

SAINT MARY'S BUTTSBURY NEWSLETTER



Services – DECEMBER/JANUARY/FEBRUARY WINTER 2013/14

All services are BCP unless otherwise stated

1	December	8.45am	Holy Communion
8	..	11.15am	Matins
15	..	3.30pm	Evensong with Communion
22	..	3.00pm	Family Crib Service
25	..	8.45am	Holy Communion
29	..	3.00pm	Carols by Candlelight
5	January	8.45am	Holy Communion
12	..	11.15am	Plough Sunday service
19	..	3.30pm	Evensong with Communion
26	..	3.30pm	Evensong
2	February	8.45am	Holy Communion
9	..	11.15am	Matins
16	..	3.30pm	Evensong with Communion
23	..	3.30pm	Evensong

INGATESTONE & FRYERNING CHURCHES TOGETHER

On New Years Eve there will be a service in Ingatestone Parish Church at 6pm to which all are welcome. Afterwards, at 7.15pm, there will be a display of fireworks in the field next the Church.

This year there will be no service in Buttsbury for the week of Prayer for Christian Unity. A service will be held on Wednesday 22 January at 7.45pm in St Mary and St Edmund, Ingatestone.

FUNNY YOU SHOULD ASK

One day a middle-aged Jewish man heard from his son at university. "I've decided to become a Christian, Dad". The father panicked. "What do I do?" he asked himself. The only thing he could think to do was call his rabbi for advice.

"Funny you should come to me with this problem", says the rabbi. "Not two years ago MY son came to me with the same speech. I had no idea what to do. I panicked, and the only thing I could think to do was to go to God".

"Goodness! And what message do you think you got from God?" asked the father nervously.

The rabbi laughed. "God said to me, "funny you should come to me with this problem...."

CHURCH OFFICERS

Priest-in-charge	The Rev'd Jean Halliday	Tel: 354359
Churchwardens	Daphne Bishop	Tel: 01245 400136
Deputy Churchwarden	Trevor Reeves	Tel: 07595826300
Secretary	Arline Leaves	Tel: 653604
Treasurer	Bryan Shedel	Tel: 352213
Flower Rota	Christine Makings	Tel: 840615
Sidesmen	Frances Baggott John Bishop Arline Leaves Christine Makings & Betty Weavers	
Pianists	Jean Bourne	Tel: 840466
	Mary Cole	Tel: 840485
	Frank Hatch	Tel: 658186

RELIVING THE NATIVITY

Rita and I were privileged to be part of a group from the City of London to visit the Holy Land at the end of October. To be able to tread the same paths and visit so many places mentioned in the Bible was a wonderful experience.

As we approach Christmas we feel that we have gained a better understanding of the Nativity. At that time Nazareth was a small village with perhaps only a dozen families. Like so many similar villages and towns it was built around a spring where Mary would have collected water with other young girls of the village and carried it up the hill, where it was perceived to be safer to live. Joseph's workshop was hewn out of rock with his house built on top. We visited the churches which commemorate both these sites. The Basilica and grotto of the Church of the Annunciation marks the place where Mary heard that she was to be the mother of Jesus, the Son of God.

The journey which Joseph and Mary made to Bethlehem would have been immensely challenging. A coach ride today takes longer than two hours over many hills and valleys on new roads. The journey on foot with Mary on a donkey would have taken weeks. They would need to have planned the route to ensure that they had places to stay where water was available. It is no wonder that Mary was so close to giving birth because the journey had taken so long.

The Church of the Nativity is built over the place where Jesus is believed to have been born. It is a must for pilgrims from all over the world who sometimes queue for hours to enter a small grotto. Today this is festooned with ornaments of the Orthodox Church, visitors squeeze in, some trying to hold their own prayer sessions. Pilgrims kneel and indeed prostrate themselves before a very small opening marked by the Star of Bethlehem, which is believed to be the actual place of the birth. It is very different from the place and conditions we imagine Jesus was born.

It is quite possible to understand and envisage the conditions of Christ's birth, the stable would have been an area where the rock had been hewn out to make a stable and the rocks used for the building of a dwelling above.

There is so much contrast; the Church of the Shepherds built on a hillside on the outskirts of Bethlehem is simple but its murals clearly depict the place, the story and their visit to the manger. In comparison The Church of the Nativity is a major complex of buildings including a more modern church. A Christmas Service was underway during our visit; the same we would hear broadcast every Christmas which this year will be reminder of an unforgettable experience.

Keith Brown

THE INTERREGNUM

A meeting of the three PCCs of the Benefice with Bishop John Wraw, Archdeacon David Lowman and the Rural Dean Ian Jorysz was held on Thursday 14th November to discuss the way forward.

SERVICES AT CHRISTMAS

There is a crib service including a Christingle element on Sunday 22 December at **3.00pm** (not 3.30pm) in place of Evensong. It will be a great occasion for all but particularly for children and their parents and grandparents.

Christmas is celebrated at Buttsbury with Holy Communion at 8.45am on 25 December to welcome the Christ child into our hearts and on Sunday 29 December at our Carols by Candlelight service to express our joy at His coming. Shenfield Parish Church choir is joining us and so that they may more easily read their music the service will start at **3.00pm** (NOT 3.30pm). The collections on Christmas Day will be given to children in need.

CRISIS AT CHRISTMAS

Crisis will again in shelters throughout central London be providing warmth, welcome and support at Christmas to some of the most vulnerable and isolated people in London. Guests are offered somewhere to stay, three hot meals a day, healthcare, someone to talk to, advice and assistance in getting accommodation and like most people at this time of year – some fun. **Donations of the following may be left in the church on Sunday 1 and Sunday 8 December; Food** (use by date beyond 15 January) tinned soup, baked beans, tinned fruit, tinned fish, ham or chicken, instant coffee (no decaf please) tins of assorted biscuits **Toiletries** soap, tooth brushes & tooth paste, Roll on Deodorant (non aerosol) & new towels: **Stationery** art and craft materials **Kitchen** Rolls of foil or cling film, tea towels and last but not least **Money** for fresh milk and vegetables etc.

SPONSORED CYCLE RIDE

Our thanks go to Margaret, Trevor, Michael and Bryan who between them raised £290 for the Friends of Essex Churches on 14th September. Half of the money raised comes to Buttsbury. Thanks too to the sponsors.

**WE WISH ALL OUR READERS
A BLESSED AND JOYFUL CHRISTMAS**