



Christmas Eve Crib Service

The Christmas Eve Crib Service will be held at 5 pm on Christmas Eve—Sunday 24th December. This is a great opportunity to have a break from all the pre-Christmas hassle and celebrate what Christmas is all about as a family.

Come and join us as we sing favourites such as 'Away in a Manger' and 'Little Donkey' with sound effects!

Children are invited to come dressed as shepherds, wise men or even angels.



What's on at St James' Church?

Every Sunday 10am Parish Eucharist with Sunday school and creche

First Sunday of month All Age Eucharist 10am

Saturday 27th January 4 – 5.30pm Messy Church in Forton School

Saturday 17th March 4-5.30pm Messy Church in Forton School

If you would like to arrange a baptism or a wedding, or discuss anything about the church please contact our Vicar, Peter



We will remember them.

Who's who at St James Shireshead?

Vicar:

Canon Peter Ballard, tel 07970923141

Chapel House, Chapel Lane, Ellel,

Lancaster, LA2 0PW

email: vicar@stjameschurchforton.org

Pastoral Assistant:

Mrs Ruth Ross, tel 01524 792306

Churchwardens:

Mrs Hilda Dugdale, tel 01524 791540

Mr Andrew Dodgson, tel 01524 383375

Spotlight

Update form St James Shireshead the parish church of Shireshead and Forton. Whinney Brow, PR3 0AE

Winter 2017



The Greatest Gift

In the space of a few minutes, at the end of October, I heard a shop assistant telling a customer that she had bought and wrapped all her Christmas presents and I didn't know whether to be jealous or sad. Whilst this conversation was going on a man joined in, who the shop assistant clearly knew, and she asked him what he was doing for Christmas. His reply was that he had never had a Christmas card or present for years and like every other year he would spend it on his own. I didn't know whether to cry or ask for his address so I could send him a card. The shop assistant and the other customer just carried on talking as though he had never said it. This wasn't in some far-flung country it was in the heart of England.

There are lot of superlatives used to describe Christmas both in the media and common parlance. For many it is a time of celebration, excitement and family and friends coming together to give and receive presents and generally have a good time. For many, not just the man in the shop, Christmas is a lonely, sad and painful time.

(Continued on page 2)

Christmas Events at St James

We warmly invite you to join with us as we celebrate the birth of Jesus

Sunday 10th December - Christingle Service at 4pm

Sunday 17th December - Nine Lessons and Carols at 4pm

Sunday 24th December - Crib Service at 5pm

- Midnight Eucharist at 11.30pm

Christmas day - Family Eucharist at 10am Children are invited to bring one of their presents with them (Adults can too if they wish!)

(Continued from page 1)

In the film Miracle on 34th Street, a little girl discovers dreams do come true if you really believe. Six-year-old Susan has doubts about childhood's most enduring miracle - Santa Claus. Her mother told her the "secret" about Santa a long time ago, so Susan doesn't expect to receive the most important gifts on her Christmas list. But after meeting a special department store Santa who's convinced he's the real thing, Susan is given the most precious gift of all - something to believe in.

We all need something to believe in. Christmas only exists because Jesus Christ, the son of God, was born in a stable in Bethlehem 2000 years ago. For the angels who told the shepherds he had been born the message was simple, "Peace on earth and goodwill to all". That simple message is as true today whether you believe in God or believe it's all about a man in a red frock with a long white beard.

In many places in the world the greatest gift they could receive this Christmas would be things we all take for granted; the chance to live in peace; a ready supply of clean water; or like Mary and Joseph on the first Christmas night a simple shelter to lay their heads. There may not be much we can do in Forton and Shireshead to provide those things to the millions across the world who desperately need them, but there are many closer to home, including Lancaster, who will have nowhere to lay their head this Christmas.



Carol Service

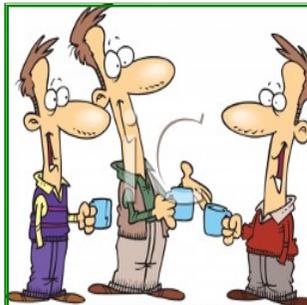
The Christmas Carol Service will be held on Sunday 17th December at 4 pm. A chance to join in and sing some well known carols as well as to listen to special arrangements by our excellent choir. Hope to see you there!

The recent flooding in Galgate has made many families, and individuals homeless and is a stark reminder of how much we simply take for granted. It is also been a wonderful example of the real message of Christmas in the generosity of giving, service and sacrifice that so many have shown in their offers of help and support.

If we can make the special effort to share the peace, goodwill and joy of Christmas with our neighbours and all those who live and work around us you never know what that may mean to somebody - like the man in the shop that might be the greatest gift they receive this Christmas.

Happy Christmas

Peter



Men's Breakfasts We meet on the first Saturday of the month at 8.30 am in a room at the back of Church and start with bacon/sausage/vegetarian sandwiches, tea or coffee followed by a discussion on a topical issue – we discussed the proposed housing development last time; or we have a speaker. We finish at 9.30am. Next meeting dates 6 Jan; 3rd Feb; 3rd March There is always plenty of food so just turn up.

The Christingle Service, originating in the German Moravian Church in the 18th century, symbolically uses an orange, dried fruits, sweets, a red ribbon and a candle to explain the real reason for celebrating Christmas in a meaningful way to both children and adults.



Christingle Service

The Christingle Service celebrating Jesus as the light of the world will be held on Sunday 10th December at 4 pm

Shoe Box Appeal

A huge thank you to all who responded to the shoe box appeal. Thanks to your generosity 48 filled shoe boxes are now on their way to bring excitement and joy to needy children.



Next Messy Church—4pm Saturday 27th January in Forton School.

