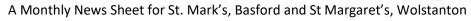
The Lion and The Dragon



www.stmarksbasford.co.uk and www.stmargaretswolstanton.org





The Innkeeper

While they were there, the time came for Mary to deliver her child.

And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. (Luke 2:6-7)

Beloved,

There is actually no reference in the bible to the 'Innkeeper', just the above reference that there was no room for the Holy Family.

And although not the most impressive costume, it's certainly a sort-after part to play in the school nativity, with often a comical role of shouting "NO ROOM!" which then develops into the compassionate offer of the stable.

The world didn't have room for the 'word-madeflesh', the light in the darkness almost didn't shine, and yet space was made, hardened hearts were opened, and the Christ child was able to pitch up his tent among us, so that we could see his glory.

So where do you fit in? We are about to start a new church year, where the main Gospel will be that according to our patron Mark (if you've never tried taking a couple of hours to sit and read the Gospel in one go, I challenge you to do so...). During Advent we will hear of some of the

warnings and prophecy, before receiving the fulfilment of promises.

These warnings are real – are we ready for an unexpected guest? – are we welcoming to the people who we don't know yet? have we only got room for our friends? Have we said "NO" to Jesus and not even realised it? because we were blinded to that one who asked us for a space at the table? Who have we shunned away or ignored when they very well may have been God himself?

Will you be making room this Christmas for Christ or for the stranger?

Will you prepare a space for Christ at your table? Will there be room for the Lord when he comes?

"What I say to you, I say to everyone: 'Watch!'" (Mark 13:37)

Wishing you all an expectant Advent and a truly Merry Christmass to you all – including the strangers who may become your guests!

Love, In Christ Your Shepherd, Ir Tommy

Worship Services during December (St Mark's, Basford (B), St Margaret's, Wolstanton (W) 3rd 1st of Advent 9.30am **Holy Communion (B)** 11.15am Mass (W) 6th Wednesday Holy Communion (BCP) (B) 10.30am 2nd of Advent 10th 9.30am Holy Communion (B) Mass (W) 11.15am 13th Wednesday 10.30am Holy Communion (BCP) (B) 17th 3rd of Advent 9.30am Carol Service (B) 11.15am Mass (W) 19th Tuesday 7.00pm Carol Service (W) 20th Wednesday 10.30am Holy Communion (BCP) (B) 24th 4th of Advent **Holy Communion (B)** 9.30am 11.15am Crib Service (W) 24th Christmas Eve 4.30pm Crib Service (B) 11.30pm Midnight Mass (W) 25th Christmas Day **Holy Communion (B)** 9.30am 27th Wednesday Holy Communion (BCP) (B) 10.30am 31st 1st of Christmas 9.30am Holy Communion (B) Mass (W) 11.15am

Christmas Carol Services:

Carol services will take place on Sunday 17th December at St Mark's at 9.30am and Tuesday 19th December at St Margaret's at 7pm.



Crib Service Gifts:

Your Gifts, toiletries, selection boxes, party nibbles, socks and boxer shorts, this year will be going to 'Open Door' for those who will be spending Christmas there. Parcels can be bought to St Marks church in the usual way labelled for boy/girl, Male/female. Thank you in advance for your kind generosity.

Diary Dates for December

2ndSaturday4.00pmChristmas meal (B)4thMonday6.30pmScouting Carol service (B)14thThursday5.00pmSeedlings Party (B)17thSunday12.00pmChurch Queens Party

wkb 18th

Various days 9.30am Schools in church (B) & (W)

Early January Dates

14	Sunday	10.00am	Joint worship (B)
15 th	Monday	7.00pm	Wedding prep evening (B)
21 st	Sunday	9.30am	Christingle + baptism (B)



Christmas Eve: 11:15am Crib Service (W)
4.30pm Crib Service (B)
11.30pm Midnight Mass (W)

Christmas Day: 9.30am Holy Communion(B)

21st January: 9.30am Christingle Service(B)

Christingle Service:

A date for your diary. Our ever-popular Christingle Service for Families will take place on 21st January 2024 at 9.30am.