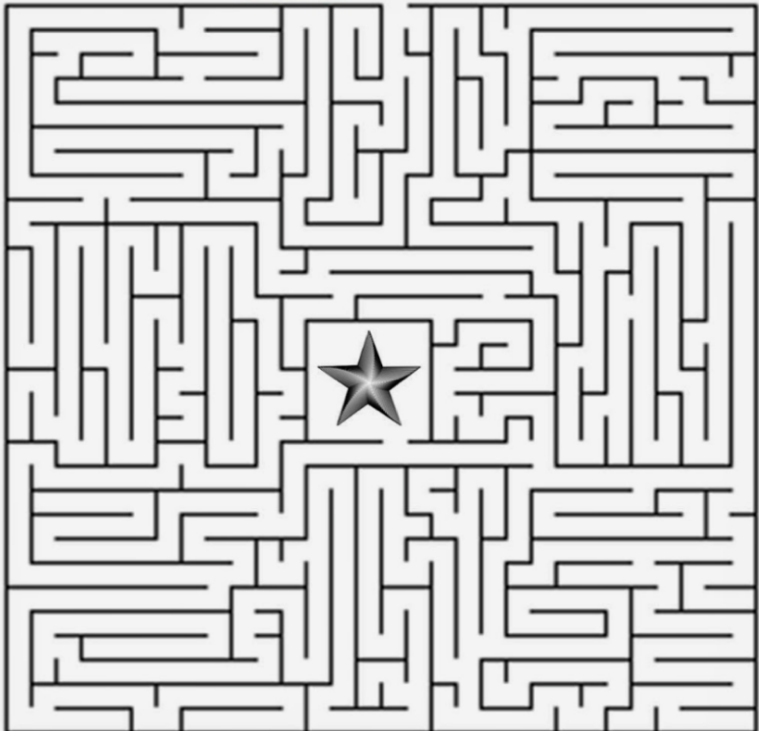
It is difficult to pinpoint ones earliest recollections in life, but I do remember hiding behind my mother's skirts to avoid being fussed by an elderly woman called Mrs Willing, who was a Dutchwoman and a widow who lived in the cottage next to Newhouse Hill Chapel, I was terrified of this woman who had an ugly face and spoke in a loud, guttural voice. When I was about 3 my father found that a boy of the same age lived in a stone house in Gibb Lane (we, ourselves, came to live in this house later), and he arranged for me to play with him. It was very convenient as I could run across the meadow when the grass was not high, and crawl through a hole in the hedge into their back garden. This boy's name was Norman Wilson; and we were to

remain best friends until we were 12 years old, when the Wilson family moved to London. Norman had two older brothers, Arthur and Eric, who always seemed very big to me. The Wilson family were the first people I had close contact with away from my family, and I can remember that even at such a young age I made comparisons between them and my parents, and one of these was that my mother provided much better meals than Mrs Wilson.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY PAGE

Christmas Maze

Can you help the wise men follow the star to find Jesus?





Peter Cunningham Concert

Monday December 5th Mellor Church at 7.30pm

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IN AID OF HALLE EDUCATION

Moor End W.I.

In September we welcomed back Keith Gordon - "The Weatherman of New Mills" - who explained the Greenhouse effect to the members. He then looked at climate predictions and compared these to the actual climate records. He certainly had our ladies contemplating the current state of the globe!

Geoff Scargill visited us again in October and gave an extremely thought provoking presentation entitled "Lucky Hitler". A psychopath, addicted to cocaine - he was in power for 12 years during which over 70 million people died. He had personal magnetism and was very popular in Germany at first, but was lucky to survive over 42 separate attempts on his life. Eventually in 1945, and to the relief of most of the western world, Hitler committed suicide alongside his lover - then wife, Eva Braun. Geoff was our last guest speaker of 2022.

On a lighter note we held a successful AGM in November, together with a Hot Pot supper. At the end of the month we enjoyed a Christmas meal at Peruga, at the local golf club.

Our final meeting in December will be our Christmas party, with our usual delicious home made buffet, together with entertainment from members. The ladies of Moor End W.I. wish all readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy, Peaceful 2023. We look forward to meeting again in January in the Parish Centre. Come and join us!

Pauline Hutchins (01663 745105)

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Raspberry Wreath Pavlova Christmas Recipe

Jill Baker

A lovely dessert for Christmas. Meringues are always excellent for using up egg whites if you have been making an egg custard for the trifle or to go with the Christmas pudding. This recipe was originally from Donna Hay. A meringue can be made a day or two before needed as can the optional coulis. If the nuts are chopped before hand too on the day all you need to do is whip the cream and assemble. This feeds 6 to 8 people.

Ingredients

4 medium egg whites

240g caster sugar

1tsp lemon juice

1 tsp cornflour

300g raspberries, I use frozen - defrost

300 ml whipping cream

1 tsp vanilla paste optional

100g chopped pistachios (looks lovely but optional)

Raspberry Coulis

150g raspberries

1tbsp caster sugar.

1 tsp lemon juice



Preheat the oven to 150C gas 2. Prepare a flat baking sheet with a piece of baking parchment, draw a 25 cm circle on it using a plate or bowl as a guide. You can use a dab of meringue to hold the baking paper down.

Make the coulis which you will fold through the meringue by heating the raspberries sugar and lemon juice together for 2-3 mins, you just want them to release their juices and then pass through a sieve and leave to cool completely.

Whisk the egg whites to soft peaks, then whisk in the caster sugar a few tablespoons at a time beating well between each addition. Beat for around 3 mins until stiff and shiny peaks. Then beat in cornflour and lemon juice.

Whisk for a couple of minutes. Then drizzle half the coulis over the meringue and fold to form ripples, Then with a large spoon dot blobs of meringue around the circle. Swirl and connect to form a wreath shape leaving dips rather than peaks to hold cream and raspberries. Reduce the heat to 140C GM 1 and cook for 1½ hours until the outside is crisp then leave to cool in the oven for at least another hour. To serve, whip the cream with the vanilla and then spread around the wreath. Dot with raspberries, scatter chopped pistachios over and drizzle with the remaining coulis.

Ed: This looked spectacular and Christmassy when finished. Tastes good too. MW & MML



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THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Chris Mann

As a producer for BBC Religious Programmes, Christmas was always a busy time of year. Broadcasting Midnight Mass from the Gulf during the first Iraq War was memorable. The troops were singing carols sitting in rows along the wings of Tomados with me vision mixing “*Silent Night*” whilst wearing a nuclear chemical and biological suit. This struck me as the ultimate tragic irony - albeit with



everybody there determined to celebrate the birth of the bringer of peace.



One Christmas I was making **Songs of Praise** from Jamaica and as we were packing up, I heard of Fr. Albert, a Roman Catholic priest, who lived with inhabitants of Kingston’s vast rubbish tip called Riverton City. I just had to get the crew to unpack the gear and go! There, by chance, I discovered Fr.

Albert organizing a Nativity procession across the tip complete with



Mary and a newborn baby on a donkey, young goats on shoulders, and happy children, some wearing paper crowns. My presenter, between gagging at the stench, did the commentary. I've never seen such a joyful re-enactment of Christ's birth – and in such an unlikely place - the ultimate celebration of the gift of God's son for each and every one of us. I've encountered many priests in my time, but Fr. Albert was the most Christ-like I've met.

The next day Fr. Albert took me to a building he had set up to look after lepers. Because they had no feeling, some had their ears nibbled by rats as they slept. One, who had cauliflower ears, was also blind and was desperate to meet Fr. Albert because he had a birthday present for him – he had learnt “*The Desiderata*” off by heart to recite to him. For me it was a life-changing moment - to witness the fruit of Fr. Albert's ministry amidst such extreme poverty. Here is an extract of the poem:

<i>Go placidly amid the noise and haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible without surrender be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even the dull and the ignorant; they too have their story.</i>	<i>Therefore be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be, and whatever your labours and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life keep peace with your soul. With all its sham, drudgery, and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world.</i>
--	--

*You are a child of the universe,
no less than the trees and the stars;
you have a right to be here.
And whether or not it is clear to you,
no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.*

Max Ehrmann, 1927

Prayer for the Month

I open the stable door



I kneel before the infant;



I worship with the shepherds;

I adore the Christ child;

I give my love with Mary and Joseph;



I wonder at the 'word made flesh';

I am aware of the love of God;

I sing glory with the angels;

I offer my gifts with the wise men;



I receive the living Lord;

I hold him in my hands;

I go on my way rejoicing,

Glorifying and Praising God



David Adam in 'Celtic Daily Prayer'



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CHURCH ROTAS

Stewards Rota

Date	8.30am	10.00am	6.30pm
4 Dec	P Cooke	D Jelleyman & A Sanders	J Shiel
11 Dec	A Mason	S McAllister & C Starling	R Holt
18 Dec	J Butterworth	P Long & A Muller	A. Shah
25 Dec	No service	R & J Elliot	No service
1 Jan	P. Cooke	A Allcard & M Lowe	J Shiel

Please arrange your own substitute. If this is not possible email
Rachel - redwards@nhs.net

Flower Rota

4 Dec Advent no flowers	1 Jan Christmas flowers
11 Dec Advent. no flowers	8 Jan Lesley Futchter
18 Dec Christmas Flowers	15 Jan Louise Driver
25 Dec Christmas flowers	22 Jan Emma Houghton
	29 Jan Gwenn Perks

If you wish to change a date, need a key or have any query, please contact Jill Baker (07881 902533 or jillbaker427@hotmail.com).

Holy Dusters

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11 Dec	A Allcard & J Jones
18 Dec	L & J Futchter
8 Jan	H Kennedy & M Lowe

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