

The Parishes of Aldbrough,
Mappleton & Goxhill with Great
Hatfield & Withernwick

PARISH NEWS

December 2014

Services in the Benefice for December:

EVERY Wednesday

10.00am Holy Communion followed by Coffee: Aldbrough

Sunday November 30th: Advent 1

10.30 Parish Communion: Goxhill

7.00pm Service of Light: Aldbrough

Sunday December 7th: Advent 2

10.30am Parish Communion: Aldbrough

HEALING COMMUNION: Tuesday December 9th

10.30 for 11.00 at 4 Mill Lane, Withernwick

FRIDAY December 12th: Goxhill

7.00pm Carol Service

Sunday December 14th: Advent 3

10.30am Parish Communion: Mappleton

TUESDAY December 16th: Mappleton

7.00pm Carol Service

Sunday December 21st: Advent 4

10.30am Parish Communion: Withernwick

7.00 Carol Service: Aldbrough



TUESDAY December 23rd: Withernwick
7.00pm Carol Service

WEDNESDAY December 24th: Christmas Eve
2.00pm Crib Service: Aldbrough
4.00pm Christingle and Crib Service: Withernwick
11.30pm Midnight Mass: Aldbrough

CHRISTMAS DAY

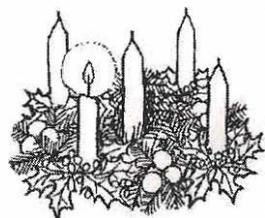
10.30 Family Communion: Withernwick

Sunday December 28th: Christmas 1
10.30am Parish Communion: Mappleton

NEW YEAR'S EVE: Goxhill 6.00pm

Sunday January 4th: Epiphany
10.30 Family Communion: Aldbrough

From the Vicar December 2014



Welcome to Advent and the start of a new year for the Church. Advent is from the Latin '*Adventus*' which simply means coming. In our readings we shall hear from the prophets of the Old Testament who urge us to be ready and awake for the coming Messiah. We shall hear of John the Baptist as the forerunner and finally of the angel's visit to a young woman, Mary. We begin the season by lighting the first candle (the candle to signify hope) on the Advent wreath. Our service of Light begins in darkness to signify the coming of Jesus Christ as the light of the world. All this is a time of preparation - a time to step away what is fast becoming simply a commercial event.

During this time, though, listen out for some new adverts that have the backing of the 'Christmas Starts with Christ' campaign that has been going for several years now. The ads this year jog the memory about the nativity story in the style of a confrontational chat show: The Three Wise Men defending why

they did not tell King Herod where to find baby Jesus (*"We're the three wise men, Herod, the clue's in the name"*); the Archangel Gabriel facing complaints about waking up everyone at 3am with the Hallelujah Chorus (*"We had shepherds and environmental health on our backs, they thought we were having an illegal rave!"*); and the donkey, that Mary rode to Bethlehem, trying to get in on the act (*"How else were Mary and Joseph going to get to Bethlehem? By shuttle bus?"*).

Christmas and carols go together. You can't have one without the other for they help us to tell this extra-ordinary story. It would require a high degree of ingenuity for anyone to get through the Christmas season without hearing a carol - and probably singing one, too. So I hope that you will join us for one of our four Carol Services (each one will be slightly different) and indeed on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

As we re-live and remember the story each year, we gain a new and deeper understanding of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany. We celebrate the fact that those who waited in darkness dared to hope that their salvation would come in the birth of a child.

The date of Christmas is not recorded in the Bible, neither is Mary riding on a donkey, but the fact remains that God came to earth in human form as a baby - O come let us adore him.

With every blessing on you and your families this Christmas.

Revd Anne

THANK YOU

Mappleton and Goxhill's Gift Day at the beginning of November raised almost £600, thank you for your support.

December

December, December, A month to remember,
A month full of darkness and light, A month full of rushing
And sharing and hoping, A month full of one special night.

By Daphne Kitching

Where did Christmas trees come from?



There are two early stories that mention fir trees. The first involves St Boniface, who went to Germany in the 8th century as a missionary and found people sacrificing a child to their god under an oak tree. Boniface was appalled, and rescued the child. He then chopped down the oak tree and found a tiny fir tree growing nearby. He gave this to the people and said: "This is a symbol of life. Whenever you look at this tree,

remember the Christ-child who is the one who will give you life, because he gave his life for you."

The second early fir tree story involves Martin Luther in the 16th century. It is said that one year he decided to drag a fir tree into his home and to decorate it with candles. He used it as a visual aid, telling people that the candles symbolised Jesus as the light of the world, and the evergreen tree symbolised the eternal life that Jesus gives to us. Many of the people who followed Luther were struck by the idea, and took up the custom.

As in past years **Aldbrough Church** will become a **Christmas Tree Paradise** from 6th December onwards. This year there will be an entry fee of just £1. Opening times and events are as follows:
Saturday 6th December: 1pm—4pm, Refreshments & Mince Pies Available

Sunday 7th December 2pm—4pm, Children's Activities including Crafts & Tombola

Saturday 13th December: 1pm—4pm Chocolate Tombola, Refreshments & Mince Pies Available

Sunday 14th December: 2pm- 4pm Children's Activities including Crafts & Tombola

Saturday 20th December: 1pm—4pm Stalls with Refreshments & Mince Pies Available

St Nicholas

The true story of Father Christmas, or Santa Claus, began with a man named Nicholas who was born in the third century in the Greek village of Patara, on what is today the southern coast of Turkey. His family were both devout and wealthy, and when his parents died in an epidemic, Nicholas decided to use his inheritance to help people. He gave to the needy, the sick, the suffering. He dedicated his whole life to God's service, and was made Bishop of Myra while still a young man. As a bishop, he joined other bishops and priests in prison under the Emperor Diocletian's fierce persecution of Christians across the Roman Empire.

Finally released, Nicholas was not bitter, but all the more determined to shed abroad the news of God's love. He did so by giving. One story of his generosity explains why we hang Christmas stockings over our mantelpieces today. There was a poor family with three daughters who needed dowries if they were to marry, and not be sold into slavery. Nicholas heard of their plight, and tossed three bags of gold into their home through an open window - thus saving the girls from a life of misery.

The bags of gold landed in stockings or shoes left before the fire to dry. Hence the custom of children hanging out stockings - in the hope of attracting presents of their own from St Nicholas - on Christmas Eve. That is why three gold balls, sometimes represented as oranges, are one of the symbols of St Nicholas.

The example of St Nicholas has never been forgotten - in bygone years boys in Germany and Poland would dress up as bishops on 6th December, and beg alms for the poor. In the Netherlands and Belgium 'St Nicholas' would arrive on a steamship from Spain to ride a white horse on his gift-giving rounds. To this day, 6th December is still the main day for gift-giving and merry-making in much of Europe. Many feel that simple gift-giving in early Advent helps preserve a Christmas Day focus on the Christ Child.

Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer turns 75

Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, a stock character in extra-biblical Christmas stories, is younger than you might think. He did not come on the Christmas scene until December 1, 1939 - 75 years ago. His first appearance was in a children's colouring book written by Robert May and given away by Montgomery Ward stores in the USA. The illustrator had to fight for him because the store owners were worried that the red nose might be associated with drunkenness. The story of Rudolph is one of triumph over adversity: Rudolph, who was initially scorned by his fellow-reindeers, was chosen by Santa to haul the sleigh because his nose lit the way on a dark night. The story was so appealing that it spawned a hit song, written by Johnny Marks, brother-in-law of Rudolph's creator. Gene Autry's recording of it sold 25 million.

Preachers have found elements of discrimination, epiphany, redemption and mercy in Rudolph's story. Dutch scientists in 2012 found reindeers do have red noses, or at least a dense network of blood vessels which "help to protect them from freezing during sleigh rides and to regulate the temperature of the reindeer's brain - factors essential for flying reindeer pulling a sleigh under extreme temperatures".

Prayer for Christmas Presence

Generous Father,

At this busy time of year, help us to remember the important things. In all the rush of sending cards and giving presents may we make time to be still, to acknowledge *your* sending and giving of the greatest gift of all, Jesus. Thank you that he didn't stay in the stable in Bethlehem, but lived and died and became the Saviour of all who put their trust in him. May we receive afresh the gift of your presence with us in Jesus, now and for ever, with great thankfulness. In his name, we pray. Amen.

By Daphne Kitching

Withernwick Ladies Group:

The November meeting took place at the home of Maureen and Ann Woolin and many thanks were given to them for their kind hospitality. Speaker for the evening was Mrs Meg Croft who demonstrated and tutored members and visitors in the art of making Christmas baubles from pieces of fabric. The finished products were extremely decorative and destined for the Christmas trees and the themed raffle of decorations produced a variety of sparkling items. Arrangements were made for the forthcoming Christmas Fair on Saturday 29th November as well as our pre Christmas lunch at Spring Garden Centre. Our last meeting of 2014 will be held on Wednesday 3rd December when we look forward to Ruby Seager as visiting speaker when the subject will be 'Yorkshire Dialect'.

Please come and join us we are a friendly group of village folk.

LITTLE FISHES

This month we shall meet on THURSDAYS 4th and 18th December at 10.30am for Parents and carers of pre-school children meeting at Wentworth House, Aldbrough.



There will be a mixture of music, stories and games, but primarily it offers the chance to come together as a community for an hour. Personal invitations work best so if you know anyone who you think would be interested please do invite them along.

Priest in charge
Revd Anne White
01964 527230

Churchwardens:
St Bartholomew, Aldbrough
Mrs C. Longstaff (527190)
Mrs K. Moore (527552)
All Saints Mappleton & St Giles Goxhill:
Mr B Rhodes (533954)
Mrs R. Skinner (534580)
Mr J. Hepworth (Deputy, Mappleton 532754)
St Alban's Withernwick:
Capt. D. Smith (527419)
Mrs Doreen Fryer & Mrs Anne Wood (Deputies)

See your Parish church on the websites;
A Church near you: www.acny.org.uk
Also Diocesan website: www.dioceseofyork.org.uk

Why not try the Aldbrough & Withernwick
village websites ;
www.withernwickvillage.co.uk
www.aldbroughparishcouncil.co.uk

*Gift aid: If you pay tax, we can claim back money
From the Government, at no extra cost to you.
Please put your donation/collection in an envelope,
Sign it & add your name & postcode. Thank you*

Editor P. Soltys soltydog@madasafish.com

Items for next Parish News to Paul by 20th December, please