



people (mostly from Men's Breakfast) who helped to set up the electrics, the boards etc, those who entertained everyone, etc. This was a complete team effort, just as the Church body should be - all the different parts each needing the other to make a whole. And as a bonus, a profit of about £1500 was raised for our Project Appeal. WELL DONE EVERYONE!

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ST MARY'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2018

Issue No 83

This Month's Diary



(Saturday 6 January no Men's Breakfast)

Sunday 7 January FEAST OF EPIPHANY, 8 am, 10 am, 7 pm services

Monday 8 January, 2.30 pm MOTHERS' UNION

Tuesday 9 January, 7.30 pm PARISH PRAYER, St Mary's Hse

Wednesday 10 January, 9.45 and 11 am MUSIC MAKERS restarts

Monday 15 January, 2 pm JULIAN GROUP meet in church

Tuesday 16 January, 2.30 pm REFLECTIONS for the bereaved

Wednesday, 17 January TEA WITH FRIENDS, with Babs Muir inviting us to make crafts for Valentine's Day

Tuesday 23 January, 2 pm DEEPENING PRAYER

Wednesday 24 January, 3.45 pm MESSY CHURCH

Sunday 28 January, 8 and 10 am MADDY'S LAST SUNDAY

DEADLINE for the next edition: the last Sunday of the month - contact John Henderson, email: winspens1213@gmail.com

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Email: admin@stmaryschurchbideford.org Website: stmaryschurchbideford.org



ONE OF THE BEAUTIFUL
DECORATIONS ON A
CHRISTMAS TREE FOR
OUR FESTIVAL
IN DECEMBER

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of Bideford

PASTORAL LETTER FROM REV'D MADDY BRAY



Happy New Year to you! I wonder if you're glad the last year is over, or whether you're looking back on it with fondness and thanking God for all that has been. But whether it's been a good or not-so-good year, I hope you can find something to thank God for – because we are told in the Bible to thank God in all things; and I know that at times that's not as easy as it sounds. But God can use anything for good, but we might need to search for it.

With the new year comes new beginnings. We can look ahead and wonder what is to come, and who knows what this new year will bring? Well, God does. He's got everything in hand, and we can trust him in all things. For all of us God says "I alone know the plans I have for you, plans to bring you prosperity and not disaster, plans to give you a future with hope" (Jeremiah 29 verse 11).

Well, I'm certainly putting my trust into God as I look towards the new year. As you know, I shall be leaving you this month (my last Sunday will be 28 January) and I shall be licensed on 12 February as part time Team Vicar to the Hartland Coast Mission Community team of churches permanently, having been on secondment since last March. I will have pastoral responsibility for Alwington, Buckland Brewer and Parkham, although I will minister across the whole team generally; and I shall be moving into Parkham Vicarage in Chapel Road. So I won't be that far away!

But as I say, at the new year we can also look back at what's gone before. I've been a member of St Mary's for about 25 years, and therefore the whole Mission Community, so this will be an enormous wrench for me. In that time I have grown so much in my faith with the love and support of the Church Family, resulting in me being ordained in 2013. I thank God for you all in the way you have supported, encouraged, loved and sustained me in my training years, and then ever since during my curacy.



It's been an amazing journey, and now that journey is going along another road. I had been looking forward to working with Rev'd Brenda, the Team Rector, but sadly due to her husband being poorly with a rare condition, she has felt that family must come first and has resigned. She'll be finishing at the end of January, so we won't actually have a cross over. This will make what was already going to be a challenge for me even greater! And I would greatly value your prayers for me please.



So looking back for me brings both appreciation, but also some sadness. And looking forward brings excitement, a challenge definitely, but also some trepidation. But I recall what God has said for me: that he has plans for me, "plans to bring prosperity and not disaster, plans to give a future with hope". And he says that about you too – so if you look towards the new year with a little trepidation, remember that God has everything in hand; you can trust him completely.

Thank you all, and may God truly bless you and enrich your lives. With love

Rev'd Maddy

An Update from CAP - Christians Against Poverty

After a few last minute cancellations we welcomed 14 guests plus 5 children and 18 support team members to our Christmas Party. As a result of the night one lady wonderfully gave her life to the Lord. There was a more relaxed atmosphere this year and we felt that the guests seemed much more open and eager to be there. It was also a real privilege to give each household a good sized Christmas bag of goodies (thanks to Jane for organising this). So all in all a very positive evening.



ST MARY'S PROJECT APPEAL

What a wonderful year it has been, with the church family raising nearly **£95,000** towards the Appeal which was launched a year ago!

- ◆ **Phase One**, restoring the organ, is all in hand, which means that Bessie, our lovely Father Willis organ will be out of action for a few weeks during January and February 2018.
- ◆ **Phase Two** is the work associated with the new disability friendly entrance steps/slope and the PCC have agreed to obtain quotations for the work and to apply for a faculty, which is the Church of England's planning permission process. The work will include electrically controlled glass inner porch doors, electrical re-wiring, replacement guttering, plaster work, decoration and removal of pews by the entrance.

Once we have the costs for the work we will apply for grants from outside the Church Family, preserving our coffers for further work planned for the next phases. *Thank you for all you are doing and giving.*

Chris Hall, Churchwarden and Chair of Appeal Committee



THANK YOU!



So many thank yous are needed to be given for our wonderfully successful Christmas Tree Festival which we held at the beginning of December. Firstly, we need to thank Lorna Dorrington for heading up the organisation of it all, and with the help of Ro Day, Maggie Murray and Maddy Bray the planning has been going on for 11 months! Then we need to thank Richard



James for organising all the wonderful refreshments, which alone made a profit of £826; and then also Ellie Doe for organising all the stewards.

Also we thank Pattie Morris for organising all those precious cribs - how wonderful they were - and thank you to all who lent them to us. The whole Festival wouldn't have happened, of course, without all the different groups and organisations who came with their beautifully decorated tree - thank you - and how different and interesting they all were!

But we're not forgetting to thank everyone who helped with the stewarding, serving and providing the refreshments, all the

