

The February Letter

Dear Friends,

During the latter part of February, we will be half way between Christmas and Easter, the two major Christian festivals. Apart from the obviously different events celebrated, there are many ways in which they are treated within the church and by the general population.

In church circles, both feasts are preceded by a season of preparation - Advent and Lent - but while Advent is very much looking forward to the coming celebration, Lent is much more restrained and becomes quite intense as Easter approaches and the events of Holy Week are re-enacted. After the strictures of seasons of fast and abstinence, there are white vestments, flowers in church and much celebration.

In the world outside, Easter doesn't count for much. I did see some hot cross buns on 1st January, but few people will go deeply into debt buying Easter eggs. The Christmas selling season is usually in gear very soon after the schools are back after summer and builds relentlessly until the January sales.

And how few outlets sell Easter cards compared with the number of Christmas cards available. Both festivals get two bank holidays (excluding New Year's Day) but few take the opportunity to worship on Good Friday - a day out is more likely, and the Christmas holidays are more often an excuse for overeating and drinking.

We should be grateful that our religious festivals are marked by public holidays but we mustn't forget what we are celebrating and do so appropriately. Enjoy.

Patrick

FEBRUARY PARISH DIARY

SUNDAY 2ND

CANDLEMAS

- 10.00 a.m. Holy Communion (*Revd. Ian Slater*)
- Tuesday 4th 11.00 a.m. Communion at Crossley House Care Home
7.00 p.m. Prayer meeting in Vestry
7.30 p.m. Adult tap dancing
- Wednesday 5th 9.30 a.m. Holy Communion at St. James's
6.15 p.m. Cub Scouts
- Thursday 6th 9.30 a.m. Morning prayer
4.30 p.m. K:Ing's Way Club
6.00 p.m. Beaver Scouts
7.30 p.m. Scouts

SUNDAY 9TH

FOURTH SUNDAY BEFORE LENT

- 10.00 a.m. Holy Communion (*Revd. Richard & Mrs. Jean Bailey*)
- Tuesday 11th 7.30 p.m. Adult tap dancing
- Wednesday 12th 9.30 a.m. Holy Communion
11.30 a.m. Ing's Way Lunch Day
6.15 p.m. Cub Scouts
- Thursday 13th 9.30 a.m. Morning prayer
4.30 p.m. K:Ing's Way Club
6.00 p.m. Beaver Scouts
7.30 p.m. Scouts

SUNDAY 16TH

THIRD SUNDAY BEFORE LENT

- 10.00 a.m. Parade Service and Holy Communion
(*Revd. Ian Slater*)
- Tuesday 18th 7.30 p.m. Adult tap dancing
- Wednesday 19th 9.30 a.m. Holy Communion at St. James's
6.15 p.m. Cub Scouts
- Thursday 20th 9.30 a.m. Morning Prayer
4.30 p.m. K:Ing's Way Club
6.00 p.m. Beaver Scouts
7.30 p.m. Scouts

SUNDAY 23RD

2ND SUNDAY BEFORE LENT

| | | |
|----------------|------------|---|
| | 10.00 a.m. | Holy Communion (<i>Rev. Ian Slater</i>) |
| Tuesday 25th | 7.30 p.m. | Adult Tap Dancing |
| Wednesday 26th | 9.30 a.m. | Holy Communion |
| | 7.00 p.m. | Holy Communion in Chapel |
| | 7.30 p.m. | PCC Meeting |
| Thursday 27th | 9.30 a.m. | Morning prayer |

Electoral Roll and Annual Parochial Church Meeting

On Sunday 23rd March, after the 10.00 a.m. service, we will be holding our Annual Parochial Church Meeting at which we elect the officers for the next year and hear about what we have done in the past year and some plans for 2014. To attend this meeting and vote, you need to be on the Electoral Roll of the church. If you are not on the roll, and would like to be - please have a word with Keith West, our Electoral Roll Officer, or any member of the PCC.

Hall Bookings

The income we get from hiring out the hall for various functions helps greatly towards keeping the church going and ensuring we can pay our way. We need someone to help with this valuable work by dealing with all aspects of bookings. If you feel you this is something you could do and would like to know more, please contact James Muff or Kaaren Raistrick (details inside back cover of this magazine.)

Women's World Day of Prayer
Allerton Congregational Church, Friday 7th March 2014,
2.00 p.m.

The origins of the Women's World Day of Prayer date back to the 19th century when Christian women in the USA and Canada initiated a variety of cooperative activities in support of women's involvement in mission, at home and abroad. In spite of strong opposition from all-male mission boards, from 1861 onwards women founded numerous and effective women's boards for foreign and home missions, whereby they could work directly with and for women and children. They also supported the role of prayer in mission work and since 1812 women had encouraged one another to engage in personal prayer and to lead communal prayer within their mission auxiliaries and associations. This emphasis on prayer led to annual days and weeks of prayers within individual denominations. Thus the foundations of the World Day of Prayer were born.

This year's programme has been devised by the women of Egypt, with the theme of "Streams in the Desert". Everyone is most welcome to attend the service - men, women and children - which is being held in our area at Allerton Congregational Church Allerton Road at 2.00 p.m. on Friday, 7th March.

Clergy conference

A young curate went to a conference at which most of the gathering consisted of bishops, archdeacons and high officials of the Church. The weather was very cold and it was natural perhaps that the older clergy should cluster around the cheerful fire in the dining room as often as possible.

The curate thought that it was about time he did something about this, so next morning he said in a loud voice: "I had a strange dream last night, I dreamt I had died and gone to hell". After a few moments of dead silence one of the number said "and what did you find there?"

"Just the same as here," was the reply. "I couldn't get near the fire for bishops."

The Real Easter Egg

Giving a chocolate egg to someone you love at Easter is a tradition going back to the 19th Century. Until recently, though, none of them has told the real story of Easter. That all changed when the Real Chocolate Company decided to make Easter Eggs from fair trade chocolate and include a booklet telling the Easter story. These eggs are now in their 4th year and have proved very popular, with over 400,000 sold so far. As well as spreading the Easter message, the company gives a sizeable donation from profits and Fairtrade Premium fees to their farmers, which allows them to invest in their community. They use the money to buy everything from school books and solar panels, to providing fresh water.

In a survey of eggs in 2013, at a rating of 4/5 The Real Easter Egg beat the Hotel Chocolat egg (3/5), Green & Black's dark mint egg (3/5) and the Ferrero Rocher milk chocolate bunny (3/5) which speaks for itself!

Jean Bailey has again kindly agreed to take orders, so if you would like an egg, or eggs (priced at £3.99 each) please sign the list at the back of church. Alternatively, if you would like to order them direct, or find a list of supermarkets who stock them, go to www.realeasteregg.co.uk

"The Lord Gave and the Lord Hath Taken Away"

Ian Mc Alpine.

My six-greats-grandparents, Thomas Wroe (1742 - 1826) and Rachel Markland (1741 - 1776) were married in Eccles near Manchester in 1761. Thomas was a tailor from Eccles and his wife was the daughter of John Markland (1715 - 1777), a labourer from Pendleton, just to the east of Eccles. Rachel's family had settled in Eccles parish in 1589 and was descended from the Marklands of Wigan, a family whose records date back to 1265 when Rachel's distant ancestor Richard de Marclan was Lord of the Manor and Rector of Wigan.

Thomas and Rachel were both illiterate and Rachel's attested squiggle - not even a cross - in the marriage register is sadly the only example of her "signature".

Rachel was just 20 when she married and her son William arrived four months later. Six more children were born between 1763 and 1774. Significantly, Rachel seems to have been too ill attend the baptism of her daughter Elizabeth in 1772. And four years later tragedy struck. On 9th November, 1776 Rachel gave birth to her eighth child, a son called Benjamin, and died the same day. She was just 35 and was buried two days later, on the very same day that Benjamin was christened. Her husband commissioned a new gravestone for her at considerable expense. During the 18th century around 2% of confinements led to the death of the mother, most commonly from puerperal or childbed fever.

For many years I was puzzled by Benjamin's name since it had never been used by the Wroes or the Marklands. However, one day while reading Genesis I discovered a beautiful explanation of why it probably had been chosen. My illustration of Chapter 35 vv 16-20, taken from an 18th century King James Bible tells the story of Jacob's wife Rachel who tragically died after the birth of her son Benjamin. Thomas may not have been able to read the Bible and perhaps knew the story from some long-forgotten 18th century sermon. I am grateful to Rev Denise Poole, the Bishop's Chaplain for reminding me of the story of Jacob's wife in an address which she gave at St Saviour's. Rachel's tomb, thousands of years old, is believed still to exist on the outskirts of Bethlehem. The monument to Rachel Wroe was unfortunately grassed over when Eccles churchyard was landscaped in the 1960s.

So by naming his son Benjamin Thomas probably sought to commemorate his wife's death and honour her ultimate sacrifice. And no doubt the quotation from Job 1:21 which I chose as a title would have had a special significance to him on that far off day in November 1776.

Interesting Bible Facts

The first people to ever see a rainbow were Noah and his sons. (*Genesis 9:8, 13*)

God used a whirlwind to take the prophet Elijah into heaven. (*2 Kings 2:1*)

Jesus and Peter once paid taxes with a coin found in a fish's mouth. (*Matt. 17:24-27*)

David used a sword to kill Goliath, not a stone, (*1 Samuel 17:51*)

Abel was the world's first murder victim (*Genesis 4:8*)

The tallest man in the Bible was Goliath and he stood 9 ½ feet tall (*1 Samuel 17:4*)

There is a talking donkey in the Bible (*Numbers 22:28*)

Adam and Eve were expelled from Eden in case they should eat from the Tree of Life, not because they had eaten from the Tree of Knowledge. (*Genesis 3:22*)

The Way I See It : Surfing the Web - 22 years after it first began

By David Winter, Former Head of Religious Broadcasting, BBC

I suppose all of us, even if reluctantly, are familiar with the strange code 'www' - the prelude to a domain name for the internet. Tap it in, and at once you are somewhere else - a shop, a charity, a government organisation, a vet or a dancing school. I don't suppose anyone knows how many of those strange 'www' names there are, but I think we'd be in the realms of Abraham's 'stars in the sky' or 'grains of sand on the sea-shore'.

The letters stand, of course, for 'world wide web', and this month is the 22nd anniversary of its birth, the brain-child of a British computer expert,

Tim Berners-Lee. It may seem to have been around forever, but in fact it's a mere whippersnapper. The next time you fume at the endless advice on the phone to 'go to our web-site', think of Mr Berners-Lee and you'll know who to blame!

In fact, the world wide web is now an inescapable part of life for most people all over the world, and even those who aren't on the internet are aware how dependent so much of modern life is on its working. Via the keys on an ordinary computer, or even the buttons on a Smart-phone, people can have access to an unlimited source of information, advice and resources. Increasingly people choose to shop online (or to cheat a bit, see it in the shop, and then go online to buy it at a discount!). It is a source of facts and information, from train times to the names of medieval monarchs. In one sense we are drowning in a sea of information, all there at our fingertips (literally) but daunting in its volume. "No", we sometimes feel like screaming, "I don't want to 'go to our web-site', I just want to talk to a human being."

I used to wonder, as a child, how God could possibly cope with everybody's prayers - millions of us, presumably, all trying to get through to him at once. How could I think of my little request making its way through this vast traffic jam to the Eternal Ear? Well, 'www' offers hope! If Mr Berners-Lee could work out a way to do it, surely it's not beyond the Creator of the universe?

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Messy Church—What's That?

Messy church is a new and exciting way to worship, involving all the family. It is an informal, fun time filled with songs, Bible stories, crafts, games and a light meal for everyone to enjoy together. Sessions are planned for the first Sunday of every month, starting on **Sunday 2nd March from 2 to 4 p.m.** in the church hall, when the theme will be "the Family". Everyone is most welcome, so please come along and give it a try!

The King and the Flowers

A king had a wonderful talent for growing flowers and was looking for someone to succeed him. He decided he would let the flowers decide so he gave everyone a little seed. The one who would produce the most beautiful flower from the seed would be the next king. A girl called Serena was overwhelmed by the bounty and determined to grow the most beautiful flower. She planted the seed in a nice pot, took great care of it, but nothing would grow.

The next year she saw everyone gathering at the palace with pots full of beautiful flowers. She was disappointed but also went to the meeting with her empty pot. The king inspected all the flower pots and then stopped at hers. "Why is your pot empty", he asked. "Your highness, I did everything to make it grow, but I have failed", she answered.

"No, you didn't," he replied. "You see, the seeds I've given out were all roasted, so nothing could come out of them. I have no idea where all these flowers come from. But you have been honest and by being so, have deserved to be my heir. You will be our queen."

46TH BRADFORD NORTH CUB SCOUT PACK

The Cub Scouts have been busy completing activities that will ultimately lead to the award of the Communications Badge. They have learnt about Braille, Morse and Semaphore and also about code breakers during the ages from Egyptian Hieroglyphics to the Enigma machine of World War II. The children made code wheels and had to decipher a message then make up their own. They were also given some instructions at the beginning of the meeting and had to recall these half an hour later. Modern methods of communication have also been discussed including fax, email and texting.

From 31st January to 2nd February twenty four of us will be spending the weekend at Fan Wood Scout Camp at Gomersal. We are staying in the Frank Harris Activity Centre which has all modern amenities including central heating and beds!! There will be a host of activities for the children to complete - a full report of our exploits will appear next month.

The District Games Tournament takes place on the 15th of February at Ebenezer Church, Dudley Hill. Children will compete against others of their age at connect four, darts, dominoes, draughts and skittles. There will be plenty of opportunity to practise for the competition. We will also hold a Pack Table Tennis tournament in the forthcoming weeks.

We are to tackle the Personal and Home Safety Activity badges next month along with the Emergency Aid awards.

Six of our Cubs and two Scouts are currently rehearsing for the County Gang Show that will be held at the Victoria Theatre in

Halifax from the 3rd to 4th April. Tickets are £15 for adults and £10 for children. Please see the flyer included in this magazine.

GROUP LEADERSHIP

Two of our leaders have recently left the group (one moving to the sunnier climes of Mirfield and another leaving due to personal circumstance). The number of young people in each of our sections, however, continues to grow and therefore we need to replace our loss and recruit even more adult help. We have asked parents to volunteer on a rota basis if they possibly can. Should anyone else feel that they may be interested to help us, please contact us - our four sections are detailed below:

Beavers: 6-8 year olds meet Thursdays from 6pm - 7.30pm

Cubs: 8-11 year olds meet on Wednesdays 6.15pm - 8pm.

Scouts: 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ - 14 meet Thursday 7.30pm - 9pm

Explorers: 14 - 18 meet Monday 7.30pm - 9pm

Thank you for considering this. You can now stop palpitating and head to the couch to recuperate!

See you in the March issue when there will be details of our 70th anniversary celebrations.

Bev Howard GROUP SCOUT LEADER bevhoward@hotmail.com

So, what exactly IS a rural or area dean?

If a Church of England diocese is a business and its bishop is the managing director, an archdeacon is the head of a division and a rural dean manages a department: not quite an accurate description but not a bad comparison. When someone cannot answer your problem and you ask to speak to a manager, that is probably the equivalent of the rural dean.

In other words, the rural dean, often known as the area dean, is the senior vicar in a large group of churches and parishes. Such a group, maybe a couple of dozen parishes, is a deanery. The rural or area dean chairs all the clergy of the area when they come together with lay people elected by each parish in a council called the deanery synod. Synods are the Church's equivalent of Parliament (General Synod), County Councils (Diocesan Synod) and local councils (Deanery Synod), where both spiritual and administrative matters can be discussed democratically and planning and policy shaped.

Rural dean is, in fact, an ancient office with certain specified responsibilities: the incongruity of a priest in the middle of a city being called a rural dean led to many now being called area deans. In many instances, the duties of rural dean are discharged by a vicar as a temporary addition to his or her responsibilities, in return for a small honorarium. Rather than seeing the rural dean as the line manager for other vicars, therefore, the relationship is nearer to that of the Archbishop of Canterbury with other bishops: not the boss but first among equals.

As an officer of the bishop the rural dean's key roles include looking after parishes that are between vicars, ensuring everything keeps going and helping in the process of finding a new vicar; chairing meetings of all the clergy within the deanery; co-chairing, with an elected layperson, meetings of the deanery synod; and carrying out visitations and inspections on behalf of the archdeacon to ensure the good order of the fabric and the general welfare of parishes.

It's not all about admin, however. Clergy can be affected by pressure just like anyone else and rural deans are expected to care for the clergy of their deanery as well as for the parishes. They listen to vicar's problems, as well

as those of parishioners, and help in whatever way they can. And then they make sure that communication between the parishes and the bishop is working, making sure that the bishop hears of any problems in the parishes.

So, you might see rural and area deans as a cross between council chair, line manager and agony aunt.

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Talking theologically...

Jesus asked his disciples who men said that he was. And his disciples answered him: "Master, thou art the supreme eschatological manifestation of omnipotent ecclesiastical authority, the absolute, divine, sacerdotal monarch."

And Jesus said, "er - What?"

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Prepared?

I am ready to meet my Maker. Whether my Maker is prepared for the ordeal of meeting me is another matter. Winston Churchill, on his 75th birthday.

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What the 23rd Psalm is really all about

The Lord is my Shepherd - *that's relationship.*

I shall not want - *that's supply.*

He makes me lie down in green pastures - *that's rest.*

He leads me beside the still waters - *that's refreshment.*

He restores my soul - *that's healing.*

He leads me in the paths of righteousness - *that's guidance.*

For his name's sake - *that's purpose.*

Yes, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death - *that's testing.*

I will fear no evil - *that's protection.*

For You are with me - *that's faithfulness.*

Your rod and your staff, they comfort me - *that's discipline.*

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies - *that's hope.*

You anoint my head with oil - *that's consecration.*

My cup runs over - *that's abundance.*

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life - *that's blessing.*

And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever - *that's security!*

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Lent Course

Looking ahead a little to Lent, which begins with Ash Wednesday on 5th March, The Revd. Richard and Mrs. Jean Bailey have kindly agreed to lead a course on the theme of “Throughout all Ages, World Without end—understanding the Eucharist”. The sessions will run on Wednesday evenings from 7.30 to 9.00 p.m. and will be hosted by Marjorie Grange at 23 Shelley Grove. Bibles will be required. The sessions will be:

March 12th – “Throughout all ages world without end.”

March 19th – **NO meeting**

March 26th – The Ministry of the Word

April 2nd – The Ministry of Intercession

April 9th – The Ministry of the Eucharist

April 16th – Communal Celebration of the Eucharist.

Please contact Richard and Jean on 01274 483344 if you would like to attend.

Vendors of “Big Issue” Magazine say “Thank You”

Thank you to everyone who kindly donated hats, gloves and scarves, and especially to those who hand-knitted items. We have recently given these to the charity “The Big Issue in the North”. We have received a lovely “thank you” card from the vendors thanking us for our help. The collection is ongoing throughout the winter months, preferably for items in dark colours. For further details, please have a word with Val Muff.

Help Needed

You will have read elsewhere in the magazine about our exciting new venture—Messy Church. To make this a success, we need help with all areas—catering, baking, setting up, activities etc. If you would like to help, please have a word with Ian or Kaaren (details inside back cover.)

February Roll of Remembrance

| | | |
|------|-------------------|--------|
| 1st | Sydney Shewan | (1978) |
| 4th | Mabel Holgate | (1981) |
| 9th | Annie Varley | (1983) |
| 10th | Harold Blackburn | (1984) |
| | Nellie Curtis | (1986) |
| 12th | Janie Jackson | (1990) |
| 14th | Doris Smith | (1979) |
| | Doris Butterfield | (1994) |
| 18th | Edward Chater | (1982) |
| | Mabel Barraclough | (1984) |
| 19th | Clara Coplin | (1985) |
| | May Surtees | (2002) |
| 21st | May Ashton | (1979) |
| 22nd | William K. Naylor | (1977) |
| | Minnie Brett | (1984) |
| 23rd | Billy Fawbert | (1979) |
| 24th | George Hayhurst | (1984) |
| 28th | Charles Exley | (1980) |
| 29th | Sarah Ellen Firth | (1979) |

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