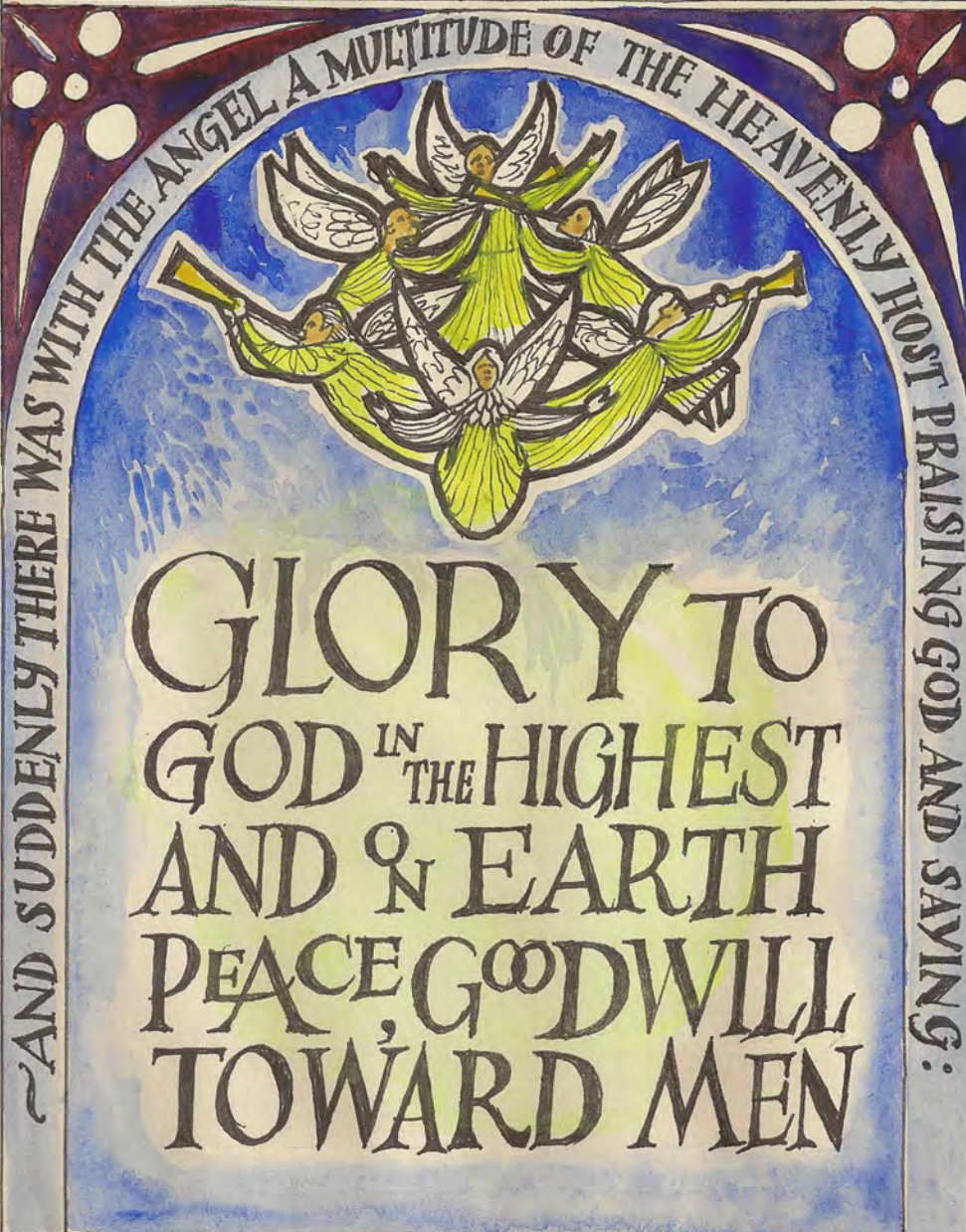


CHRISTMAS GREETINGS



ST JAMES CHURCH — 2014
CHRISTLETON

Countdown to Christmas

Mon	1	10.45 am	Holy Communion at Oaklands NH
		11.30 am	Holy Communion at Tarvin Court NH
		7.30 pm	PCC - Parish Hall
Wed	3	10.45 am	United Communion - followed by refreshments
Thur	4	12.00 noon	United Prayer Lunch - Methodist Church
Fri	5	6.30 pm	Choir Practice
Sun	7	Second Sunday of Advent	
		8.00 am	Holy Communion (CW)
		10.45 am	Holy Communion (CW)
		10.45 am	Sunday Club - Parish Hall
		6.30 pm	Holy Communion (EW)
Mon	8	2.00 pm	Mothers' Union Advent Service - St James
Wed	10	10.45 am	Holy Communion - followed by refreshments
		11.30 am	Holy Communion at Birch Heath Lodge NH
Fri	12	6.30 pm	Choir Practice

NB: Last date for contribution to January Parish Magazine to Janet Milton (325529) You can attach your Word Document and e-mail: christletonmag@hotmail.co.uk or christlemag@spraff.net

Sat	13	5.00 pm to 8.00 pm	Victorian Street Market
Sun	14	Third Sunday of Advent	
		8.00 am	Holy Communion
		10.45 am	Toy Service -You are invited to bring a wrapped gift which should be labelled accordingly for a boy/girl and with the age for which the gift is suitable. The gifts will be given to a local charity
		10.45 am	Sunday Club - Parish Hall

		6.30 pm	Holy Communion (CW)
Mon	15	12.30 pm 2.00 pm 7.00 pm	Luncheon Club —Parish Hall Primary School Carol Service - St James Primary School Carol Service - St James
Wed	17	10.45 am	Holy Communion - followed by refreshments
Fri	19	6.30 pm	Choir Practice
Sun	21	Fourth Sunday of Advent	
		8.00 am	Holy Communion (CW)
		10.45 am	Morning Prayer (BCP)
		4.00 pm	Messy Christmas - Parish Hall
		6.30 pm	Service of Nine Lessons and Carols
Wed	24	CHRISTMAS EVE	
		4.00 pm	Crib Service
		7.00 pm	Carols Round the Tree
		11.30 pm	First Holy Communion of Christmas (CW)
Thur	25	CHRISTMAS DAY	
		8.00 am	Holy Communion (CW)
		10.45 am	Holy Communion (CW)
Fri	26		Feast of St Stephen
		10.45 am	Holy Communion (BCP)
Sun	28	First Sunday of Christmas	
		8.00 am	Holy Communion (CW)
		10.45 am	Morning Prayer (CW)
		6.30 pm	Holy Communion (CW)
Wed	31	10.45 am	Holy Communion - followed by refreshments

Bible Verse: Ecclesiastics 3 vs 1 “To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:”

Message from our Rector



As we approach the Christmas season, we will sing many of the familiar Christmas Carols, perhaps without really giving thought to their words.

One of the most popular Christmas Carols is “Away in a manger” the author is unknown, although it is attributed, that the Theologian and Pastor, Martin Luther, wrote the Carol, as it first appeared in a Lutheran Service book.

If you consider the words it conjures up images of a nice cosy shelter, for a young mother to give birth to her son, with cattle, and sheep, and a nice soft warm manger for the child to be placed.

The reality of course, and those who have ever visited a cattle shed will testify, is that they are quite grim places, the smell, and dirt and flies, are hardly the place for any person to give birth, or to be born.

However, the image is so much better than the reality, after all, who would want to believe that even 2000 years ago, people would be so hard that they would refuse to offer suitable accommodation for an expectant mother.

Even when this young mother had given birth, there was an urgency to leave that place, not because of the risk of disease, but something far worse.....danger of death.

The life of this young mother and especially her new child was in danger, as orders had been given to seek him out and kill him.....not something we sing in the Carol.

We can ask, what have we learned over the past 2000 years ? How have our values and respect for human life changed ? Sadly, even today, expectant mothers in many places throughout the world are giving birth to their children in conditions

no different to those of Mary and the infant Jesus. Sadly, there are still many dangers, not only of disease, but from those who wish them harm, if they belong to the wrong ethnic or religious group.....if they are perceived to be a threat.

Christmas is a time for fun and rejoicing, but it's also a time when we can make a real difference in the lives of others, by prayer, and practical support.

So this year, each time you hear, or sing that wonderful Christmas Carol, "Away in a manger" rejoice and have fun, but also make a conscious decision to do something which will make life easier for those in poverty and fear.



Your faithful servant,
Malcolm.

The December Cover by Phil Hodges

Our sincere thanks once again to Phil for his superb cover for our December magazine. Phil has produced the cover with a Christmas design for the Parish Magazine for many years. This is first opportunity to have one of his excellent designs produced in full colour.

Back Cover

Part of the Advent collage in the Lady Chapel, produced by the late Dorothy Colley and children from Christleton Primary School.

Girls from Leh Ladakh at the font at St James' Christmas 1987. These delightful young ladies spent five months in our village thanks to the support of Gertrude Wright and friends.

WHAT'S ON THIS MONTH

SUNDAY CLUB

Held in the Parish Hall from 10.45 am – 11.45 am each Sunday during term-time, except when Family Service is held at St James. For further details please contact Berenice Kirwan, 336779.

CHRISTLETON METHODIST CHURCH

We meet for Informal Prayers and a Simple Lunch on the first Thursday of each month at 12 noon. All welcome. There is no charge for the lunch but a donation to cover costs would be appreciated.

CHRISTLETON W. I.

Meets on the second Wednesday of the month at 7.15 pm in the Parish Hall. Further details may be obtained from the Secretary, Miss Ida Rogers, Chester 350060.



CHESTER FLOWER CLUB

Meetings are held in Christleton Parish Hall on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 1.30pm. Details of any events can be obtained from the Secretary, Mrs Lilian Hopley. Telephone Chester: 676683.

MAGAZINE CONTRIBUTIONS

Please ensure all items for inclusion in the **January** edition are sent to Janet Milton (325529), as soon as possible **BEFORE Friday 12th December** or you can e-mail this to: christletonmag@hotmail.co.uk OR christletonmag@spraff.net

MAGAZINE DISTRIBUTORS

The **December** magazine will be available for collection from Church on **Sunday 30th November**.

Nature Notes

Barn Owls

Earlier this year I reported on a very successful breeding season for barn owls, after the complete disaster of a breeding season in 2013. Young barn owlets seemed to be everywhere, and 15 were born to three pairs locally. Just two weeks ago, one of the pairs even had a second clutch, and yet more young owls have almost reached fledging, before the colder weather sets in. Keep your eyes open at dusk, because with fewer leaves on the trees you might just catch sight of one of our young owls hunting. However autumn is setting in and the frosts have come, as have the wintering thrushes from northern Scandinavia.



On the last weekend of October I saw good numbers of both fieldfare and redwing feeding on hawthorn berries, their favourite diet when they arrive on these shores. I've mentioned these beautiful thrushes many times before in these nature notes, but they still have the capacity to thrill, seeing such elegant birds in close up after their long journeys. I hope to see them in their natural surroundings next summer, but that's another story. Several nature programmes have featured murmurations of starlings, clouds of more winter visitors creating patterns in the sky. Well we haven't anything like a large number in the area yet, but a good group are roosting in the yew trees at St James' Churchyard, and make a delightful show when dusk is near. They also give the game away to locate them, by chattering in the tree-tops. DC

Bible Verse: Psalm 145 vs 4: "One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts".

The History File

Remembering the Fallen

On 11th November the annual Armistice Commemoration for the Fallen will take place in Whitehall. Four Hot Scholars from the History Department at Christleton High School have been invited to take part in the Ceremony and lay a wreath. This invitation was received from members of the Western Defence Association who saw & heard them at the inaugural event of the Christleton Village Voices Project at the High School in October. Following on from that, more remembrance activities are planned including the re-enactment of the famous WWI football match in no man's land. This will take place at the High School in December.



Although our primary research for information about our fallen is being done through local sources and increasingly the internet, I wanted to visit the Imperial War Museum, to see their new 1914-18 Gallery, and maybe find books to help our search for detailed information. It would also allow us the opportunity to see the inspirational installation of ceramic poppies around the Tower of London depicting the 888,246 lives lost during the War. This temporary installation 'Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red' will be removed after 12th November and the poppies sold for worthy Military Charities. It has already been seen by more than four million people. This powerful and poignant display has had these beautifully crafted ceramic poppies gradually added to it each day to commemorate each of the British and

Commonwealth soldiers who fell during the First World War. Standing at least ten deep in the pouring rain, looking out at rank upon rank of ruby red poppies glistening in the rain and reflected light from floodlights, we listened to the reading of names of some of the fallen soldiers, the exhortation of the poem

by Lawrence Binyon, and the sounding of the last post. The silence of the occasion was incredible, from such a huge assembly of visitors, many from across the globe. The poignant ceremony meant such a lot to so many people. I'm really glad we made the effort, to realize that each poppy stood for a real person, who went out to serve on our behalf that we might be free today.

Another WWI exhibition that is really well worth seeing is an outdoor one at the far end of Horse Guards Parade as it backs onto Green Park. Here the Fields of Battle 14-18 Lands of Peace Organisation have put on a display of First World War Landscape Images by Michael St Maur Sheil. These capture the land as it is today, where battles were fought and lives lost. The photographer says at the end of the introduction to his beautiful book; "They were Fields of Battle in 1914-18; today, one hundred years later, they are Fields of Peace. May they ever remain so" DC

People in the News

Cliff Bridge who died peacefully on 23rd September aged 102yrs.

This is just a short tribute to Cliff who was so much part of the life of Christleton during the 63years he lived here. He was born at Hyde in 1912. He left school at 14yrs, becoming an apprentice bricklayer and after much studying at Stockport College eventually gained a H.N.C in Building & Construction. This was the grounding for a very successful career, because after marrying Joan in 1937, he gained employment as Chief Planning Officer with Chester City Council, most memorably supervising the building of some parts of Chester Zoo (subject of the recent TV Series). During the dark days of WWII although he was in a reserved occupation, he was determined to serve his country, and in 1943 joined the Royal Engineers. He became an Offi-

cer, and later Garrison Architect, helping design equipment for the Normandy Landings. In 1960 he helped design and build houses at The Park in the village, adjacent to the grounds of the newly built Christleton Secondary School. He taught Building Construction at Carlett Park & became Fellow of the Institute of Architects and Building Construction.

Cliff was Churchwarden & sidesman at St James, a member of Christleton Parish Council, a Freemason, President of Probus in Chester, and a member of the National Trust.

He was a keen footballer in his youth playing for Boughton Hall, and loved cycling with the Cyclists Touring Club once covering over 100 miles in 5 1/2 hours. He also loved touring on a tandem with his wife Joan, and taking his young family including sons Roderrick and John abroad in an old Austin 40, camping and walking in the mountains of France, Austria & Switzerland.

Cliff taught himself to paint in his latter days, often painting scenes from trips with his many National Trust friends from the Chester Area. These could be seen proudly displayed all around his bungalow.



Great sadness occurred in 1999 when his beloved wife Joan died, and then son John a few months later. He also lost partner Dorothy who was a good friend to him. He was supported to the last by his family, but was a fiercely independent gentleman, sharp and astute and loved living in his own house in the village. He was a great diarist which he kept until quite recently. He loved the village, the people and especially the church. He would walk to the Village Green each day, often be seen being helped onto buses or given lifts to Chester or just to Sainsbury's. He loved his food, and would always have "seconds" at our Luncheon Club in the Parish Hall, and it's perhaps appropriate that he shared his 102 birthday at the Luncheon Club in July surrounded by lots of his friends from the village. He even made a short speech, saying how grateful he was to be there and enjoying his birthday. Cliff was a village personality with such style, a true gentle man. He will be missed. DC

FOOD BANK

To date, we as a community have donated 400kgs of food since January – a fantastic achievement!

Last week I took 36kgs of food including a donation from the pre school in the village – a big thank you.

Please keep the food coming, further cuts or delays in benefits always affect the most vulnerable in society – add that extra item to your weekly shop!!

Many thanks. *Mike Lightfoot*

CHRISTMAS CANDLES

As we approach Christmas time, our thoughts and prayers will turn towards those who we love and see no longer. We will again this year, decorate the Church window ledges with candles, which will bear the name(s) of our loved ones. The candles will be lit during the services of Nine Lessons and Carols (Sunday 21 December at 6.30 pm), First Holy Communion of Christmas (Christmas Eve at 11.30 pm) and Christmas morning (at 10.45am).

If you would like a candle or candles bearing the name of your loved one, please print the name of the person you wish to be remembered on the form at the back of Church (there is also a donation box, should you feel able to make a donation). Please ring the *Rector* (335563) or *Janet Milton* (325529) for more information.

Light hearted joke

Wife: "How would you describe me?"

Husband: "ABCDEFGH IJK."

Wife: "What does that mean?"

Husband: "Adorable, beautiful, cute, delightful, elegant, fashionable, gorgeous, and hot."

Wife: "Aw, thank you, but what about IJK?"

Husband: "I'm just kidding!"

NURSE EDITH CAVELL 1865 – 1915

World War 1 is very much in the news today and Edith Cavell's 100th Anniversary is next year.

Edith Louise Cavell was born in a vicarage at Swardeston in Norfolk and grew up there. She had a flair for French which she had learned easily and quickly, resulting in several jobs as a governess and was recommended for a post in Brussels in 1890.

She returned to her home village in 1895 to nurse her father through illness and this is when she decided to take up nursing.

She returned to Brussels and joined a training school for lay nurses. Edith often returned to visit her mother who was living in Norwich and it was there that she heard of the German invasion of Belgium and went back to Brussels.

In the Autumn of 1914 two stranded British soldiers found their way to Nurse Cavell's training school and were spirited away to neutral territory in Holland, resulting in an underground lifeline and some 200 soldiers were helped in their escape. Two members of the escape team were arrested on 31 July 1915 and five days later Edith was interned. She was tried in secret and sentenced to death by German Military authorities along with four others and despite frantic efforts to save her Edith was executed by firing squad at a rifle range just outside Brussels at dawn on 12 October 1915.

The Allies acclaimed Nurse Cavell as a martyr and within eight weeks of her death, recruitment into the British Army had doubled.

After the war her remains were taken to Westminster Abbey for the first part of a burial service on 15 May 1915 and a train then took her to Thorpe Station Norwich, from where a large procession followed her to the Cathedral where she is buried outside.

Speaking to a Cathedral member of staff after our visit she said that next year Edith's grave is to be refurbished in line with the War Graves Commission style and access to it will be directly from a chapel so that people will be able to visit it directly without going a long way round, outside. *Margaret Croston*

Salonika "The forgotten War" And the 12th Cheshires

Like many other people I have taken a car over to France and toured the W.W.1 Battlefields, visited the memorials and museums marvelled at how Ypres and Albert have been rebuilt. We have visited the Menin Gate and found the name of my wife's uncle who at the age of 19 disappeared into the Flanders mud and we have attended the evening ceremony. We have visited many cemeteries, but who has visited the Lembet Road cemetery in Salonika, who has heard of it? I hadn't until I looked it up. It contains the graves of 1648 allied soldiers.

When the war broke out the Cheshire Regiment had three regular Battalions two on active service and one in reserve. There were also a number of Territorial Battalions all were called up. Then Kitchener's New Army was formed initially made up of volunteers and bringing the Battalion strength up to very many more. The 12th Cheshires [my Father's Battalion] were raised in Chester in September 1914 and after training in England landed in Boulogne in September 1915 moving to Salonika in November 1915.

The fuse for the W.W.1 was lit when Archduke Franz Ferdinand heir to the Austrian throne was assassinated in Sarajevo. Austria-Hungary with the backing of Germany blames Serbia. Britain tried to negotiate a political solution but of no avail, Austria invaded Serbia and so the conflict started. Italy and Russia allied itself with Serbia and eventually Bulgaria allied itself with Germany. Britain at the invitation of Greece establishes a

bridge-head in Salonika [Thessaloniki] to come to the aid of Serbia now overrun and a new front was established.

The following is a portion of a report on the conflict:

Our attack on ‘Pip Ridge’ was led by 12th Cheshires. The battle opened with a crash of machine-gun fire, and a cloud of dusty smoke began to blur the outline of the hills, Almost immediately the advancing battalion was overwhelmed in a deadly stream of bullets which came whipping and whistling down the open slopes.

Those who survived were followed by a battalion of Lancashire men, and a remnant of this undaunted infantry fought its way over the first and second lines of trenches - if indeed the term “line” can be applied to a highly complicated and irregular system of defence, taking full advantage of every fold or contortion of the ground. In its turn, a Shropshire battalion ascended the fatal ridge. By this time the battle of the “Pips” was a mere confusion of massacre, noise and futile bravery. Nearly all the men of the first two battalions were lying dead or wounded on the hillside.

Colonel Clegg and Colonel Bishop were killed; the few surviving troops were toiling and fighting in what appeared to be inevitable and immediate death. The attack was ending in a bloody disaster. No orders could reach the isolated cluster of men who were still trying to advance on the ridge. Contact aeroplanes came roaring down through the yellow haze of dust and smoke, hardly able to see what was going on, and even flying below the levels of the Ridge and Grand Couronne. There was only one possible ending to the assault. Our troops in the military phrase of their commander, “fell back to their original positions” Of this falling back I will say nothing. There are times when even desperate heroism has to acknowledge defeat
I think that it might have been at this battle that my father was severely wounded and eventually invalided out of the army.

Ben Williams

Bible Verse: 2 Sam 22: 35 “He teacheth my hands to war; so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms”.

Reminiscing Christleton Village Fete 2014

The rain tried very hard to dampen our carnival spirit but an amazing day was had by all at our 'Brazilian' Village Fete, we even saw some sunshine!!

The procession was led by The Wirral Pipe Band and the fete was officially declared open by the lovely Margaret Croston BEM and her husband Alf who went on to choose the fancy dress winners. David Cummings compered throughout the day introducing Terry Large and his brilliant birds,



singer 'Natasha Peto' and the fabulous 'Kings of Wervin'. A record number of stalls meant that we were borrowing gazebos left right and centre but it all made for a huge choice of things to do and buy including Bottle Lamps from Lumen8, Balloons, Glitter Tattoos, Handmade Bags, Swanbola, Popcorn, Burgers and Beer!!

The fetes crowning glory was the 5 brand new games, designed, made and very generously donated to the fete by the lovely Paula and Sean Hemens of Bedtime Beds. This donation has helped the Fete tremendously to ensure its survival, without local support, sponsorship and a good voluntary committee, the fete would not happen each year.

As some of you will have noticed our well used gazebos are looking a little worse for wear so we are very pleased to announce that Councillors Parker and Parker have kindly donated £2000 for us to put towards the cost of buying some new double gazebos!!!!!!



Finally, this year we will be donating £2586.16, to 17 different causes. Please take a look at our website for a full list of donations. www.christletonfete.org.uk

Thanks again for all your continued support, The Fete Committee



The Parish of
St James, Christleton



**What are you
doing on
Christmas
Eve?**

Join us in Church for our new

Crib Service

at 4.00pm on 24th December

**For the very young, their parents,
grandparents, godparents, family
and friends to enjoy
the message of Christmas.**

THE MONTHLY
CHRISTLETON

LUNCHEON CLUB

IN PARISH HALL

12 noon for 12.30 serving
No charge, donations welcome

Next Lunch:



Monday
15th December



.... after that: 19th Jan; 16th Feb; etc.



All welcome. Book a place by calling:

Liz: 409414, or Janet: 325529,
or Chris: 335562, or sign the list in Church



The Parish of St James, Christleton

TO BE A PILGRIM....

TO BE A PILGRIM.... A weekly home group will start in January on a Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday morning. The group will choose which morning they prefer. For 6 weeks it will follow the Pilgrim course which is designed to help us explore our faith.

It will be suitable for everyone whether you are new to this and wondering what the Christian Faith is all about, or whether you have been a member of the church for years and would like to explore a little more. See the article in the November magazine.

Talk to Elizabeth Inall (336500) or Barbara King (300756) to find out more or to book a place. Please do this soon as booklets will need ordering. Thank you.

Be Thankful it is Christmas

It is Christmas and we should be thankful as we celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ and what he did for us. The Bible tell us in, I Thess. 5:18 to “Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” Sometimes the circumstances of our lives are not always the best. In fact, they may be downright bad, but still, we are to look for something to be thankful for!

And there is ALWAYS something positive for which we can be thankful! We should give thanks to God in all situations especially during this christmas time. Dr. Dale Robbins wrote that, “He used to think people complained because they had a lot of problems. But he had come to realize that they have problems because they complain. Complaining doesn’t change anything or make situations better. It amplifies frustration, spreads discontent and discord, and can invoke an invitation for the devil to cause havoc with our lives.”

Complaining makes us miserable because, Psalm 77:3 says, “I complained and my spirit was overwhelmed.” Instead we should dwell on Philippians 2:13 which tell us “Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe.”

A positive, thankful person is a great witness in this dark world especially during this Yuletide. We only shine when we are thankful. Our light shines for the Lord when we are thankful, when we live it and express it! Instead of looking at the negatives in our lives and complaining, we must look at the positives and give thanks.

The bible in I Thess. 5:18 tell us “Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” A woman living on a farm in Germany told this story to her minister as she made an offering of about \$10.

As she laid down the money she said: “In former years I have

had to pay about this amount in medicine. This year there has been no sickness in my family. I want to show my gratitude to the Lord in this way.”

Some time later this same woman again came to her minister with about \$5, explaining that many of her neighbors had suffered some losses in a recent windstorm, but that her farm had been spared. “I bring the church this donation as an offering of thanks.” That’s gratitude!

We should be Thankful for.....

....the taxes we pay because it means we are employed.

....the clothes that fit a little too snugly because it means we have enough to eat.

....our shadow that watch us work because it means we are out in the sunshine.

....a lawn that needs mowing, windows that need cleaning and gutters that need fixing because it means we have a home.

....the spot we find at the far end of the parking lot because it means we are capable of walking.

....our huge heating bill because it means we are warm.

....all the complaining we hear about our government because it means we have freedom of speech.

....the lady or gentleman behind us in church who sings off key because it means that we can hear.

....the piles of laundry and ironing because it means our loved ones are nearby.

....the alarm that goes off in the early morning hours because it means that we are alive.

....the weariness and aching muscles at the end of the day because it means we have been productive.

A young man was feeling very proud of himself. As a brand new college graduate he had taken his Exams and passed with flying colors. Now he was a full-fledged Certified Public Accountant.

His father had been an immigrant to the western world, and now owned his own little business. Filled with self-importance, the young man began to criticize his father’s way of keeping books. He said, “Dad, you don’t even know how much profit

you've made. Over here in this drawer are your accounts receivable. Over there are your receipts and you keep all your money in the cash register. You don't have any idea how much money you've made."

The father answered, "Son, when I came to this country the only thing I owned was a pair of pants. Now, your brother is a doctor, your sister is an art teacher, and you are a C.P.A. Your mother and I own our home. We have a car and we own this little business. Now add that up, subtract the pants and all the rest is profit."

ADD IT UP! That's exactly what we need to do this Christmas. Add it all up. We came into this world with nothing but the eternal soul that God gave us.

Everything else is profit. We can never give too much thanks to God! Especially during this time of the year we should be thankful as we remember the birth of our Lord God Jesus Christ by casting all our anxiety on him because he cares for us. Amen.
Remain blessed and Merry Christmas.

What have you called him?

Do you like your name? Some people do, even if they were named after a well-known celebrity! Sometimes we like to shorten our names, such as Eleanor to Ellie, but usually the name we are given by our parents is the one we keep for the rest of our lives. Of course, people change their name for all sorts of reasons.

For example, Marion Morrison, the American actor, changed his name to John Wayne! Or, if we don't change our name we adopt a nickname and only hope it's a favourable one! Would-be parents have the task of choosing a name for their baby, but in the Christmas story things were different. The

parents of Jesus didn't have to select a name. Both Mary and Joseph were told by an angel what to call their new baby. Their Child was given a special name. They were told to call Him 'Jesus' because He would be the 'Son of the Most High God' and 'save His people from their sins'.

This Baby had a name that described who He was and what He would do. We can only speculate on how Mary and Joseph felt after this announcement. They must've wondered what this Baby was to be like in the years to come. Interestingly, when the angel spoke to the shepherds in the fields of Bethlehem, they were not provided with the name 'Jesus'. Instead, they were told He was their 'Saviour' and 'Christ the Lord'. Perhaps, the shepherds shared these extra names with Mary and Joseph, and the significance was reinforced a little later in the temple by the prophet Simeon. Jesus was the promised Messiah.

At Christmas, in our special services, it is usual to read again the words of Isaiah. He described Jesus with names such as Immanuel (God with us) and Prince of Peace. Our carols, traditional and contemporary, add more names and titles that help us celebrate Christ's coming. We use them to thank God for the everlasting life He gives to us. As the apostle Peter said (who knew Jesus personally!) 'No other name has been or will be given to us by which we can be saved, only this one' (Acts 4:12 'The Message'.) Thanks be to God for Jesus who has the Name above all names.

FACING UP TO OUR GIANTS

David coveted Uriah's wife, slept with Bathsheba so she became pregnant and then murdered Uriah to cover up his actions. It appeared that David had got away with it, until the prophet Nathan confronted him with his sin (2 Samuel 12:1-14). Nathan spoke with courageous obedience and wisdom from God, result-

ing in David acknowledging his wrongdoing. How do we have those difficult conversations at work, with friends and family, or in our communities, when we want to speak up for truth and justice? Nathan told the story of a wealthy man who stole a lamb from his poor neighbour. David was quick to condemn: 'David burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan, 'As surely as the Lord lives, the man who did this must die!''(5). However, Nathan challenged David, 'You are the man!' (7). Like Nathan, to be effective in difficult conversations we need to equip ourselves with four things:

Right Truth: The facts of the situation were evident to Nathan, seeing Bathsheba and her child were living in David's house. If we are going to challenge wrongdoing, we have to be sure of the facts, otherwise we are shooting in the dark! How often do we make efforts to overlook obvious wrong or injustice?

Right Timing: Nathan waited for the right time to speak, recognising that the child was about a year old. Rather than sounding off in the heat of the moment, we have to seek God's timing and like Nathan confront privately. In God's timing we will find that the message, though painful, will have impact.

Wise Words: Nathan did not directly speak to David about his sin. He used the story to get David to acknowledge his guilt. What words can we use that will enable the person to own the reality of their situation?

Fearless Courage: Nathan's courage was God given! He didn't trust his own strength or wisdom. In confronting wrongdoing we should not fear losing a friend. It is not a choice between telling the truth and keeping a friend, for God will honour us and often others want to hear the truth about their predicament, 'faithful are the wounds of a friend' (Proverbs 27:6, ESV).

As a result of this conversation, David acknowledged before Nathan, 'I have sinned against the Lord.' (13). The worst thing we can say to a friend when they ask, 'why didn't you tell me the truth?' is 'I didn't want to hurt you!!'

Love This Christmas

JESUS CHRIST said, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, so you must love one another: By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:34-35).

Everybody loves to be loved. To be loved you have to love. Then comes the question, “How do you love?”

First, in our confused society we would do well to define love. The New Testament word for it most often used is AGAPE. It is selfless love such as God has for us. It is unconquerable benevolent, invincible good will. This love is not an emotion to be aroused but instead, it is a principle we should deliberately live by. It is spontaneous and self-giving without regard for merit.

“How can I learn to love?”

Psychologists tell us that babies are not born knowing how to love. However, they do have the capacity to receive love, to experience it. In effect they have to learn to love by observation and experience from how they are loved. If a child does not experience it from parents, it dramatically influences the child. Dr. Rene Spitz of New York University has studied many children living in secular orphanages and concludes that unloved children are much slower in development. Love is not only a part of our development, it aids our total development.

It is said we learn how to love from the parent of the same sex, and we learn who to love from the parent of the opposite sex. Ideally we learn to love from our parents. With a breakdown in the traditional family and with so many poor role models for children to relate to, more and more people are finding it difficult to learn how to love.

The Bible says, “God is love.” It doesn’t simply say, “God loves.” He does, of course; but the point is He is love. To learn to love go to the source and experience His love. By doing so you can learn to love. 1 John 4:19 tell us “We love because he first loved us”. Christ has shown us the true meaning of love by loving us.

By experiencing His love we learn how to love. When we commit our life to Christ, we begin to experience His love; and it spontaneously shows in our relationships with others. “He who does not love does not know God, for God is love” (1 John 4:8) We set standards we want people to come up to so that we can love them. We don’t really love them; we love their good qualities. As miraculous as it is God loves you just as you are Ephesians 4:30-32.

Sometimes it is hard for us to love because we know ourselves so well. We know all the deep dark secrets about ourselves that are so unlovely that we can hardly believe anyone would love us. We develop defenses to keep people at a distance so they won’t really discover what we are truly like.

Some persons have such a deep need for love that they don’t want people to know their unlovable qualities. After all without the love of Christ as our standard we don’t love people if they aren’t lovable. Some people need love so badly they dare not reveal any imperfection in themselves. Thus, they become defensive and refuse to admit error. This results in a self-righteous attitude. The consequence is destroying any rapport with the very people with whom they most want a good relationship.

Some people try to camouflage their true nature with flashy expensive clothes, fad food habits and dining places, titles, position, and appearance. God doesn’t love you because of what you have or do, but because He is love. Some persons go through life very insecure because they feel they must earn God’s love. They translate this into personal relationships and feel they must earn the love of people also. This makes it difficult for them to accept love because they don’t feel they deserve it.

Parents have you been putting conditions on your child which must be met before you will love him or her? We are to love one another as Christ loved us. How is that? Unconditionally! “We love because Christ first loved us.” If you first give love unconditionally, you will find those around you sooner or later will catch on. Agape love is demonstrated by doing for others what Christ has done for us. That means we learn to accept others

with all their faults and failures. We accept them even when we do not approve of what they are doing. God loves you though He might totally disapprove of some things you are doing. This axiom is true, “God loves the sinner, but He hates the sin.” You may disapprove of something someone is doing while still showing God’s love for them. That is unrestricted, unconditional, Agape love. God’s love is so unrestricted that He gave His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, for you. We hope and pray that you will begin to imbue Agape love to those around you during this time of the year when we celebrate Christmas. *Remain Blessed*

Faith is Acting on God’s Word

It’s time to quit hanging around and to start acting on the Word of God, because faith is acting. I was in one church where there was a man who had been severely burned over the lower part of his body. He couldn’t walk; he just scooted along. In one of the services, the Holy Spirit told me to have everyone who had something wrong with them from their hips down to come into the healing line. This man was the first in line.

I waited until they were all in line before I told them what else God had said for me to tell them to do. I went up to this man and asked, “Can you run?” It took him by surprise. “Oh, my God, no,” he said. “I can’t even walk, much less run.” I said, “That’s what the Lord has told me to do—to tell you to run.” The man didn’t even give it a second thought. He turned and started scooting up the aisle as fast as he could. The third time he came around, the Spirit of the Lord came upon me and I jumped off that platform, grabbed the man by the hand, and ran around that building with him. When we got back to the front, he was walking normally; not scooting. He was perfectly healed.

However, if I hadn’t been able to get him to cooperate and act on his faith, I couldn’t have helped him. Faith, you see, is acting on God’s Word—doing whatever He says to do in His Word, or whatever He may say to us in the Spirit. It’s one thing to believe. It’s another to believe and act on that belief! *Kenneth .E. Hagin*

Parish Registers (October)

The Funeral Service

2nd	Raymond (Ray) Miller	“Winora”, Plough Lane Christleton 78yrs
17th	Clifford (Cliff) Bridge	“Parkgates” Birch Heath Lane Christleton 102yrs
29th	Sydney (Sid) Hardy	Whitby House Nursing Home Ellesmere Port 85yrs

“Grant them eternal rest”

Offertories

October	Cash	CSE	2014	2013
5th	139-00	380-27	519-27	579-18
12th	36-38	798-90	835-28	885-88
19th	386-80	525-50	912-30	629-22
26th	98-45	644-02	742-47	726-25
Totals			£3,009-32	£2,820-53

“Of your own do we give you”

We Wish You

*A Merry Christmas
And A
Prosperous New Year.*

PARISH CHURCH OF ST. JAMES, CHRISTLETON

SUNDAYS:	8.00 a.m.	Holy Communion	
	10.45 a.m.	Parish Communion	1st & 3rd Sundays
		Family Service	2nd Sunday
		Mattins	4th & 5th Sundays
	6.30 p.m.	Evensong	1st, 2nd & 3rd Sundays
		Evening Communion	4th Sunday
		Songs of Praise	5th Sunday
WEDNESDAY:	10.45 a.m.	Holy Communion	
SAINT'S DAYS:	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion	

WHO'S WHO & WHAT'S WHAT

Rector: The Rev'd. Malcolm Cowan, B.Th
The Rectory, Birch Heath Lane, Christleton
01244 335663

All baptisms weddings and appointments by arrangement with Janet Milton - 325529

Church Wardens:	Carl Cumiskey	330028
	Bettie Gilliatt	335645
Deputy Wardens:	Alan McAllester	335494
	Chris Platel	332466
	Keith Smalls	335688
Curate:	Barbara King	300756
Verger:	John Milton	325529
Sacristan:	Betty Dunning	335652
Pastoral Worker:	Berenice Kirwan	336779
Sunday Club:	Berenice Kirwan	336779
Mothers' Union Branch Leader:	Janet Brown	335785
Organist & Choirmaster:	Steve Roberts	815277
P. C. C Secretary:	Mark Evans	950596
P. C. C Treasurer:	Brian & Lorraine Lewis	534323
Stewardship Envelope:	Betty Dunning	335652
Gift Aid Secretary:	Nigel Seddon	335588
Bellringers:	Ian Braithwaite	300565
Bellringers Secretary:	Nikki Dromgoole	351124
Parish Hall Booking:	Clare Holland	332819
C. M. S Secretary:	Janet Brown	335785
Children's Society Sec:	Lesley Morgan	335088
Visiting Group:	Berenice Kirwan	336779
Library:	Gwen Knight	336236
Church Flowers:	Olive Hammond	336562
Person for Child Protection:	Alastair Holland	332819
Magazine Editor:	David Bull	332234
Magazine Distributors:	Jenny Davies & Valmai Griffiths	335884
Magazine Compiler:	Ike Efobi	336072

December 2014



Part of the Advent collage in the Lady Chapel, produced by the late Dorothy Colley and children from Christleton Primary School.



Girls from Leh Ladakh at the font at St James' Christmas 1987.

Early Christmas shopping

It was Christmas and the judge was in a merry mood as he asked the defendant, "What are you charged with?" "Doing my Christmas shopping early", replied the defendant. "That's no offense", said the judge. "How early were you doing this shopping?" "Before the store opened."

December 2014 @ St. James, Church Christleton