

Holy Baptism



Alison Bird

Ella Joan Reed

Sienna Mai Allington

Ralph William Allington

Holy Matrimony



*24th October Nicholas William Eggington
and Sally Yvonne Ritchie*



Mothers' Union

Are you looking for alternative gifts this Christmas? If so, please take a look at the new Mothers Union all year round alternative gift catalogue "Global Village Fair". These virtual gifts start from £7.50, which supports a bee-keeping & mushroom growing project to help families in developing countries.

All gifts enable the MU to undertake family based projects at home & abroad. Gifts can be ordered by post, phone or online and cards to personalise will be supplied blank or for specific occasions. They would make a very worthwhile Christmas gift. Please take a catalogue from the back of the Church.

Ann Stephens-Jones

Women's Fellowship

Mrs Horner's talk about the Deanery Synod in October was very informative.

The Synod is a group of members from all the churches in the Deanery. They usually meet twice a year to discuss what churches are doing especially for special occasions such as Easter and Christmas. Ideas also come from the Bishops. I think we all understand this better now.

At this month's meeting we are having a Christmas Theme afternoon on Wednesday 16th at 2:30 pm in the meeting-room.

Mary Geering

The Travelling Cribs

Several years ago the Mothers' Union revived an old Mexican custom whereby a couple went from house to house, symbolising Mary and Joseph travelling to Bethlehem and asking for shelter on the way.

Our travelling cribs will be blessed at the Family Service on Sunday 6th December. They will go from family to family, finally arriving back at church for the Blessing of the Crib Service on Christmas Eve.

We have at least 5 cribs with figures and animals made of wood, porcelain or wool to allow for children of all ages. The Travelling Crib box may include dressing up clothes, a Traidcraft Advent calendar, a story book, pictures to colour, and a candle.

If you would like a family to bring the Travelling Crib to your home, please speak to MU member Jean Gilby (01992 583125).

An active month

Saturday 3 October was the date set for the bellringers' annual outing. This year we started at Chesham, a pleasant ring of bells well worth the climb over the roof and trying to peer over the beam in the centre of the

ringing room. This was followed by ringing at Penn, Lane End and both Great and Little Missenden. As always we were joined by friends old and new and finished with a meal in *The Firecrest* near Wendover.

We were extremely lucky with the weather – dry and windy all afternoon and one visitor was heard to ask “*can I come again next year?*”

Once again the organisation was in Jill Crocker’s capable hands and we would like to thank her for all the effort she put in. We also thank the incumbents at the various churches we rang in as well as those fellow ringers who turned out to unlock doors and let us in.

On 31 October a peal of 5,125 changes of Stedman Caters was rung by a band selected from the Hertford County Association of Change Ringers. As well as being rung for All Saints-tide, the peal also marked the 125th Anniversary of the Hertford County Association and was a compliment to our Ringing Master, John Kemp who has completed 60 years service as a ringer in Hertford.

Alastair Stracey

Climate change – what individuals do DOES matter

From the 7th to the 18th of this month (December), the world’s governments will be meeting in Copenhagen to try to agree a ‘climate deal’ that will shape our future. It’s easy to feel overwhelmed by this subject (the news is full of it) but it doesn’t have to be this way.

As the writer Leo Hickman has pointed out, most of us appreciate that sawing away at the branch we are sitting on can’t be a good idea, but actually doing something about it requires us to make a leap of imagination and to stretch our ideas of self-interest and moral responsibility.

Giving a recent lecture in London, Archbishop Rowan Williams said that our

relationship with the rest of creation is intimately bound up with our relationship with God. “To act so as to protect the future of the non-human world,” he said, “is both to accept a God-given responsibility and to honour the special dignity given to humanity itself.” Drawing parallels with the financial crisis, Dr Williams argues that we urgently need to revise some of our assumptions, including those that are incompatible with our duty of care for the whole of life.

The significance of small changes is obvious, but unless the spiritual roots of the challenge are grasped, our best efforts will amount to no more than what the psychologists call ‘displacement activity’.

Rowan Williams went on to point out how old rhythms in work and leisure have eroded and how we have lost patience with the passing of time so that speed of communication has become a good in itself. “We have been losing the ability to accept that living as a material body in a material world is risky,” he said.

Light the Light

In June this year we went on a cruise to Norway and Iceland. We had a fantastic holiday and enjoyed many memorable experiences. The following was just one of them.

On 26th June we visited a marvellous church in Reykjavik named the Hallgrímskirkja. Unfortunately the outside was covered in scaffolding but this did not detract from the beautiful simplicity of its inside. Whilst we were there we came across the following statement and poem which we felt we would like to share with you as we begin the season of Advent.

LIGHT A CANDLE

Do not let the darkness prevent you from seeking the light.

And when you have found it let other people see, re-think and be convinced.

If you want the light to live, then give rise to the same yearning in other people.

Light the light of frankness in the darkness of fear,
 Light the light of justice in the darkness of corruption
 Light the light of faith in the darkness of denial.
 Light the light of hope in the darkness of despair,
 Light the light of love in the darkness of death.
 Light the light

Setterlind

Bo

Malcolm & Judy Oughton

12 Days of Christmas

When most people hear 'The 12 days of Christmas' they think of the song of the same name. It is believed by many that this song had its origins as a teaching tool to instruct young people in the meaning and content of the Christian faith. From 1558 to 1829 Roman Catholics in England were not able to practice their faith openly, so they had to find other ways to pass on their beliefs. The song 'The Twelve Days of Christmas' is one example of how many people believe that they did it.

The song goes, "On the first day of Christmas my true love gave to me..." The 'true love' represents God and the 'me' who receives these presents is the Christian.

The 'partridge in a pear tree' was Jesus Christ who died on a tree as a gift from God.

The 'two turtle doves' were the Old and New Testaments - another gift from God.

The 'three French hens' were faith, hope and love - the three gifts of the Spirit that abide (1Corinthians 13).

The 'four calling birds' were the four Gospels, which sing the song of salvation through Jesus Christ.

The 'five golden rings' were the first five books of the Bible, also called the 'Book of Moses'.

The 'six geese a-laying' were the six days of creation.

The 'seven swans a swimming' were 'seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.' (1Corinthians 12:9-11, Romans 12, Ephesians 4, 1Peter 4:10-11.)

The 'eight maids a milking' were the eight beatitudes.

The 'nine ladies dancing' were the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23).

The 'ten lords a-leaping' were the Ten Commandments.

The 'eleven pipers piping' were the eleven faithful disciples.

The 'twelve drummers drumming' were the twelve points of the Apostles' Creed.

So the next time you hear 'The 12 Days of Christmas' you can make up your own mind: could this non-religious sounding song really have had its origins in the Christian Faith, or not?

