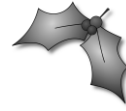


**The Grapevine
News for the parishes of
The Carlford Benefice
December 2015**

“Wishing you a Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year”



“DECEMBER – A TRADITIONAL MONTH”



It certainly is. In December traditions threaten to take over our lives – Advent, Christmas, New Year's Eve each have their own, as do families, churches and villages. We change them at our peril and worry about doing them properly. Yet how often do we stop to ask how old they are or where and how they originated, let alone why we follow them, often slavishly? Does it matter?

There were probably celebrations to mark the winter solstice long before Jesus was born, including the midwinter feast of Yule in Scandinavia. The Roman calendar put the solstice on 25th December; the feast of Saturnalia was a few days before and then that of Kalendae at the turn of the year. The first Christian emperor, Constantine, seems to have adopted 25th December in around 354 as the official day to celebrate the birth of the Son in an attempt to divert his people from celebrating the birth of the sun.

Google will tell you more about the origins of pantomimes, crackers, wassailing, carolling, mistletoe, holly, ivy, the tree, cards, presents, St Nicholas etc. and the large part played by the Victorians (Charles Dickens in particular) in shaping what many of us regard as our traditional Christmas season. After a bit of research it soon becomes obvious that finding the “true spirit of Christmas” (as adverts often claim to have done) is difficult, because it has always been caught up in a mix of cultural, political and religious traditions. The stress caused by trying to follow them is now becoming a tradition in itself.

Some of the “happiest” Christmases I can remember (and what exactly do we mean when we give someone a traditional “Happy Christmas”?) have been spent away from home doing things differently. The surroundings of Jesus' birth were far from traditional for his family, but we can detect in Mary and Joseph a sense of wonder that was far deeper because everything was so different. Perhaps during the ordeal of their journey to Bethlehem, they had done some of the things that became traditional in Advent – contemplative waiting and preparing their hearts and minds – a tradition that we now often ignore.

Contemplate on this:

- it is only 57 years since Christmas Day became a public holiday in Scotland;
- it is only 112 years since the first Advent calendar was published (in Germany);
- it is only 135 years since Edward Benson instigated the “Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols”;
- it is only some 2000 years since the birth of Jesus;
- the human race has only existed a few hundred thousand years;
- it is some 13 billion years since Big Bang.
- before that was the Word – the Christ.

My tradition in December is to stand outside gazing up at the starlit night-sky, reflecting on its immensity and my insignificance. I can't answer the “how?” or the “why?”, but there's no need. It is enough just to marvel and give thanks that Christ, the one who exists before all things and in whom all things are held together, somehow lives in me and in you.

James Hall

Carlford Benefice Group Meeting – 16th December

Grundisburgh Parish Rooms

Wendy Gourlay will be our guest speaker and the title for her talk is
‘A visual interpretation of the Christmas story’ and is at 2.30pm

The Carlford Benefice Group hosted this year's village quiz and the £614 raised has been shared between St Mary's Church and HOPS (Holiday Opportunity Play Scheme for disabled youngsters).

Services across the Carlford Benefice

December 6th A2

Mal 3:1-4, Phil 1:3-11, Luke 3:1-6

8.00am	Holy Communion	Grundisburgh	CS
9.30am	Holy Communion	Burgh	CS
9.30am	Christingle Service	Hasketon	WG
9.30am	Holy Communion	Swilland	CB
11.00am	Holy Communion	Boulge	WG
11.00am	Toy Service	Grundisburgh	CS
11.00am	Parade Service	Otley	JaneH

December 13th A3

Zeph 3:14-end, Phil 4:4-7, Luke 3:7-18

8.00am	Holy Communion	Grundisburgh	CS
9.30am	Holy Communion	Clopton	JaneH
9.30am	Par Euch	Hasketon	JW
11.00am	Morning Prayer	Boulge	Lay Led
11.00am	Par Euch	Grundisburgh	CS/JaneH

December 20th A4

Mic 5:2-5a, Heb 10:5-10, Luke 1:39-45

8.00am	Holy Communion	Grundisburgh	CS
9.30am	Family Holy Communion	Burgh	CS
11.00am	Holy Communion	Boulge	JamesH
11.00am	Carol Service	Swilland	CS/CB
4.00pm	Carol Service	Ashbocking	CB
5.30pm	Carol Service	Hasketon	WG
5.30pm	Carol Service	Otley	CS
7.00pm	Carol Service	Grundisburgh	CS/WG

December 24th

Is 52:7-10, John 1:1-14

3.00pm	Crib Service	Hasketon	WG
4.30pm	Crib Service	Grundisburgh	CS
4.30pm	Crib Service	Otley	CB
6.00pm	Carol Service	Burgh	CS
6.00pm	Carol Service	Clopton	JaneH
11.30pm	Midnight Mass	Grundisburgh	CS
11.30pm	Midnight Mass	Hasketon	WG
11.30pm	Midnight Mass	Otley	JaneH

December 25th

Is 9:2-7, Luke 2:1-14

9.30am	Holy Communion	Burgh	CS
9.30am	Holy Communion	Swilland	JaneH/JamesH
10.30am	Crib service with Communion/blessing	Ashbocking	CB
11.00am	Holy Communion	Boulge	CS
11.00am	Holy Communion	Clopton	JaneH/JamesH

December 27th

Exod 33:7-11a, 1 John 1, John 21:19b-25

11.00am	Benefice Service	Grundisburgh	CS/JamesH
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Key – CS – Clare Sanders, CB – Catherine Beaumont, WG – Wendy Gourlay, FW – Fred Woods, JW – John Waine, BH – Bill Herbert, MS – Mark Sanders, JaneH Jane Hall, JamesH James Hall, RP – Richard Pepper RF – Robert Fletcher JaneW Jane Woods IW – Ian Wilson, PI – Philip Ind, TBC – To be Confirmed

Other Services in December

December 7th	Holy Communion BCP	Hasketon	9.30am
December 9th	Holy Communion BCP	Grundisburgh	9.30am
December 21st	Holy Communion BCP	Hasketon	9.30am

As a Ministry Team we share the responsibility for pastoral care.

First point of contact is:

Ashbocking & Swilland—Catherine Beaumont- 01473 890264

Burgh, Boulge & Grundisburgh—Clare Sanders 01473 735183

Clopton & Otley—Jane Hall 01473 785251

Hasketon—Wendy Gourlay 01728 685335



FANCY A COFFEE?



We have opportunities, throughout December, at

Grundisburgh – Wednesday 2nd at 10.15am-11.30am and then Saturday 5th 10.30am – 12 noon at Grundisburgh Parish Rooms

Ashbocking –Friday 6th at the home of Nel and Rex Peries, Chez Onze, The Green, Ashbocking 10.30am – 12 noon

Otley –Please note that there is no coffee morning this month.

Clopton –Wednesday 16th at the Village Hall 10am – 12 noon

What's On across the Carlford Benefice

1st Coffee and Crafts 10.00am – 12 noon

Shrubbery Farm, Hasketon.

2nd Bible Study Group 4 The Cottages, Ashley

Grange, Ashbocking 10.00am – 12 noon.

2nd Clopton Craft and Chat Morning 10.00am – 1pm at the village hall

2nd SWAPSHOP Grundisburgh Parish Room

10.15am-11.30am

4th Ashbocking Coffee Morning 10.30am – 12 noon at the home of Nel and Rex Peries, Chez Onze, The Green, Ashbocking

4th UPBEAT Concert in Grundisburgh Church 7.30pm raising money for The Alzheimer's Society and Great Ormond Street Hospital

5th 10.30am – 12 noon **Grundisburgh Coffee Morning** at Grundisburgh Parish Room

5th 10.30am **Otley Christmas Draw & Coffee Morning** Otley Village Hall

7th Otley and District Gardening Club Otley Village Hall 7.30pm

10th Hasketon Community Lunch Club Christmas Dinner 12.15 for 12.30pm. Cost £6 a head for a 2 course lunch plus coffee and mince pies

10th Tiddlywinks Toddler Group meet at 2.30pm in the Upper Room

11th Reader Support Group 9.00am The Upper Room

11th 1.30pm **Otley School Carol Service** in Otley Church

12th Burgh Coffee Morning 10.30am – 12 noon at Burgh Schoolroom

12th Swilland Christmas Draw Witnesham Village Hall at 1pm. Soup, filled rolls and mince pies will be served from 12pm. There will be a cake and preserve, book and gift stall.

12th 1.00pm **Grundisburgh Church Thanksgiving Service** for Ollie and Alfie Burch

14th Knit and Stitch Burgh Schoolroom 10.30am – 12.30pm. All welcome. Help/Tuition available

14th 10.30am **Beyond Alpha** meet in Upper Room, Grundisburgh

14th 5.00pm **Benefice Prayer Group** meet in the Upper Room

14th Swilland & Ashbocking Carol Singing Rehearsal 7.30pm at Swilland Church

16th Clopton Community Coffee Morning 10.00am – 12 noon at the Village Hall.

16th Bible Study Group 4 The Cottages, Ashley Grange, Ashbocking 10.00am – 12 noon.

16th Carlford Benefice Group

16th Carol Singing at Otley Village Hall with FFY & refreshments 6-8pm

17th 6.00pm **Grundisburgh School Carol Service** in Grundisburgh Church

18th Swilland Carol Singing 6pm at Swilland Water Tower and **Ashbocking Carol Singing** 6 pm starting at the Crockery Barn entrance

22nd Messy Church at Warren's Farm 10.00am - 11.30am



**Toy Service
at
Grundisburgh Church**

**December 6th
11.00am**

Please bring an unwrapped gift for a child or young person - our gifts will be taken to West Villa Homeless Families Unit in Ipswich



TRAIDCRAFT
Fighting poverty through trade

Traidcraft Stalls

In Grundisburgh Every Month

1st Saturday Coffee Morning 10.30 Parish Room

1st Sunday & 2nd Sunday in St. Mary's

at 12.00 after morning service

Charity Christmas Cards

order soon!!!

Chocolate - Cleaning materials - Socks - Gifts

Catalogues in St. Mary's

Come & Buy & Support the Farmers & Artisans

For info contact Pat Fletcher 01473 735 775

BBC

Bible Book Club

A small group - those of faith, agnostics, & atheists - interested in the historical context of Christian literature.

We meet in Grundisburgh on the third Tuesday of just four months each year, our next meeting is on January 19th 2016 at 10.30.

We are discussing 'The Origin of Satan' by Elaine Pagels.

Why not get a copy and start reading now, we would be very pleased to have you come along.

paulwiffen222@btinternet.com or 01473738474 - Please let us know if you would like to join us.



Room at the inn? Small charity HOST is seeking friendly people who would like to learn more about other countries and cultures and share their home life with adult international students at UK universities. Young adults from many countries would love to have a short homely break and discover the real life of this country.

Host Kit Millington-Hore wrote "Meeting students from around the world is hugely fulfilling and satisfying. Watching their pleasure as you introduce them to our ways of living, particularly over Christmas, is extremely rewarding."

Visits can be for a day, weekend, or four days at Christmas. Offering a Christmas invitation to someone who would otherwise be alone on a University campus can make a big difference. Invitations are urgently needed from volunteer hosts, no matter their age, or how far they live from a university.

To find out more, or to be put in touch with your local organiser, please visit www.hostuk.org or call [020 7739 6292](tel:02077396292).

CHRISTMAS COFFEE MORNING

Burgh Schoolroom
Burgh IP13 6QA

**SATURDAY 12th DECEMBER
10.30 - 12.00**

Tea/ coffee FREE.

Donations for delicious homemade cakes.

Fantastic Tombola Prizes,
Sales table with gifts, preserves.

**Come and Join Us at
Hasketon
Christingle Service**

**December 6th
9.30am**



**Grundisburgh Crib
Service
on Christmas Eve
at 4.30pm**



Come and join us as an Angel or a Shepherd

Ashbocking Christmas Events

Carol Singing Rehearsal

Swilland and Ashbocking rehearsal on
14th December at 7.30pm,
Swilland Church



Carol Singing 18th December

Carol singing through the villages, both ending up at
carolling in the Moon and Mushroom with the revellers
in the pub to raise the roof again
Swilland – 6pm at the Water Tower
Ashbocking – 6pm Crockery Barn
All welcome especially the children.



Carol Service Ashbocking Church

Sunday 20th December
4pm



Christmas Day Service with Scratch Nativity Ashbocking Church at 10.30am

Come as a character in the Nativity or use one of our
costumes on the morning



Otley and District Gardening Club

7.30pm on the first Monday of each month



Otley Village Hall, Chapel Road, Otley
Invited speakers on a wide range of subjects

Monday 7th December – Matthew Tanton-Brown
"The Fragrant Garden" with mince pies

All welcome

Admission £1.50 (members) £4.00 (non members)
(Includes refreshments) Annual Membership £10.00

For more information contact Alan Trevelyan (07706054630)
Jenny Vince (01473 738244) or Issy Lincoln (01473 890826)

FROM THE RECTOR.....

Like so many of you, I guess this year, amongst all our other Christmas greetings and cheer, our thoughts and prayers will also be with those thousands of people across Europe and the Middle East, who have fled from their homes in search of safety. They are not known to us by name, but we cannot say we do not know them.

The message of God's love as revealed in the Christmas story is needed evermore increasingly in our fractured and fragile world- Jesus knew the plight of the refugee, what it was to have to flee the land of his birth- the birth of Jesus is God's statement of solidarity with the people of the world- all humanity- God has come among us- God walks this earth- and invites us to journey with him, in solidarity with the hurting people of our planet.

Please hold the displaced people of the world in your prayers amidst the busyness of Christmas.

My love and prayers for all of you and thanks for all you do in HIS name.

Clare

Come and join Otley Youth Club for
family carol singing...



ALL WELL KNOWN CHRISTMAS SONGS!

Yummy refreshments available.

16th December 2015

6pm – 8pm

Otley Village Hall car park.

Dress warm

For more info contact

Kelly 01473 890006

or Jane Hall 01473 785251

From the Editor The cut off date for material to be included is the 8th of the month and material should be sent to Clare at revclaresanders@tiscali.co.uk & Amy at bakergirl174@gmail.com please.