

November 2020
THE DIARY OF ST MARY
DROYLSDEN

*A welcoming all-age community growing and sharing
God's love*



Associate Ministers

Reverend Nancy Alexander 371 9667

Reverend Sue Ball 682 1439

Church Wardens

Pat Catterall 370 0039

Beth Cutler 285 1472

for I know the plans I have for you" declares the Lord"

Services – November 2020

**Morning Worship in Church 10am each Sunday and
as announced**

**Face coverings must be worn, and social distancing
observed**

Services during November can also be found on YouTube on
Wednesdays at 6pm and Sundays at 1pm.

**If you listen online and are having trouble with the sound, please
try listening with earphones**

(Google YouTube then search St Mary's Droylsden)

Any changes and updates will be announced on the website and
where possible Facebook

Remembrance Day Service – Sunday 8th November 10am



Remember Remember the 5th November

..... is a rhyme I remember from my childhood, of course it's about The Gunpowder Plot and Bonfire Night but the month of November is a month of remembrance and remembering.

It starts with Halloween or All Hallows Eve or perhaps more relevant to the Church All Saints Eve followed by All Saints Day on 1st November. The tradition of All Hallows Eve and All Souls dates back thousands of years and its origins are from the Gaelic festival of Samhain marking the end of the harvest season and the beginning of winter and the darkness. Halloween can be quite a contentious issue for Christians, many being concerned about celebrating anything to do with the devil or his works. However, there is a train of thought that All Hallows Eve is the precursor to All Hallows Day, or All Saints Day and it is the dark before the dawn, the night that the Sun (Son) extinguishes. And let's not forget that Jesus has all the power and has already won the victory - as children of light we have nothing to fear.

The Bible tells us that all Christians are Saints, not just those who are famous in history and have a St. in front of their names. The Church celebrates All Saints Day by remembering loved ones we no longer see and give thanks for the good times and memories of them. Remembering is such a bittersweet thing, isn't it? When we remember, it is often with the joy of a cherished time being brought back to our minds, but with the sadness that that time is now past - that it can only be revisited in our memories. The memories themselves (perhaps triggered by a certain sight or smell or sound or date) bring a smile to our faces, but they often come tied up with a ribbon of grief because some of the people at the heart of that memory have died. It is not always easy to do so, but it is important that we know it's ok to hold that joy and pain together – to find moments of light and laughter in the darkness - because both the joy and the pain come from the same source: love. If we didn't love, we wouldn't grieve.

A little further into November is Armistice Day and it is important that we remember and give thanks for the sacrifice made by the unimaginably vast number of people who lost their lives in the two World Wars. Each year at Remembrance services there are fewer surviving veterans, and each year we get further away from living memory of the horror that those two World Wars brought. In the Chancel here in St Marys Church, we have a memorial to those who perished in the First World War, and recently I stood before it and read the names. As I looked, I wondered what they would make of life today, and of the changes in the world they knew, both good and bad, that they gave their own lives for us to live in. There are no veterans left from the First World War, and not many from the Second either, but we must never forget to tell their stories. We need to tell the generations to come, about those who came before. You could not have lived through those times and been unaffected, it was a local, national and global calamity but before very long, these wars will no longer dwell in the minds of those who lived through that horror but will be consigned to the dry pages of history - almost imperceptibly, the lessons learned in blood are fading from memory as well. The philosopher George Santayana once said, "those who cannot remember the past are doomed to repeat it." We will remember them!

Whilst there is nothing as painful as the death of someone we love, we may find ourselves remembering and grieving the loss of other things too. We might be struggling with all sorts of other losses at the moment – loss of a relationship, perhaps, or of our working life, or - for many of our younger people at the moment – the loss of both our present and our imagined future. It might be the loss of who we 'used to be' before age, injury or chronic illness changed things. It might be the loss of the family we were unable to have, the children who were never born.

There are other things too - and it might be that we feel guilty for grieving these things because they don't seem as serious – but they still have an impact on us. Many of us are mourning our pre-Covid world aren't we? We don't want a 'new normal', we want our old normal back (however much we complained about it!).

And it strikes me that that is at the heart of any grief, isn't it? Not just the person or thing we have lost and the almost physical hole that leaves in us, but the loss of our 'normal' life and the coming to terms with a new way of being – a way we didn't plan for and don't really want. And yet, we must do that, mustn't we – however slowly we do it, however long it takes, because life can't stay the same – in fact, it never does, does it really? And so, when we remember, we must be careful not to get stuck in our longing for the past. Our remembering must be part of our re-forming, our re-grouping, our re-emerging.

It would be very easy here for me to simply acknowledge the importance of faith in this – to remind you that God is with us in all of it - yet I know that our faith can be really knocked when we experience such loss and so I don't do so lightly. In my Sermon just a week ago I said how hard it is to praise God when we really don't feel like praising God. But, for me - whilst I might shout at God; whilst I might demand he acts NOW; whilst I might question why – I am in absolutely no doubt that I will find him there with me, holding me. He is there when it feels darkest and, because he is there, there is light. Maybe just a flicker at first but even a flicker of light, like a match striking, makes a huge difference to our darkest time, doesn't it? And the light grows, and it beckons us forward. The light doesn't deny our grief, rather it illuminates it and helps us to find new ways to be, new ways to live with and despite our loss, new ways to find the balance between joy and pain.

It is no accident, I think, that our season of remembering moves into the season of Advent, of waiting for the light – and ultimately the explosion of the light into the world at Christmas, the light that is Jesus. My prayer is that you will trust that his light is there for you, today and always.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it (John 1:5).

Yours in Christ
Rev Nancy

Still walking...

Despite a real lack of motivation last week, I am still collecting my daily miles. I've settled on a circular route from our house that's just over five miles so if I don't have any errands to walk I set off on that. It starts by cutting down the old Graver Lane that runs alongside where the corner shop used to be at the top of Berry Brow. It's quite steep and not well maintained but cuts out the busy corner at the Bay Horse. Popping out by Millstream Animal Shelter, I then walk along the road to the bottom of the steep hill. Here there is an entrance to the country park, and I can get off the road. A 'green lane' (called Vale Lane) winds up to Woodhouses village. You would never know you were almost in central Manchester when walking along; you can hear the birds rather than traffic, you are surrounded by greenery rather than concrete. It does me good to put myself in the middle of Creation as often as I can, away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

The rest of the route is along roads - through Woodhouses to Crime Lake, round to Where the Roxy Cinema used to be and home along Oldham Road. As the traffic noise builds, I listen to worship music or Radio 3. And pray.

Fr Neil Shaw from **All Saints, Stamford** is new in post and asks that we pray for him as he tries to discern how best to reach out in these challenging times. He also asks us to pray for all who are suffering from the virus.

Rev Becky Dyball at **All Saints, Sawtry**, asks for prayer for their new curate as they take up their post.

Donations are still coming in with £195 on JustGiving and a similar amount via the collection box in church. The excess for the insurance claim has now been covered, but there has been a leak in the roof and that also needs fixing. The Emmaus Room will then need decorating. It's never ending! If you wish to contribute, visit <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/rev-sue-long-walk> , transfer directly into the church bank account, or drop your donation in the collection box. Make sure you let us know it is sponsor money so that I can thank you personally.

Many blessings,

Rev Sue

Our Harvest Gifts for the Foodbank and Lifeshare

A heartfelt thank you for all the harvest gifts which will be shared between **Droylsden & District Foodbank** and **Lifeshare**.

A special thanks to Jenny who leafletted all her estate and collected and delivered all their donations to church. We may not all be able to gather together but our outreach to the community continues through new and imaginative ways.



Silver Service

Many of you will know and may well have experienced our Silver Services in the past. For those of you who haven't, about six times a year, we welcome into church those who may no longer be able to attend church each week. We are able to offer lifts to those who need it and use the cosiness of the church room for the service and fellowship.

We worship at a Holy Communion service and then enjoy simple refreshments. We have a chance to natter and catch up with friends we may not have seen for a while.

But of course, we have not been able to meet up during the past few months and may not be able to do again for a few more months to come. So how could we keep in touch with these church family members and let them know we are thinking of them and they are not forgotten?

If they are unable to come to us, we can go to them.

Over the summer months we delivered an envelope containing a card, a tea bag and biscuit and asked them to sit quietly with a brew and remember they are not forgotten.

At harvest we would normally have gathered together once again but not this year, and so we delivered once again. This time a reflection from Rev'd Sue together with a packet of soup and a pack of biscuits.

The doorstep socially distanced conversations, as we delivered, were a joy to hold and although we know that many received regular telephone calls from friends and family a different face and knowing someone cares made a huge difference to us all.

We are reimagining church and what a joy the new ways of worshipping can be.

Let us pray that it won't be too long before we can join together for worship in church and enjoy a hot pot refreshment. (Not sure we could deliver that in an envelope!)

Pat



Christmas Shoebox Support for 2020

Just a little reminder that there won't be a Shoebox Sunday this year but shoeboxes can be made up online or you can make a monetary donation as shown below or into the Shoebox in the church room. The closing date for donations is 8th November.

Blythwood for individual donation amounts <https://blythwood.org/donate-to-shoe-box-appeal/> or to create and pay for a box online OCC build a box <https://shoeboxonline.samaritans-purse.org.uk/>

Postal Addresses, if you do not have internet access, please send a cheque to either:

Blythwood Care,

Highland Deephaven,

Ross-shire. IV16 9XJ

(Cheques payable to 'Blythwood Care' include your name & address on back)

or

Samaritans Purse,

Victoria House, Buckhurst Hill,

Essex. IG9 5EX

(Cheques payable to 'Samaritans Purse'. Include on back - your name & address)"

Keith Morgan on behalf of St Mary's Team

Family Nativity Activity

At this time of the year, different groups within the church and the community usually make nativity crafts and scenes and put them in shop windows and community buildings around Droylsden to create a display trail. This year due to current situations unfortunately this isn't happening.

We have decided that as a church family we will create our own large-scale Nativity Scene on our Cross.

We are inviting families to create a Nativity scene or a Nativity character to decorate our cross.

You can be as creative as you wish. All we ask is that you make your creation waterproof.

We will need Angels, Shepherds, Kings/Wisemen, Animals, Stars, as well as actual Nativity scenes.

A few examples...

Salt dough characters, animals etc painted and varnished, painted rocks, stain glass pictures using tissue paper then laminated, decorated nativity figures, lolly stick figures or scenes etc. Your creation will need to have a fixing to attach it to the cross e.g. string.

It is important your creation is waterproof as the cross will be displayed outside the church. If you don't have access to a laminator and you wish your piece to be laminated then please place your creation in a plastic wallet and seal with tape and a member of the church team will gladly laminate it for you.

Bring your Nativity Creation on Sunday 6th December ONLY. Between 11.30am - 1.30pm. You will be able to hang or attach your creation to our cross.

At this time you will also be able to collect your Christingle pack. This is so you can join in with the Christingle service via you tube the following Sunday 13th December at home. We will provide all the parts for your Christingle but unfortunately with it being a week apart we won't be able to supply the Orange.

Also due to the current situation, we won't be able to hold our annual Christmas Fair. Therefore, on the day this day 6th December 2020, we will have a small stall/table with gifts

to buy. It will be cash donations only.

Happy crafting. We can't wait to see our cross transformed into 'The Nativity Scene'.



Words for Today

I know a lot of our congregation have Word for Today as I do. Well on Sunday 18th October, it tells us how our minds can work for or against us. When it works for us it helps to keep us positive and enjoy each day (best we can!)

Keeping positive in terms of faith not fear! As the Bible tells us, the thoughts of the righteous are right (Proverbs 12:5)

Why not give the 'Word for Today' a go? it can be collected at the church or from me..

Ann Holland

Sowing and Growing In Faith

During Lockdown and since, I have been fortunate by being on the internet to join in with other church services as well as those of St. Mary's. One of the most recent ones was actually the Harvest one from Rev Susan Ball. This really struck home with me, for as Sue began to tell the story of Ruth and Naomi my ears pricked up, Ruth being my favourite book of the Bible. Here as Sue told, were two women virtually homeless and penniless, having travelled back after much loss to the homeland of Naomi. Once there Ruth the daughter-in-law went out early into the fields and as she followed behind the workers sowing the grain, she collected that which was dropped. For as Sue said, farmers in those days told their workers to drop a little for the poor. Sue brought us back then to the harvest we were celebrating and to one of the beneficiaries from St. Mary's harvest, the Foodbank, and that is what sort of awakened me. I had never thought like that before, my cupboards are usually always full, whilst others go hungry. It made me think hard and deep and in a way uncomfortable, so I give thanks to God for all He has provided for me and I thank Sue for a lesson that I have now well learnedfor even at my ripe old age I still have much to learn.

Jean Gaunt.

Your Opinion Counts (and a little bit of help too please!)

If you are joining our services online, please let us know how you are finding them. One or two people have had trouble hearing the services, try listening with earphones connected it seems to help, again please let us know.

Shhh..... Christmas is coming, although singing still isn't allowed at services we would like to try and play carols with words at the Carol Service, if anyone has got a CD with the carols being sung on it and you are willing to let us borrow it for this year's Carol Service please get in touch – all the contact details are on the front of the diary.

Thank you for your support

The Leadership Team

Remembrance Day 2020

Remembrance Day gatherings at cenotaphs throughout the country have, understandably been cancelled this year but we will be having our usual Remembrance Day Service at St Mary's. There is a national campaign to encourage people to mark Remembrance Day this year by putting a poppy in house windows. At the back of this month's diary you will find a poppy to cut out and colour to put in your window if you wish.

How God Helped Me Hold On to Who I am When Rishi Sunak Told Me to Rethink: Reskill: Reboot

I have never had what you would call a proper job...unless you count Macdonalds when I was 17 years old to pay my way through college. I did the whole career advisor thing in secondary school and thank God we never listened to him when he told us I should be an accountant. Instead, with the help of a very supportive family, I followed my passion and developed my skill in performing. From the age of 3, I've been singing and dancing, but I'd say it became more than just a hobby from around the age of 9. I even went so far as to train professionally in London for 3 years receiving world-respected tuition and a degree in musical theatre. I believe God gave me some natural talent but there has also been a lot of hard work, sacrifice, and pain involved (3 times to date I have dislocated my knee cap through dance and endured an operation and the rehab it took to return). But that hard work over the years has paid off! Since graduating 16 years ago I have been consistently employed in the creative arts; 7 years in a MOBO nominated girl band, 5 years as a presenter for a national radio station, and the past 4 years I've been an international singer. I feel like music and performing is who God created me to be.

So, when Covid and lockdown hit back in March maybe you can imagine how bereft I felt. Not just because I couldn't see friends and family, not just because I'd be missing out on a summer season in Cyprus, but because what I felt made me, me, performing to crowds and making them smile, became illegal! I was not allowed to use the gifts I've been given. Initially, I knuckled down choosing to focus on home schooling my children and supporting my husband. I even managed to start performing and singing nightly online and created a gorgeous

community through my Facebook platform, but it's honestly just not the same as being able to see the smiles you are bringing to people's faces.

I continued to pray and hold on to hope over the summer months that soon enough all would return to normal so at the end of September when we were told to expect the same for the next 6 months I had to ask myself some really honest questions. Who was I if not a performer? Had I let pride seep into my identity as a singer? What do I do next? How do I help support my family? Let's not beat around the bush, my husband is a teaching assistant and I'm a freelance singer, I can't afford to not be earning and, as helpful as the little financial grant I got from the government was, I had to date lost nearly £10,000 of my projected 2020 salary and that figure was only going to keep rising. How do I be who God designed me to be within the Covid climate and still keep a roof over my family's head?

I can say over the last month God has been slowly answering those questions and I have felt Him so close, through quiet times, through daily bible verses, through desperate prayers, and through counsel from wise friends. He has been encouraging me to look at what is in my hands. I am creative, I love organising, being outdoors, music and making people smile and I realised that all that can still happen, it might just look a little different for now. Although I feel so out of my comfort zone in the past 4 weeks I have set up 3 new business ventures all of which express different areas of my God-given creativity: A baking business (Cook's Cakes & Bakes), a garden maintenance business (Eden Garden Maintenance) and an online singing princesses venture (Virtually A Princess). I can see His hand at work in and through each of them already. Feel free to ask me about any of them if you wish, I'm more than happy to tell you and I have to say I couldn't have done it without the support and encouragement I've received thus far. It's totally the case that although my brain is so full and overwhelmed with all the 'new' I have a real sense of that 'peace which passes all understanding' (Phil 4.7)

It's baby steps, it's humbling, and I have so much to learn but I am realising that who I am hasn't changed. God is steadfast, unswerving, and reliable. He hasn't changed his opinion of me. My identity is the same as it always has been, it's in who He says I am, not in what I do for a living. I am still who He created me to be, I'm just expressing it differently for now. Honestly, it's not been a comfortable lesson, but it's been one well worth learning and hopefully one that I can carry forward into any future change of season in my life. I can now say, where just a month before I was lacklustre, I am now excited again for what the next few years hold for me career-wise. One day when I am allowed to perform to a real live audience again, I can do so knowing that what I do does not make me who I am. I can have confidence in knowing that a stage or a platform does not define me, nor does a politician saying my career choice is not viable... only His opinion matters and that has never faltered. If you want to chat with me about any of this just call me or check my Facebook page, but may I encourage you that, if you are facing similar questions in these unprecedented times, seek his opinion first, it's honestly the best one!

Jess

A Song For The Times

Recently I heard this song and thought it appropriate for the times we are living in:

In this world I walk alone, with no place to call my own

But there's one who holds my hand, a rugged road to barren land

The way is dark, the road is steep

He keeps me calm, my eyes to see, the strength of life my grief to bear

The Saviour is inside me there

In you love I find release, a peaceful love that follows me.

Refrain

Take my life and let me be a living prayer by God to Thee

In this time of life I cry, another voice inside my mind

He comforts me and gives me love, beside the love that follow's me

Refrain

Take my life and let me be a living prayer by God to Thee, a living prayer my God to thee

Ann Holland

Christmas Fair

Many people in our Church Family make things all year round to put on sale eventually at our Christmas Fair with all proceeds going to Church Funds. This year I'm sure this has carried on as usual, I know I have. We are thinking hard about how we can perhaps safely have some sort of Christmas Fair, perhaps it could be called a "Sale of Work" this year. However I have planted some hyacinth bulbs in painted pots – 3 bulbs in each pot - (I've actually planted them this year so you don't have to "do it yourself") and I've made some "light bottles" made from different fancy bottles (gin bottles in the main and I hate gin!) The planted bulbs come gift wrapped and cost £3.00 each and the light bottles cost £4.50 each. Both things make excellent gifts for teachers, child minders or as your Secret Santa and all proceeds go to church funds. I am happy to deliver if anyone is interested just let me know by the usual contact.

Christine



Community Page

Pumpkin muffins

150g butter or marg at room temp

175g dark brown sugar

115g treacle

1 egg, beaten

225g cooked or canned pumpkin

200g self raising flour

¼ tsp salt

1 tsp bicarbonate of soda

2 tsp ground cinnamon

1 tsp ground nutmeg

50g currants or chopped dried apricots

Preheat the oven to 220C/180C fan/gas mark 6.

Cream the butter, sugar and treacle until light and fluffy.

Add the egg and pumpkin and stir until blended.

Sift over the flour, salt, bicarb, cinnamon and nutmeg. Fold in but do not overmix.

Fold in the dried fruit.

Spoon the batter into muffin cases to about ¾ full.

Bake for 12-15mins until the tops spring back when pressed lightly.

Answers to Last Month's Quiz

I'm sorry we don't have the answers to last months quiz

November's Quiz

This month's quiz has been kindly submitted by Rosemary's sister Brenda. Brenda said she has really enjoyed the quizzes in the last few diary's (kindly supplied by Kate)

A_ _ _ _ _	A flowering tree
A_ _ _ _ _	A sweet smelling liquid
A_ _ _ _ _	A hill in Atham (Acts: 17 vv 19-22)
B_ _ _ _ _	A small precious stone
B_ _ _ _ _	A tree from which sweet smelling resin was obtained
C_ _ _ _ _	A sweet smelling plant
C_ _ _ _ _ seasoning	A small plant whose seeds are crushed and used for
C_ _ _ _ _	A spice made from bark
D_ _ _ _ _	Rev: 12.3 13.4; 20 2-3
D_ _ _ _ _	A small plant used for seasoning
E_ _ _ _ _	A cloth worn over the shoulder
F_ _ _ _ _	A small, cultivated plant, fibres are spun into thread
F_ _ _ _ _	A colourful, rather hard rock often glassy in appearance
G_ _ _ _ _	A semi precious stone
G_ _ _ _ _	A kind of deer
H_ _ _ _ _	It is very like cinnamon
M_ _ _ _ _	Exodus 16 v 23 Numbers 11 7-9
M_ _ _ _ _	Mark 15 V23 John 19 v39
O_ _ _ _ _	A semi precious stone
P_ _ _ _ _	A Jewish religious holiday
S_ _ _ _ _	A valuable stone
S_ _ _ _ _	A small Jewish religious party
U_ _ _ _ and T_ _ _ _ _	Two small objects used by Israelite Priests

We would like to thank everyone who has made a contribution to this month's diary, without **you** there wouldn't be one

If **you** would like to contribute something to the diary, please contact:

Christine

christine.withers12@talktalk.net

Facebook

Enter St Mary's church on your FB page search bar and you will see our Facebook page

St Mary's Church Website is

www.stmarydroylsden.co.uk

Church Flowers and Bookstall - Details from Church

Mothers Union - Details from Church

Tots Time (pre-school) - Diane Heywood/Margaret McCracken

Lighthouse - Bubbles (3-5yrs), Splash (5-8yrs) 2nd and 4th Sundays in Church Room

St Mary's Church of England Nursery and Primary School

Head Teacher, Miss K Hampson - 370 3948

250th Manchester Scout Group

Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers - 07973739041

5th Droylsden Brownie Guides - 339 0016

Rainbow Pack - 301 4251

St John's Band - 285 3583

