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tba

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Open 9am - 1pm Monday to Friday

**Room Bookings should be made through the Church Office**

*The Free Church is committed to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.*

## Free Church Worship



### Chapel Prayers 10am Monday - Saturday

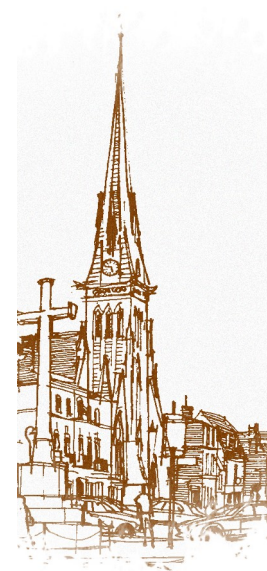
|              |       |  |
|--------------|-------|--|
| Sun 3rd Dec  | 11:00 | Revd Dr Catherine Ball<br>Holy Communion       |
| Sun 10th Dec | 11:00 | Geraldine Swain                                |
| Sun 10th Dec | 18:00 | Geraldine Swain<br>Joint service at Fenstanton |
| Sun 17th Dec | 18:00 | Carols by Candlelight                          |
| Sun 24th Dec | 11:00 | Revd Dr Catherine Ball<br>Nativity Service     |
| Sun 24th Dec | 18:00 | Family Service                                 |
| Sun 24th Dec | 23:30 | Midnight Candlelight<br>Communion Service      |
| Sun 31st Dec | 11:00 | Service led by the elders of the church        |
| Sun 7th Jan  | 11:00 | Revd Dr Catherine Ball<br>Holy Communion       |



## Fenstanton Worship

|                          |       |                        |
|--------------------------|-------|------------------------|
| Sun 3 <sup>rd</sup> Dec  | 9:30  | Revd Derek Newton      |
| Sun 10 <sup>th</sup> Dec | 9:30  | Revd Dr Catherine Ball |
| Sun 10 <sup>th</sup> Dec | 18:00 | Geraldine Swain        |
| Sun 17 <sup>th</sup> Dec | 09:30 | Geraldine Swain        |
| Sun 24 <sup>th</sup> Dec | 09:30 | Revd Peter Ball        |
| Sat 25 <sup>th</sup> Dec | 09:30 | Revd Dr Catherine Ball |
| Sun 31 <sup>st</sup> Dec | 09:30 | Keith Cakebread        |

# inspire



THE NEWSLETTER OF  
THE FREE CHURCH  
(UNITED REFORMED)  
SAINT IVES

# December 2017

## View from the Manse



### Seasons Greetings!

Winter *can* be cold and grey and dismal, but today the sun is shining and the frost on the leaves is sparkling! Winter *can* also have its own beauty – the red berries of holly and cotoneasters against the bright white snow, silhouettes of the bare trees against the low setting sun, and when it snows at night, waking up to a winter wonderland . . . and in the Church calendar, the special time of Advent and Christmas!

The anticipation of this special holy-day builds throughout the months of November and December – not only by colourful Christmas lights and decorations in shop windows and homes, and Christmas cards and emails sending warm wishes and catching us up with news from family and friends from afar – but also by our worship services and the Advent course which gradually take us through the greatest story ever told, the story of God entering our world in the baby Jesus.

It is an epic story covering thousands of years of God promising to send a deliverer to restore and renew our world to God's original intention of abundant life, justice and love. It is a

Cont'd.....

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## Inspire Editorial Team

December Editor  
Mary Anthony ☎469530

Val Bush ☎469189  
Christine Curtis ☎350787

Copy preferably by email please to  
[office@stivesfreechurch.org](mailto:office@stivesfreechurch.org)

..... Cont'd  
story with drama and excitement, surprise and joy, and most of all, a story of hope, promising to bring peace and goodwill to all. Wouldn't you want to rush out to buy the book and/or see such a film?

Even though we may have heard the story dozens of times before, it will never cease to reveal new insights, touch our hearts and encourage our faith in God and humankind. Do come to our Advent course on Monday evenings 7 pm at Fenstanton URC and journey with us in our services of worship as we begin with a Christingle service for the whole family on 26<sup>th</sup> November, the magical Readings and Carols service on the 17<sup>th</sup> December, through to Christmas Eve Midnight Communion by Candlelight service at the Free Church and Christmas morning at Fenstanton and experience the wonder and joy once again!

This year, let us refrain from moaning about the cold and bundle up and get out and enjoy the particular beauty and wonder of winter.

Happy Christmas to all and Peace in the New Year!

Love in Christ, Catherine and Peter

Services at The Free Church, St Ives

Sunday 17th December  
6pm Readings and Carols by Candlelight

Sunday 24th December  
11am Nativity Service  
6pm All Age Christmas Eve Service  
11:30pm Holy Communion by Candlelight

Christmas Day  
9:30am Worship at Fenstanton URC



Church Activities

|            |               |                              |
|------------|---------------|------------------------------|
| Mondays    | 19:00         | Bowls Club                   |
| Wednesdays | 10:00 - 11:30 | Tots & Carers Term time only |

Community Activities

|              |               |  |
|--------------|---------------|--|
| Mondays      | 10:00         | CRUSE  |
| Tuesdays     | 20:00         | St Ives Photographic Club                          |
| Wednesdays   | 14:00         | Senior Citizens Club                               |
| Thursdays    | 09:45         | Sunny Steps  |
| Sat 2nd Dec  | 09:30 - 16:00 | Saints Crafters Fair                               |
| Sun 3rd Dec  | 15:00         | Hemingford Ladies' Choir Concert                   |
| Wed 6th Dec  | 11:00         | U3A Current Affairs                                |
| Thu 7th Dec  | 19:30         | WI   |
| Fri 8th Dec  | 10:00         | COPE   |
|              | 19:30         | Mayor's Charity Christmas Concert                  |
| Sat 9th Dec  | 19:00         | Harmonia Music Concert                             |
| Sun 10th Dec | 18:00         | Rotary Club: 'A Musical Christmas Cracker' Concert |
| Mon 11th Dec | 13:30         | U3A French   |
| Wed 13th Dec | 19:30         | St Ives Gardening Club                             |
| Fri 15th Dec | 09:00         | U3A Local History                                  |
| Sat 16th Dec | 18:30         | St Ives Choral Society Christmas Concert           |
| Mon 18th Dec | 19:30         | Tapestry Christmas Concert                         |
| Tue 19th Dec | 10:00         | Alzheimer's Support Drop-In Cafe                   |
| Wed 20th Dec | 11:00         | U3A Current Affairs                                |
|              | 19:30         | RSPB   |
| Wed 3rd Jan  | 11:00         | U3A Current Affairs                                |
| Sat 6th Jan  | 18:00         | COSI Winter Concert                                |

The Minister and Elders wish you all a happy and peaceful Christmas and hope you will join us for worship.



Details of all services on Page 2

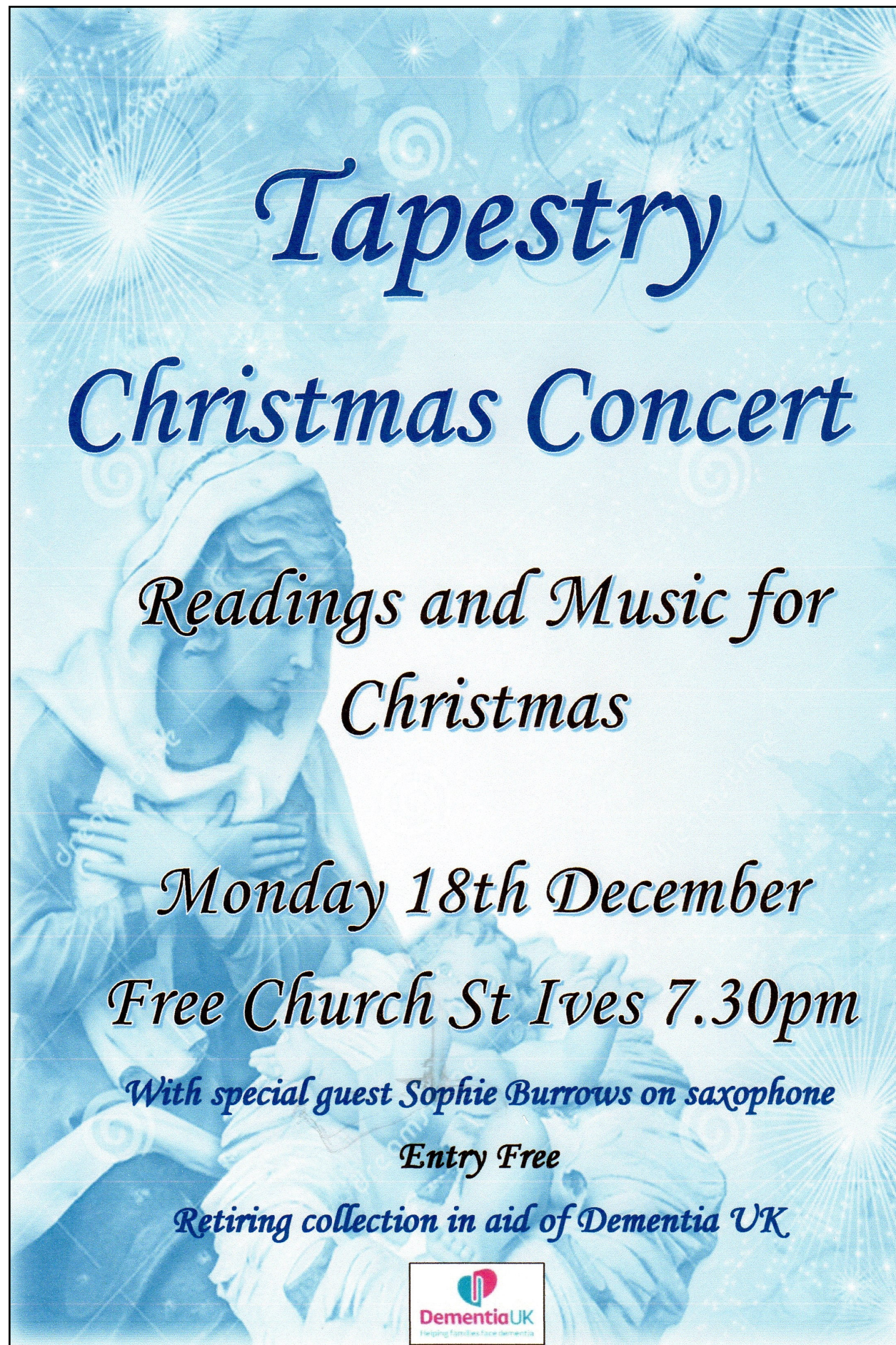
Save Our Spire

Bake Stall  
Monday 4th December  
10am - 1pm in the Foyer of the Church

All contributions gratefully received







# Tapestry Christmas Concert

## Readings and Music for Christmas


### Monday 18th December

### Free Church St Ives 7.30pm

*With special guest Sophie Burrows on saxophone*

**Entry Free**

*Retiring collection in aid of Dementia UK*



### From the Church Secretary

We are now in the season of Advent. The term is a version of the Latin word meaning 'coming'. It is time to get out the Advent calendars, lighting Advent wreaths, praying Advent daily devotionals, lighting a Christingle and putting up the Christmas decorations. In Inspire we list the Christmas services and the Christmas choirs and concerts that take place in our church, and we hope you will enjoy these. They are all part of the expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the nativity of Jesus at Christmas.



We have some new beginnings in December. Our minister is leading a 4-week Advent Course at Fenstanton URC on Monday evenings at 7pm to help us in our preparations. In December we also welcome Esmond Edwards, David Duffett, Barbara Duffett, Cindy Surtees and Helen Ackroyd as elders and trustees – encouraging them as they prepare for these roles.

We wish all our readers 'Seasons' Greetings'. May this Christmas bring you joy. The celebrations of the season encourage us to participate in community activities. Singing in the choir, or playing some carols on the piano, leading children's activities and for some of us using gifts we do not normally make time for. If we enjoy these activities at Christmas, perhaps we should develop and enjoy these gifts more often.

May this Christmas bring you times of peace. For many, such as those, on duty rotas in our hospitals and residential homes, or doing holiday cover, or busy parents this can be one of the more stressful times of the year – especially in the weeks of Christmas and New Year. So let's remember in our fellowship to watch out for each other and express thanks.

May this Christmas encourage you to be generous. Many charities launch special appeals over Christmas and it is good to be generous, especially for those facing hard times in winter. Resources can be in terms of time and/or money. We trust that guests will enjoy the church Christmas Day dinner that remains popular in St Ives, and that contributions to the Food Bank continue.

So may the season nurture goodwill in us all, and the New Year come in peacefully.

*Christine Macleod.*

### Inspire Newsletter

For the last 12 years or so we have had 4 editors for our newsletter: Keith Cakebread, Christine Curtis, Val Bush and Mary Anthony. Keith has decided that now is the right time for him to stand down as an editor. I am sure that we would all like to say a big thank you to Keith for his excellent work with publishing our monthly newsletter for so many years. Editing Inspire is time consuming but worth all the effort when we see the excellent result each month. We now have a vacancy on the team so if anyone feels they may be interested in joining the team please speak to one of the editors. Enjoy your retirement from editing Keith, you will be missed.

*This is what Keith does when he is not editing our Inspire Newsletter. Now that he is retiring from editing perhaps he can find more time to play with his wooden train!*





# Save Our Spire!

## Calendar of Events

On behalf of all church members and friends of the Free Church, the SOS fundraising team would like to thank those who have contributed to the well-being of the spire in so many ways over the past year. We are especially grateful for the many generous gifts from individual church members, friends and user groups.

We continue to be amazed and very grateful for the support and kindness shown to the Free Church by so many local groups and individuals.

A recent donation has been received from the Cromwell Quilters after their wonderful exhibition of quilts. The SOS team attended the St Ives Civic Society meeting in November to be presented with a donation of £2,000. Earlier in the year our fund received a tremendous boost when five of the St Ives Masonic Lodges, combined with the Huntingdonshire and Northamptonshire Provinces, donated £3,000. In addition, a member of one of the St Ives Masonic Lodges has given a personal donation of £2,000. In the summer, we were also delighted to receive a generous gift from the St Ives Rotary Club; and the Huntingdonshire District Council Community Chest, supported by the St Ives Town Council, granted us £2,000. An enormous "Thank You" to each and every one.

### The next events are:

|  |  |
|--|--|
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> December 3pm           | Hemingford Ladies Choir Afternoon Concert, with the kind offer of donations for the SOS Appeal                                     |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> December 10am to 1pm   | SOS Bake Sale – Please bring any savouries, cakes or biscuits for sale. All takings for the spire appeal.                          |
| 13 <sup>th</sup> January               | Chamber Orchestra Of St Ives Concert – in aid of the Spire Appeal. To round off the appeal year, and we are very grateful to COSI. |
| 20 <sup>th</sup> January (provisional) | A meal and musical entertainment to celebrate Saving Our Spire!  |

### Ongoing activities are:

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Sale of marmalade     | Jars of tasty homemade marmalades kindly provided by Charlotte are on sale in the centrum  |
| Smarties tubes        | We are still receiving tubes of Smarties with 20ps, thank you  |
| Family Tree Histories | Genealogy research reports of your family tree, with all donations to the Spire Appeal. Please contact Mavis.  |
| LOAF Recipe Book      | A unique booklet of recipes for cakes and pastries. Each recipe includes at least one LOAF ingredient. This will be available for sale at £3 during December. Please contact Mavis or Sally sallyrunham@btinternet.com |

For more details please contact the Church Office or nevrnham@btinternet.com .

## Christmas Thoughts



People may think or feel very differently about Christmas. Some look forward eagerly and with excitement – others with dread and sadness. In whatever way Christmas stirs our emotions, our feelings are very often reflections from past Christmases and events that have affected us in either childhood or adult life. As Christians we have reason for joy and celebration that has little to do with feelings and more to do with the fact of God's gift to the world, which is what we celebrate. Wesley described the incarnation in an unforgettable way – "our God contracted to a span, incomprehensibly made man". God became man in the form of a baby, the most dependent state of man. The provider of all became the most needy. The King of Kings was born in a place where cattle fed and slept not in a palace or place of privilege. His parents had no status or privilege but became the most remembered of all time, wherever the account of the incarnation of the Son of God has been proclaimed. Not for God's Son the surroundings of a modern maternity unit – God could have chosen a more suitable time and place for the birth of His son! But Jesus identified with all human need and claimed no special rights when he came to earth.

I worked in the Norfolk and Norwich maternity hospital when it was first opened and 'sparklingly' new. I think it was there that I first realized the contrast between my modern surroundings and the place of Jesus' birth. Jesus identified with all human need and conditions in His earthly life. This enables all to feel included in God's love and understanding from the street children of our world to those in highest authority. Christmas is a time for the giving and receiving of gifts. May our hearts, minds and lives be open to receive the greatest gift of God's love by allowing Jesus and the knowledge of Him to grow in us. May we offer to the King of Kings our lives to be used to serve Him by serving the community and family He has placed us in. May we all experience the love and joy of Christ's presence this Christmas time and His grace to sustain us in the coming year.

Faith

## Just Sharing The Fair Trade Shop



We have a lovely selection of Christmas decorations, cards and nativities as well as many beautiful craft items from around the world.





**ST IVES**  
CHORAL  
SOCIETY  
MUSICAL DIRECTOR  
Alison Daniels

# FAMILY CHRISTMAS CONCERT

**Featuring**  
**Junior Prime Brass**  
**Directed by Chris Lawrence**

**6.30 pm, 16 December**  
**Free Church St Ives**

**Tickets £5 (accompanied children under-16 free)**  
**Available from the Fair Trade Shop in the Free Church)**

Registered Charity No. 291640

## LOAF Recipe Book

The SOS team has produced a Recipe Book of cakes and biscuits which follow the LOAF principles (Local, Organic, Animal-friendly & Fairtrade) wherever possible. Several of the recipes were collected at the Garden Party held in July.



An ideal Christmas gift at a cost of only £3. Available early December from Tookey's and Just Sharing, the Fair Trade shop or phone Mavis on 01480 463117 to place your order.

Thank you

*Mavis*

## Table -Top Sale

Many thanks to all the people who donated items for the Table Top sale and tombola in October. A total of over £400 was raised for the Spire repair appeal.



A big thank you also to the Corn Exchange for offering the use of their building which enabled us to accommodate more tables.

*Mavis*

## MEDITATIONS ARE RETURNING!

Meditations on Christian themes will recommence on the second Tuesday of January (9th) at 2:30 pm at Fenstanton URC for the first month. This will be on the theme of "Renewal". The times and places of meditation sessions after that may well vary in the New Year so please watch out for notices about that.

I have been asked to suggest a Meditation for Christmas. Those of you who have been attending in the past will know how to begin. Those who have not, and would like to try, here is a suggestion of how you can begin. The form of meditation that we follow is one of relaxation and self-awareness so that body and mind are calm in order that we can receive more readily the words of scripture or Christian writings and contemplate their meaning. Do not attempt to meditate immediately after a meal.



**TO PREPARE:** Ensure that there will be no interruptions, e.g. switch off phones, etc, find the reading and have it ready by your seat. Sit as comfortably as you can in an upright chair, feet flat on the floor, hands on lap. Close your eyes and focus your thoughts first of all on the top of your head, then gradually move down the body, taking time to be aware of each part. When you eventually arrive at your feet, focus on your breathing. Study how the breath comes in and out, follow it, don't alter it unless you have to. Then, after a few minutes take up the reading. If you are distracted in any way by noises or disturbing thoughts, go back to following the breath for a couple of minutes. Imagine the sounds or thoughts are "passing clouds", observe them and simply allow them to pass. Don't react to them. Read the passage slowly and carefully, more than once, to get the full meaning. When you have done this, close your eyes once again and think over the reading several times. What did it mean to you? It's important to try and see what God is telling you through the reading. At all times remain in a calm state. The reading is LUKE Chapter 1 verses 26 to 42.

All the best

*John Williams*

Any problems, ring me on 01480 463 117 PLEASE DO NOT email, my computer is down.

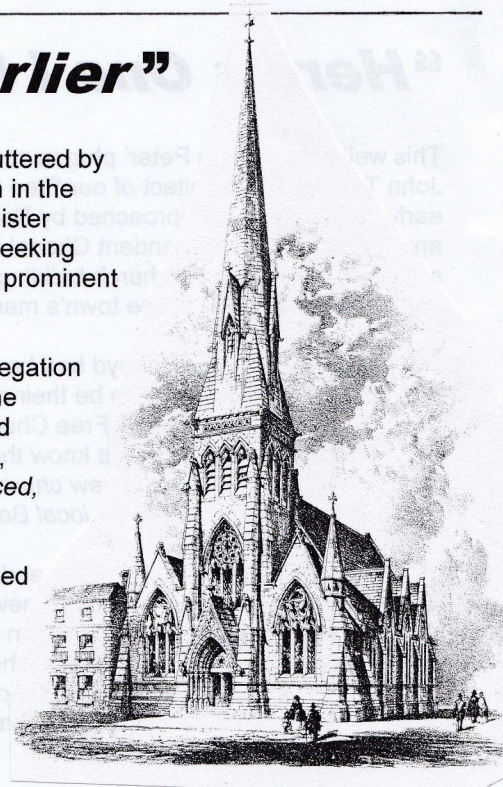


## “Here’s One I Made Earlier”

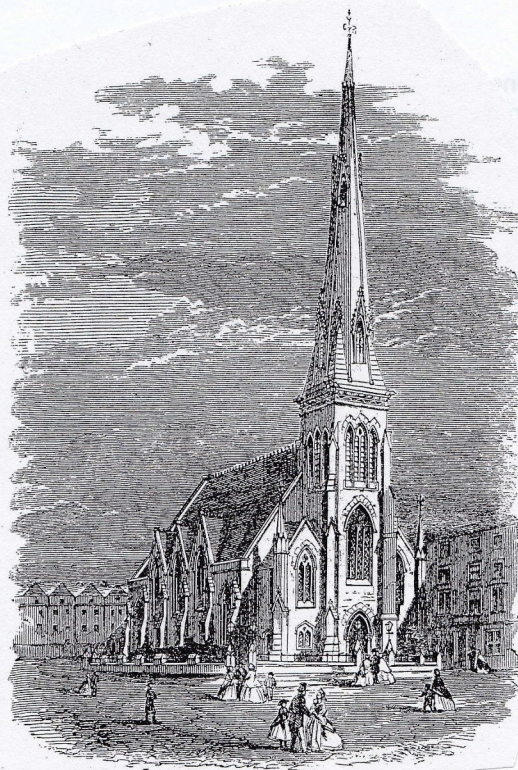
This well known ‘Blue Peter’ phrase could easily have been uttered by John Tarring, the architect of our Free Church building, when in the early 1860’s he was approached by Potto Brown and the Minister and Elders of the Independent Chapel in St Ives, who were seeking a bold design for a new church building to stand on the most prominent site in the very centre of the town’s market square.

In 1861 the Rev Thomas Lloyd had been called by the congregation of the Independent Chapel to be their minister. At this time the Chapel was in the building in Free Church Passage, occupied today by local businesses. We know that on arrival in St Ives, Rev Lloyd ‘found plans for a new church building well advanced, which included joining with the local Baptist congregation’.

There is no doubt that the Minister and Elders were determined to make a bold statement with their new church and with the wealth of Houghton miller Potto Brown at their disposal, they felt confident to search for an established architect who could create this for them. The architect they chose was John Tarring with a practice at Bucklersbury in London.



The Free Church, St Ives 1864



Tolmers Square Congregational Church 1863

John Tarring was born in 1806 at Holborn near Plymouth and worked there as a carpenter or plasterer until moving to London in 1828. He studied at Brown’s Academy in Wells Street and obtained a Royal Academy medal for measured drawing. He became a member of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1845 at the age of 39. He worked principally in London, later to be joined by his son Frederick William who would succeed him.

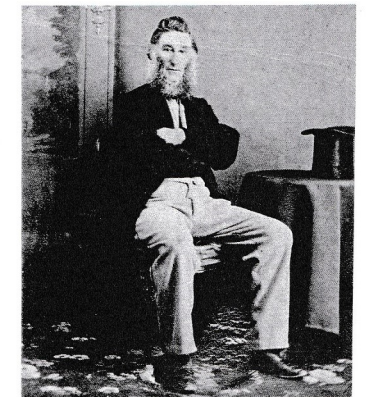
Known as the ‘Gilbert Scott of the Dissenters’, Tarring was the first architect to design a spire for a non-conformist church in London. He is thought to have influenced the Baptists and Congregationalists to adopt the ‘Gothic style’ for their churches.

In seeking to employ someone for their creative skills, it would be very natural for Potto Brown, Rev Lloyd and Elders to ask to see examples of their previous work.

There can be little doubt that one of the projects Tarring showed them was “one he had made earlier” for Tolmers Square Congregational Church in Euston, seen here on the left and completed in 1863.

Completed within 18 months of each other, the external similarity between the two churches is obvious and very striking. Not only would John Tarring be able to show the St Ives non-conformists the drawings of the Tolmers Square church, but it is very likely that he would have taken them to see the building in its early stages of construction. We cannot know for certain, but they surely must have been impressed by the Tolmer design, whose front was dominated by a soaring tower and spire which would exactly make the bold statement the St Ivesians were seeking for the prestigious town centre site which was ready and waiting for their new building.

Following their visit and further consultations, it is fair to assume that Potto Brown, Minister and Elders from St Ives enthusiastically commissioned John Tarring to create their new ‘Free Church’ for St Ives - based on ‘the one he had made earlier’ at Tolmers Square.



Architect John Tarring

This particular commission would have been good news for John Tarring on two fronts. First it would further enhance his reputation with the wider Non-Conformist church community. Secondly, the time taken to produce the working drawings for the St Ives building could be considerably reduced because a lot of the architectural detailing had already been resolved at Tolmers Square. Producing architectural drawings in the 1860’s was a very time consuming and laborious process.

Work began on the foundations for the new ‘Free Church’ building in 1863, the foundation stone being laid in the October of that year. Remarkably, within 12 months the building was complete and opened in September 1864 to great acclaim and joyful celebrations. Sadly, the ensuing histories of the two churches could not have been more different. Within 60 years the Tolmers church had become a cinema which closed in 1972. Eventually it was demolished to make way for housing. In great contrast, the Free Church was to flourish during the next 100 years. In 1980 a radical remodelling of the interior enabled the church to broaden its outreach and ministry to the local community which continues today.

SMD

The fragile drawing on the right is one of a handful of surviving drawings by John Tarring from the early 1860’s preserved in an RIBA collection housed at the Victoria and Albert Museum. In this cross section, are we looking towards the apse at the Free Church or the Tolmers Church? There are so many recognisable features of the Free Church in this drawing - the soaring stone arch; the roof detailing of the apse; the thin cast iron columns and the wooden tracery segments within the main roof beams. But this drawing is of the Tolmers Square Church. Remove the sloping gallery seating on each side and this drawing probably illustrates how our Free Church building looked on the day it opened in September 1864.

