

Christmas 2011



- ★ When I felt that God was calling me
- ★ In search of the *Railway Children*
- ★ Prize-winning Competition entry
- ★ What I learned
- ★ Y@AS

**only
50p!**

www.scraptoft.leicester.anglican.org

Scraptoft & Netherhall

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Meet every second Monday of
the month at the Scraptoft
Village Hall.



Material for the magazine

Please provide material for the
next magazine by
18th March 2012
Editor—Fr. Andrew

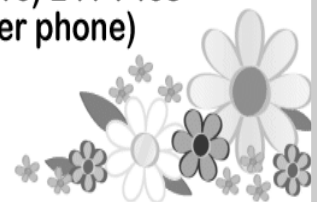
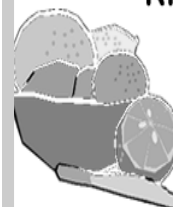
FLOWERS AND FRUIT BASKETS

for all occasions

by
Josie and Graham

(ex Graham's Greengrocer)

RING (0116) 241 7468
(answer phone)



Vicar's message:

To be-lieve or not to be-lieve? That is the question...

As we embrace the Christmas Season, with all its festivities, carolling and present-giving, there is an assumption held by many (especially church goers) that everyone else is thinking more about Godly things. Surely Nativity scenes and plays around the country are evidence that God comes more into the picture at Christmas, more people go to Church, and people of Christian faith feel a little more confident.

However, the recent instalment of the annual British Social Attitudes (BSA) survey seems to suggest otherwise, and it's particularly sober reading for those in the Church of England, where it states that since 1983, the number of people self-affiliating to the Church of England has halved, most siding to go with no religion, which has increased from 31% to 50%.

It seems that the biggest reason for this is the younger generations moving through who are brought up without religious affiliation replacing those who might have had such in previous generations. This doesn't mean that everyone is actively non-religious, but rather they do not want to link themselves with a particular strand of faith (Christian or otherwise) and especially the Established Church. It is noted that some other churches have grown or at least held steady. But the figures seem to point to decline in membership for the C of E.

Another interesting factor picked up in the survey is the likelihood of a person retaining their faith throughout their life if they were brought up in it. For Anglicans and those of other Protestant traditions the figure is a mere 49%. The Catholic church fares a little better, with 62% of those brought up a Roman Catholic staying a Roman Catholic. Better still are those brought up in other faith traditions, 87% of whom remain in their faith.

But for those of us of all churches and faith traditions, perhaps the most worrying statistic is that nearly everyone – 94% to be precise – brought up without religious affiliation in Britain today stays without religious affiliation for the rest of their life.

Essentially, if your parents bring you up without faith, you remain without faith

This has made me, for one, sit up and think again about the Christmas Season, never

Vicar's message (continued):

mind anything else. And it should be a wake-up call to all Christians, of whichever denomination, that our preaching of the Gospel is not reaching this country's ears. It doesn't take a scientist to work out that if the trend carries on in this direction then the Church as a whole, and very probably all faith communities, are in for a very difficult future indeed.

This will, of course, be fuel to the arguments of Richard Dawkins and his posse and all those who see religion as make-believe and who foster the atheistic lobby. The old arguments about 'more wars being caused by religion than anything else' will be hotly debated in pubs up and down the land. And recent sex and abuse scandals in the Church will add fuel to the fire. But sadly, these are accusations we have to face and deal with. It is undoubtedly true that the behaviour of some Christians, for example, has not been a good advertisement for anyone considering faith.

Thankfully, just because some of us behave badly or even wickedly does not mean the message is wrong. We know we struggle to be heard, even at Christmas, as the god of Mammon really usurps the child in a manger at Christmas. But our task as disciples of Christ is to listen afresh each year so we may grasp even better the meaning of the Incarnation and what this gift brings to the world, so that we will be better equipped to make God's love for his people know, even if they appear not to want it.

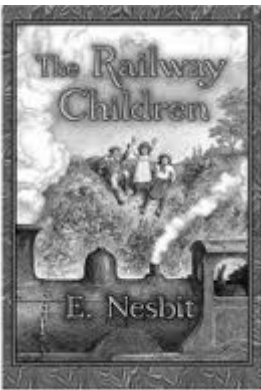
So this Christmas, as well as listening again to those familiar, heart-warming nativity stories and singing all those lovely carols, let us also heed the warning of that British Social Attitudes survey. The signs are not good, especially for the Church of England, if we don't do something to address matters, and whilst we undoubtedly get some things right and do some great work, there is clearly something missing in our witness to this nation. So as you celebrate this joyful season, hopefully with friends and family, pray for those without the gift of faith and perhaps make a New Year's resolution which involves recommitting yourself to the work of God wherever you are this year.

With every blessing



IN SEARCH OF THE RAILWAY CHILDREN.

We were not always The Railway Children: the first short sentence at the beginning of Edith Nesbit's iconic story. First published in 1905 in the London



Magazine, it emerged in book form in 1906 and for over a hundred years, has captivated and entranced generations of children and

adults alike. I am sure most people have either read or seen the adaptations on television or the cinema screen, and also on the radio.

For those of you not familiar with the story; it concerns the Waterbury family who are forced to move to "Three Chimneys" a house in Yorkshire which is near a railway, after the father, who works for the Foreign office, is imprisoned after being falsely accused of selling State Secrets to the Russians. While their mother writes and sells stories to magazines, the three children, Roberta (Bobby), Phyllis and Peter find amusement watching trains on a nearby line, and waving to the passengers. They become friendly with Albert Perks, the porter at the nearby station

and with the old gentleman who regularly rides the 9-15 down train. After many adventures the whole family are reunited in a very satisfactory ending.

As a youngster, I was a bit of a railway child, during school holidays and at weekends I was to be found sitting on the fence of the Great Central railway and the stadium car park, clutching my Ian Allan Train Spotters Guide hoping to catch sight of a "namer", (a named engine). It was a very good spot, as you could see up the track to Birstall and along the viaduct almost to the station in Great



Central Street, which gave one plenty of warning, of the approach of the trains.

My first encounter with the "Railway Children" happened in 1951, when the BBC produced its first serialisation. I was 14 at the time and I remember hurrying home from school to view the eight part half hour series that was live and in glorious black and white. Jean Anderson played the mother and John le Mesurier (before his Dads' Army fame) the doctor. The BBC mounted two further productions, in 1957 and 1968; by which time I was earning a living, was married and had three daughters of my own.

My interest was revived with the news that dear Lionel Jeffries

was making a motion picture of it, which was premiered on December 21st, 1970. It became an instant success, gaining many awards and nominations. I remember going to see it with the family in Leicester, and the wonderful feeling it generated as we left the cinema that evening which has stayed with me to this day! As life moved on I never lost sight of that lovely film, eventually securing myself a copy on DVD. I learned that quite a considerable piece of the film was filmed on location on the Worth Valley Railway in Yorkshire. This is Bronté country, and the line runs from Hawarth to Keighley, with Oakworth station, about half way along the line being the main focus of the film. The lore of the production was such that a few years later in 1989 I spent two days exploring the line. After travelling to Keighley station I alighted at Oakworth, where the stationmaster was busy showing a party of young school children around. As I waited to speak to him, the teacher in charged thanked the gentleman for his time and turned to the class and said "children, what we do say to the gentleman?" They responded as one saying "Thank You Mr Perks". Now these children were very young and could not have been around when the film was at its height, yet they all knew who Mr Perks was. I was able to chat



to the stationmaster who showed me over the premises and later took me just round the corner to show me the Perks home in the film, which was a Bed and Breakfast accommodation but vacant at that moment. I also got to meet Mr Mitchell who played the Railway Guard in the film, but who by this time had retired and was then the President of the line. I also found the house the "Three Chimneys", slightly off the beaten track, but none the less, quite close to the railway line.

Three notes of interest; one of the steam engines featured in the film, no 4744 is now resident on the Great Central line at Loughborough, and actress Sally Thomsett, cast as 11 year old Phyllis, was 20 at the time! Because of this, her contract forbade her to reveal her true age during the making of the film and she was also not allowed to be seen smoking or drinking during this time. Although at the time there were a number of preserved railways in operation, Jeffries chose this line because it had a tunnel which is an integral part of the story.

In 2000, Carlton Television revived the story with a made-for-television film picture, and in 2008 & 2009 a stage play of the story was performed at the

National Railway Museum York. Set up by the York Theatre Royal it involved its younger members (Youth Theatre) in the production. In 2010, this production was transferred to the disused Euro Star International Terminal at Waterloo Station in London, and such was its success that it returned again this year, winning the Olivier Award for Best entertainment 2011. Came my birthday in July, and I was persuaded to journey towards the capital the following day under some subterfuge. You can imagine my delight as we neared Kings Cross Railway Station, when I learned that I was to witness that same production. After some anxious moments in regard to escalators, wheelchairs and underground trains, we arrived in the nick of time on the concourse and a kindly helper showed us to our seats at the very front of an extraordinary stage. Some eighty yards in length with a railway track in the middle, and tiered seating either side, the whole set encased in a very large marquee type tent, the familiar tale was retold. It was an amazing experience, with a bridge over the tracks at one end, to allow the actors to perform either side of the track and the station house at our end, to which Mr Perks (in this instance the comedy actor Marcus Brigstock)and others would retire to when not needed. Three movable platforms on the tracks were used to recreate the scenes other than the railway

ones; unseen personnel moved and reset them with great efficiency!



However the star of the show is undoubtedly the engine The Stirling Single which appears three times steaming (false steam) and pulling two carriages, the second, the original observation coach used in the movie, very realistic although now moved by a electric motor. I sat entranced as the story was unfurled, and at the end, as the cast took their bows, I reflected that the tale for me had come full circle, some 60 years after I had first encountered it. An incredible piece of theatre then, still fresh after all these years. Sadly not to everyone's tastes as recently Edith Nesbit has been accused of plagiarism. Lifting the book from "The House by the Railway" by Ada Graves, a book first published in 1897 and serialised in a magazine in 1904; a year before "The Railway Children" first appeared. For me, that is of little consequence, a wonderful warm story of hope and endeavour that has brightened not only my life but countless many others and for that I am truly thankful!

Brian Belcher

Church Calendar



JANUARY

1st Sun **Most Holy Name**
10.00am Sung Eucharist

4th Wed 7.30pm Eucharist

6th Fri **EPIPHANY**
7.30pm Sung Eucharist

7th Sat 10.00am Coffee Morning

8th Sun **BAPTISM OF LORD**
10.00am Sung Eucharist

10th Tue 7.00pm PCC

11th Wed 5.30pm Youth@All Sts
7.30pm Eucharist

15th Sun **EPIPHANY 2**
10.00am Sung Eucharist
2.30pm ASK!

17th Tue Confession of St Peter
8.30am Eucharist

18th Wed 5.30pm Youth@All Sts
7.30pm Eucharist

22nd Sun **EPIPHANY 3**
10.00am Family Mass

25th Wed

Conversion of St Paul
7.30pm Eucharist

26th Thu

Ss Timothy & Titus
8.30am Eucharist

29th Sun

EPIPHANY 4
10.00am Sung Eucharist

FEBRUARY

1st Wed

5.30pm Youth@AllSts
7.30pm Eucharist

2nd Thu

CANDLEMAS
7.30pm Sung Eucharist

4th Sat

10.00am Coffee Morning

5th Sun

3RD BEFORE LENT
10.00am Sung Eucharist

7th Mon

Ss Paul Miki & Comps
8.30am Eucharist

9th Wed

5.30pm Youth@AllSts

8.00pm Guild of Servers

12th Sun

2ND BEFORE LENT
10.00am Sung Eucharist

15th Wed

7.30pm Eucharist

19th Sun	SUN BEFORE LENT 10.00am Sung Eucharist	4.00pm	Benediction & launch of SSWSH <i>St Mary de Castro</i>
	2.30pm ASK!		
21st Tue	SHROVE TUESDAY 7.30pm Shrove Party	4th Sun	LENT 2 10.00am Sung Eucharist
22nd Wed	ASH WEDNESDAY 7.30pm Sung Eucharist & Imposition of Ashes	7th Wed	Ss Perpetua & Felicity 5.30pm Youth@AllSts
24th Fri	7.30pm Stations of the Cross	9th Fri	7.30pm Stations of the Cross
26th Sun	LENT 1 10.00am Family Mass	11th Sun	LENT 3 10.00am Sung Eucharist
29th Wed	5.30pm Youth@AllSts	14th Wed	5.30pm Youth@AllSts
	7.30pm Eucharist		7.30pm Eucharist
MARCH		15th Thu	7.30pm Senior Strings Concert
1st Thu	St David 8.30am Eucharist	16th Fri	7.30pm Stations of the Cross
	7.30pm Deanery Synod <i>Beaumont Leys</i>	17th Sat	7.30pm String Trio Concert
2nd Fri	7.30pm Stations of the Cross	18th Sun	MOTHERING SUNDAY 10.00am Family Mass
3rd Sat	10.00am Coffee Morning		2.30pm ASK!
	12.00pm St Chad Patronal Festival <i>Bp Norman</i>	19th Mon	St Joseph 8.30am Eucharist
		21st Wed	5.30pm Youth@AllSts

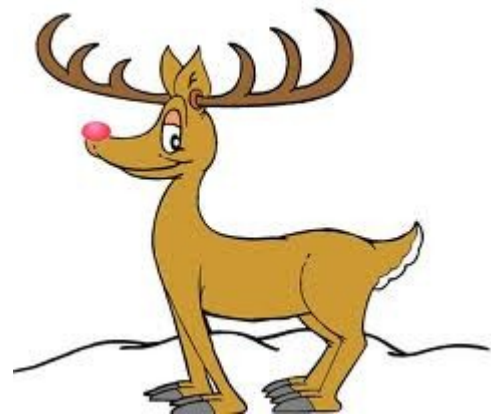
	7.30pm	Eucharist
23rd Fri	7.30pm	Stations of the Cross
25th Sun	LENT5	10.00am Sung Eucharist
26th Mon	Annunciation	8.30am Eucharist
27th Wed	5.30pm	Youth@AllSts
	7.30pm	Eucharist
29th Thu	7.30pm	Chrim Mass
30th Fri	7.30pm	Stations of the Cross
31st Sat	10.00am	Friends of All Saints Craft Fair

APRIL

1st Sun	PALM SUNDAY	9.45am Procession & Sung Eucharist
2nd Mon	Monday in Holy Week	7.30pm Mass & Talk
3rd Tue	Tuesday in Holy Week	7.30pm Mass & Talk
4th Wed	Wednesday in Holy Week	7.30pm Mass & Talk
5th Thu	MAUNDY THURSDAY	7.30pm Mass of the Lord's Supper

6th Fri	GOOD FRIDAY	7.30pm The Liturgy
8th Sun	EASTER DAY	5.00am Vigil & 1st Mass
		10.00am Family Mass

Sent in by a female reader!



According to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, while both male and female reindeer grow antlers in the summer each year, male reindeer drop their antlers at the beginning of winter, usually late November to mid-December. Female reindeer, however, retain their antlers until after they give birth in the spring. Therefore, according to every historical rendition depicting Santa's reindeer, every single one of them, from Rudolph to Blitzen..... had to be a female. We should have known this.... Only women would be able to drag a fat man in a red velvet suit all around the world in one night, and not get lost.

A Microsoft Christmas

'Twas the night before Christmas,
when all through the house
Not a creature was stirring, except Papa's mouse.
The computer was humming,
the icons were hopping,
As Papa did last minute Internet shopping.

The stockings were hung by the modem with care
In hope that St. Nicholas
would bring new software.
The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of computer games
danced in their heads.

PageMaker for Billy, and Quicken for Dan,
And Carmen Sandiego for Pamela Ann.
The letters to Santa had been sent out by Mom,
To santaclaus@toyshop.northpole.com -

Which has now been re-routed
to Washington State
Because Santa's workshop has been bought
by Bill Gates.

All the elves and reindeer have had to skedaddle
To flashy new quarters in suburban Seattle.

After centuries of a life that was simple and spare,
St. Nicholas is suddenly a new billionaire,
With a shiny red Porsche in the place of his sleigh,
And a house on Lake Washington
that's just down the way

From where Bill has his mansion.
The old fellow preens
In black Gucci boots and red Calvin Klein jeans.
The elves have stock options
and desks with a view,
Where they write computer code
for Johnny and Sue.

No more dolls or toy soldiers or little toy drums
(ahem - pardon me)
No more dolls or tin soldiers or little toy drums
Will be under the tree, only compact disk ROMS
With the Microsoft label. So spin up your drive,
From now on Christmas runs only on Win95.

More rapid than eagles the competitors came,
And Bill whistled, and shouted,
and called them by name.
"Now, ADOBE! Now, CLARIS! Now, INTUIT! too,
Now, APPLE! and NETSCAPE! you are all of you
through,

It is Microsoft's SANTA that the kids can't resist,
It's the ultimate software with a traditional twist -
Recommended by no less than the jolly old elf,
And on the package, a picture of Santa himself.

Get 'em young, keep 'em long,
is Microsoft's scheme,
And a merger with Santa is a marketer's dream.
To the top of the NASDAQ! to the top of the Dow!
Now dash away! dash away! dash away - wow!"

And Mama in her 'kerchief and I in my cap,
Had just settled down for a long winter's nap,
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
The whir and the hum of our satellite platter,

As it turned toward that Christmas star
new in the sky,
The SANTALITE owned by the Microsoft guy.
As I sprang from my bed and was turning around,
My computer turned on with a Jingle-Bells sound.

And there on the screen was a smiling Bill Gates
Next to jolly old Santa, two arm-in-arm mates.
And I heard them exclaim in voice so bright,
Have a Microsoft Christmas,
and to all a good night.



When I felt that God was calling me to be a Pastoral Assistant, I discussed with Fr

Martin, the sort of things I hoped to be involved with. One of these was to visit those members of our congregation who were ill, less mobile or for whatever reason unable to come into Church as often as they would like to. About two years ago I carried out my first official pastoral visit and I remain very grateful to that member of our church family who allowed me to come into her home. I won't name her, but she will know who I mean! Indeed everyone has been so welcoming and I am grateful to them all.

One of the other items on my 'to do list' was to help with some sort of prayer ministry. That list was probably a bit ambitious and progress on it was delayed by work and family commitments and also work with the children and Kids' Club. However, the desire is still there, as prayer is surely the foundation on which all good works are built and I don't believe that its value can be overestimated. With this in mind, we hope to be able to open up All Saints for a couple of hours each month when anyone can just come in and look around at our beautiful Church or sit quietly and spend some time with God. We would also like to offer a ministry of intercession where a team of us will pray for people who ask for our prayers. We aim to put some prayer intention forms at the back of the Church, so that anyone can complete one when they come into Church – or prayer requests could be sent in via email or telephone.

In the short time I have been commissioned, I believe that I have learned much – from Fr Martin, Fr Andrew, the Sisters at the Community of the Holy Cross (at Costock), from my tutors and

colleagues, but also from the people I have visited, talked with and prayed with. When sometimes I feel that my problems are getting on top of me, I realise that there are many people who are experiencing much greater difficulties and facing immense challenges with courage and cheerfulness. I believe they can only do this because Christ is a very real presence in their lives.

At times, most of us will need help to bring our worries and problems to God. The Bible tells us that people brought others in need of healing to Jesus. In Luke 5: 17-26, we read of the men who brought the paralysed man to Jesus and finding that they could not get close to him because of the crowds, had to lower him down through the roof. Those men went to extraordinary lengths so that their friend could receive healing. Luckily for us, we don't have to climb up to the roof of a house with a paralysed man on a stretcher, removing roof tiles before lowering the bed down in order to bring others into the presence of our Lord. We have an easier option – just to bring our brothers and sisters to God through Jesus in prayer. Prayer can take place at any time and in any place – it does not have to be in Church, and if we had a team who were interested in a ministry of intercession, our prayers offered during the course of our daily lives would help to bring Christ's presence, healing and peace to others in need.

If you feel that you would like to help with a ministry of intercession or by helping to keep the Church open once a month for a couple of hours for a time of quiet and prayer, please do let Fr Martin, Fr Andrew or me know. You can commit as much or as little time as you would like, but you can be sure that it will make a difference.

Julie

**LIMITED EDITION PRINT
ALL SAINTS CHURCH AND SCRAPTOFT HALL
1967
from an original painted by
DAVID WESTON**

David Weston painted this picture for me in 1967. He had recently started to take-up painting full time. He and I first met when he worked at Leas store in Humberstone Gate in the 1950's.. We all know that David became an international star and his paintings have become 'collectors items'.

Sadly, David died earlier this year. His wife Mary is quite happy for me to have a limited number of prints produced to help raise funds for our Church.

Sheila and I hope you all like the picture.

Framed: £100

Mounted: £50


Tony Green



INNER PEACE

I am passing this on to you because it definitely worked for me today, and we all could probably use more calm in our lives. Some doctor on TV this morning said the way to achieve inner peace is to finish all the things you have started...

So I looked around my house to see things I'd started and hadn't finished.

I have managed to finish off a bottle of Merlot, a bottle of Chardonnay, a bottle of Baileys, a bottle of wum, a package of Prungles, the remainder of both Prozac and Valiumun scriptins, the rest of the chesecake and a box of chocolates.

Yu haf no idr how bloody fabulous I feel right now.

Please send this on to dem yu fee ar in need of inner peace. An telum, u bloody luvum!! Xxx

What I've learned.....

It's some time since I penned an article called **God, the dog and Norman** which looked at the support and care I have received during my journey with depression.

I am pleased to report that due to the very special care I have had from a whole number of wonderful people I now feel I can move forward with confidence to the next chapter of my life.

Along the way I've learned and re-learned some important things which I now commit to paper, sort of my checklist to keep me feeling ok. I hope they might be helpful to you too?

I've learned... That we should be glad God doesn't give us everything we ask for.

I've learned... That it's those small daily events and happenings that make life so spectacular.

I've learned ... That under everyone's hard shell is someone who wants to be loved and appreciated even if it doesn't seem that way.

I've learned... That the Lord didn't do it all in one day. What makes me think I can?

I've learned ... Life must go on and we must accept the happy and unhappy parts and move on as best we can.

I've learned... Life is short, friendships are too precious to waste, and happiness is contentment.

I've learned... We would all like to live on the mountain top but all the growth and happiness happens when we're climbing it.

I've re-learned... That the less time I have to use the more I get done.

I've learned ... I can't choose how I feel, but I can choose what I do about it.

I've learned... Life is tough but I'm tougher.

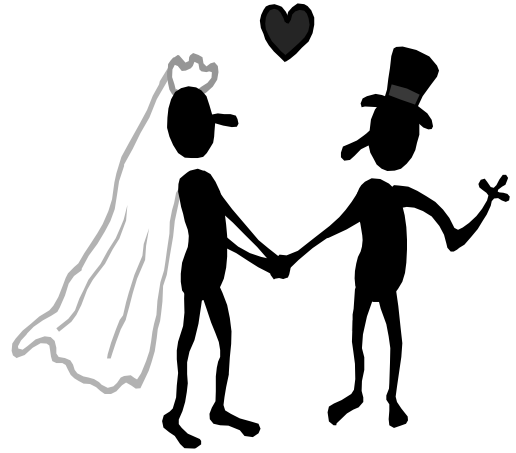
Happy Days



Jane Smith

Getting Married

A happy marriage is a wonderful way of life, and the start of married life together is a really important time. Across the three hundred Anglican churches in Leicester and Leicestershire, we not only provide a venue for your wedding and help with the practical details, but also more importantly offer to support you emotionally and spiritually as you take this important step.



Children's Provision on Sunday Mornings

On Sunday mornings there is a table at the back of Church where children can go and fill in activity and colouring sheets.

We aim that there will always be someone who will sit with them while parents join in worship.

Our main focus with the children will be at ASK! which is usually held on the 3rd Sunday of the month in the afternoon, and during the Family Mass which will usually be on the 4th Sunday. This will be especially geared towards the children and their involvement.

If your children prefer to sit with you, then they are welcome to borrow books from our collection or a rucksack with playthings.

We look forward to seeing you and your children and helping them as they grow in their faith.



ASK! (All Saints Kids)

We have a Club for children aged 4 to 11 which normally meets in Church on the 3rd Sunday of the month, between 2.30pm and 4.30pm

The next Club meetings are:

15 January

19 February

18 March

If you have a child who'd like to come along please contact:



And getting to know God!

—————→ **Caroline Brown 07851 118165**

All Saints Kids had a stall on 2nd / 3rd December at the Christmas Market to raise funds to support the education of a child in Bolivia (through World Vision)

Y@AS

November 23rd for most of us is a date like any other and passes unnoticed; but at All Saints it saw the launch of our new youth project Y@AS (Youth @ All Saints). Y@AS runs weekly on a Wednesday evening from 5-6:30pm for 11-14's....

Expectations were for a very quiet start to the club; three youth were moving up from the monthly kids club ASK! and a few were interested from detached work over the last few weeks (Each Wednesday morning- yep you read that right a Youth Missioner talking about mornings :) while the youth waited for the school bus. So 6 or so youth were expected.

We weren't, I wasn't expecting to get 18... So a much busier night than any of us had expected. We must have got something right as week 2 saw the return of most and 5 new ones.

Y@AS provides a safe space, a no pressure place come and relax after school; meet up with friends and make

new ones: a place to have fun, to chat and meet challenges: a place to let relationships grow and to have a short thought for the week ahead.

Try this Challenge at home over the Christmas holidays: one which the youth love.. Malteasers fly.

The idea is to lie on your back putting one Malteaser on your lips and blow it as high as you can. The current record at Y@AS is 13cm... Winner gets a prize at end of term.

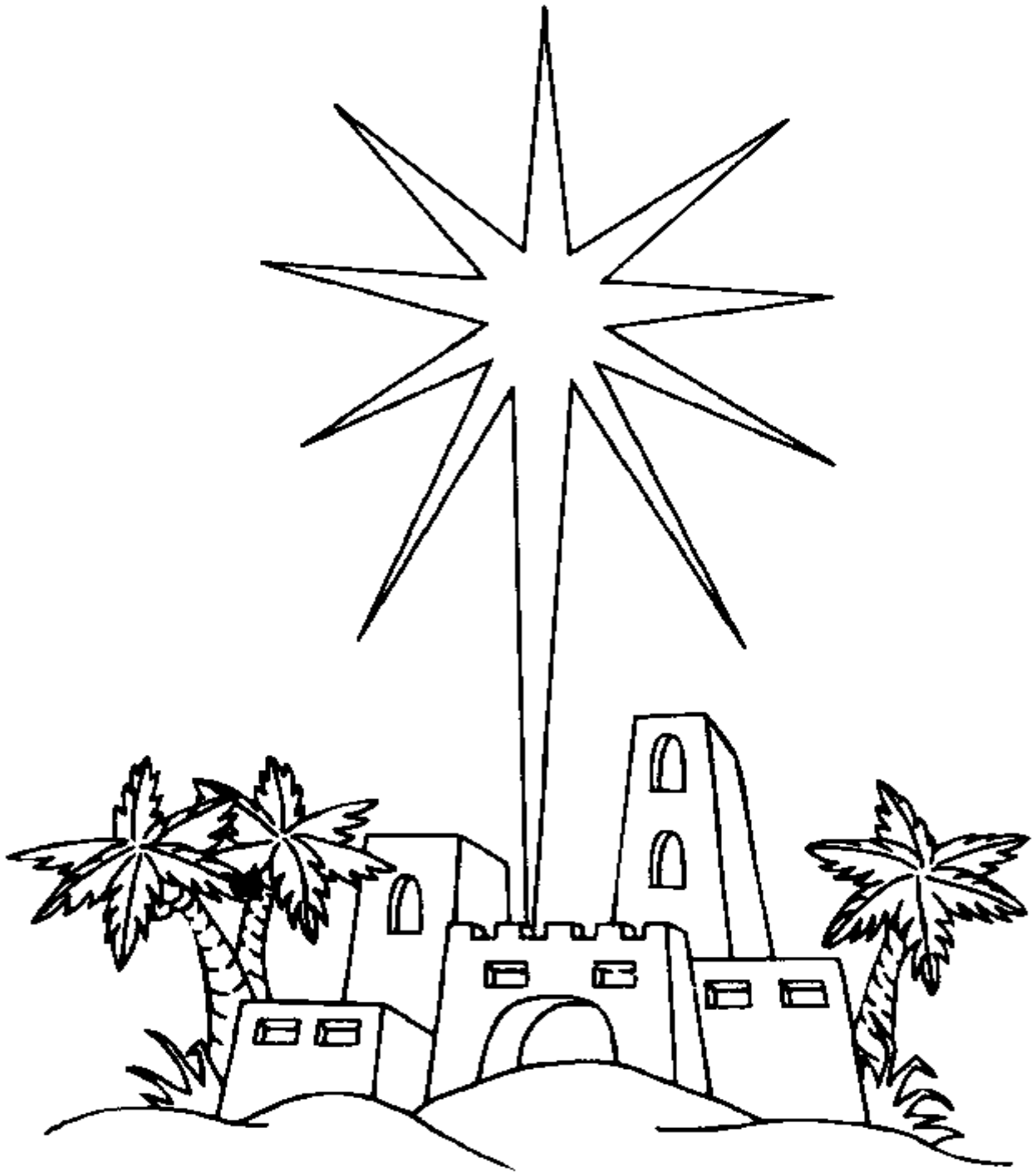
So if you know any 11-14's who want something to do, send them up to Y@AS. It's free entry.

To Close a very big thank you to those who have volunteered to help with the running of Y@AS...



Caroline
(Children and Youth Missioner)

A Page to Colour



Do you remember this story?

What was the name of the town?

A Page to Colour



Can you name the people in this picture?

SANTA WORD SEARCH

D	E	T	D	E	U	H	S	P	Z	B	S	Q	I	C
Q	Y	C	G	V	C	B	A	Q	U	B	R	Q	M	E
J	V	H	A	U	P	E	M	K	G	W	M	M	L	F
Z	T	M	U	L	R	J	T	J	T	B	S	Y	D	T
E	K	S	L	F	P	E	S	S	C	G	F	X	B	K
S	V	R	Z	S	L	E	I	G	H	S	D	L	J	I
W	Y	W	G	V	F	X	R	N	I	T	X	D	P	D
E	R	B	E	H	R	N	H	I	D	N	C	G	W	S
R	P	S	L	O	X	U	C	K	F	E	Y	K	R	F
M	E	C	M	I	H	X	D	C	C	S	E	Y	O	C
O	O	N	O	R	T	H	P	O	L	E	N	R	H	T
S	G	B	N	D	O	Z	U	T	L	R	M	F	T	T
F	B	C	O	O	K	I	E	S	X	P	I	M	T	S
O	Y	O	B	L	D	V	H	N	V	P	H	I	J	E
U	Y	Y	K	R	B	S	T	P	K	L	C	U	J	W

CHRISTMAS	RUDOLPH	REINDEER
FIREPLACE	STOCKINGS	CHIMNEY
NORTHPOLE	ELVES	DONNER
BLITZEN	SLEIGH	PRESENTS
COOKIES		

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Here we have the winning entry in the very first 'Friends of All Saints' Short Story Competition. Well done to Mrs Alison Gardner who wins £25.

The Broken Finger

Max was unable to sleep. Every time he drifted away a noise startled him awake. Somewhere at the back of the cabin a child began to cry.

Standing beside their kitbags, the players looked like the champions they expected to be. The press attention was exciting. Cameras clicked as they pretended to bowl at each other and hit imaginary balls. A young man watched the performance from the other side of the Departures Hall, with others not important enough to be part of the photo shoot. Tanned and fit, he looked as though he should be among the players. But his smile was forced and he appeared impatient to get on with checking in.

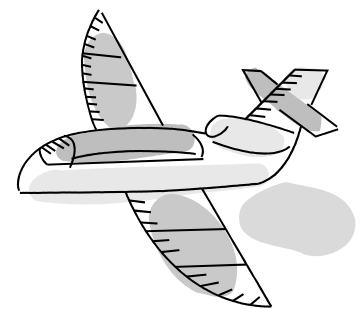


It had only been a broken finger, a bad break, but it had healed quickly. Coach however was cautious and didn't want to risk the long-term prospects of a promising young batsman. Max had been dropped for the rest of the season, including the tour he had hoped was going to be his big opportunity. So here he was, watching others in the place where he had worked so hard to be, wondering why on earth he'd agreed to accompany the tour.

"Experience." Coach said encouragingly.

"We need you mate." his team mates said cheerfully. At this moment he wished he was just about anywhere else.

The plane was almost full. The team could be heard in Business Class, their voices raised in raucous song. The rest of the party, split up all over Economy, climbed over each other, reclined their seats into each other's laps and tried to watch the film on a screen that jumped and rolled. Max tried unsuccessfully to talk to his neighbour, had his meal dropped down his shirt by a steward and realised he had forgotten the book he bought specially for the flight.



He gave up. As the lights were dimmed and the windows covered, he unwrapped his pillow and blanket and, feeling increasingly sorry for himself, settled into his seat to sleep.

The crying got louder. Stewardesses went backwards and forwards with drinks and

toys. The child shouted and sobbed. Low voices spoke calmly, to no avail. Passengers near Max woke and sat up, looking around for the source of the noise. Irritation spread. His neighbour began a diatribe concerning parents controlling their children and others began to join in. He didn't know what was worse, that or the piercing cries. He wondered if there were any empty seats in Business Class. It would be worth upgrading to get some peace. He put out his hand and stopped a stewardess.

"I don't want to be a nuisance, but when you've got a minute. What's the matter with that child?" he asked.

The stewardess hesitated, a look of pity in her eyes.



"Don't worry sir. We're doing our best." she said. The noise continued, reverberating around the cabin.

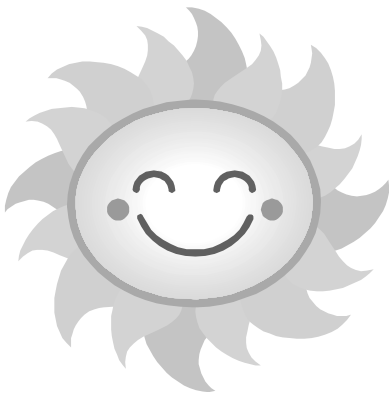
"I'm going to give those parents a piece of my mind." said Max's neighbour, "We pay good money for our seats. We ought to be able to sleep without being disturbed."

"No, I'll go." said Max, "I'll find out what's wrong."

He stepped into the aisle and began to follow the noise.

Passengers had slumped back into their seats, blankets over their heads and pillows pressed against their ears. Only on the very back row were three people sitting upright. A little girl was wrapped in a blanket, her face blotchy and tearstained. The women each side of her looked desperate and exhausted. One of them looked up quickly.

"I'm so sorry about the noise. She's always like this at night. She won't sleep. We think she remembers being in hospital. It was meningitis you know. She was lucky-maybe."



Before Max could say anything the little girl flung aside her blanket. He saw that her arms finished at the elbows and her legs at the knees. He was suddenly ashamed; of himself, his neighbour and the grumbling passengers. Fighting a wave of anger at an illness that could do this to a child, he knelt down between the seats and gently touched her cheek.

"Hey," he said, "What's all this crying for? I've come to play with you and when it's light I'll take you to see my friends and they can sing to you. Would you like that?"

The little girl's eyes opened and her sobs subsided. Tears still dripped from her chin but slowly she began to smile at Max and hold out her arms towards him.

Alison Gardner

*All Saints Church
Scraptoft & Netherhall*

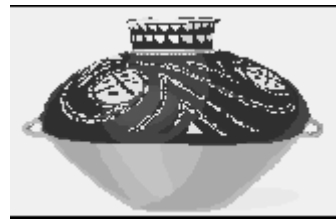
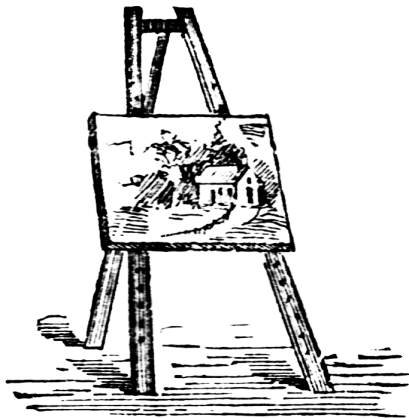
Spring Craft Fair

Saturday 31st March 2012

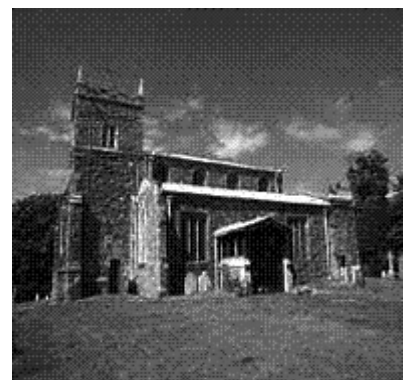
10am - 3.30pm

Lots of stalls and refreshments

Admission £1.00



Organised by The Friends of All Saints
helping to preserve our historic church
for the community and future generations





Friends of All Saints

—

our extended family

The Friends of All Saints is a new organisation with two main aims:

- ◇ **To appeal to people who are not regular worshippers**, but who value the church within the community, as an institution, as a place for weddings and funerals or even just as an historic monument (it has been here for nearly 900 years!) Friends may already support the church through the Summer Fete, the Christmas Market, Coffee Mornings, Concerts, the Harvest Supper and other events or they may have moved away or become infirm and unable to be with us on a regular basis.

- ◇ **To help us through subscription and fund raising to provide for the upkeep of the building.** (At the time of writing it costs around £60,000 per year just to keep the doors open.) The churchyard and wall are now the responsibility of the civic Parish Council and we do receive help with the costs of maintenance of the churchyard (grass mowing) through Harborough district Council. But otherwise we receive absolutely NO State funding for the maintenance of this listed medieval building.

The Friends will have leaflets available at the Christmas Market and at Coffee Mornings. If you are not a regular worshipper with us, but nevertheless wish the church well and want it to continue to have its place in our community, then please sign up. It will be run by its own people and will develop its own ideas. We hope members of the Friends will be able to offer their skills and talents and we look for a 'can do' attitude.

Morning Prayer is said in
Church Monday to
Thursday at 8.00am -
anyone is welcome to
join us

