

St John the Evangelist Manthorpe



Jottings – January 2026

News and views from church, village and estate

Minister's Letter

A Little Light for the Year Ahead

The liturgical year begins with the season of Advent, but our calendar year begins with the season of Epiphany; a celebration of God's revelation to the world as a saviour for all nations.

I'm sure that many of us find ourselves standing at the threshold of the new year feeling a sense of hesitation. Like the Magi of old, we look out at a landscape that feels vast, unfamiliar, and perhaps a bit shadowed by uncertainty. We might pray for the sunshine to illuminate every corner of our future, yet God frequently provides something much subtler: starlight.

The Magi did not have a GPS or a detailed map; they had glimmer of a distant star and a deep well of faith. They travelled through deserts and bypassed the halls of power, trusting that the small light above them was enough to lead them to the Truth.

There is a lesson for us too here. Faith is not the absence of darkness, but the courage to trust the light we do have. We may not know what our health, our career, or our world will look like six months from now, but Epiphany reminds us that we serve a God who guides us one step at a time. We don't need to see the destination to know we are being led by a loving Heavenly Father.

This month, this year, can we challenge ourselves to look for our "star." It might be a word of scripture, a quiet moment of meditation, or a hand extended in friendship. Let that small light be enough. Let us trust that the One who placed the myriad stars in the sky is the same One who leads our daily lives.

A blessed new year to you and your loved ones. Steve Potts

Services for this month

Sunday 4th	Epiphany: Morning Prayer	10.00am
Wednesday 7th	BCP Eucharist	10.00am
Sunday 11th	Baptism of Christ: Eucharist	10.00am
Wednesday 14th	BCP Eucharist	10.00am
Sunday 18th	Epiphany 2: Morning Prayer	10.00am
Wednesday 21st	BCP Eucharist	10.00am
Sunday 25th	Conversion of Paul: Eucharist	10.00am
Wednesday 28th	BCP Eucharist	10.00am

Dates for your Diary

Friday 2nd	Afternoon Whist Drive	2.00pm
Tuesday 6th	PCC	2.00pm
Wednesday 7th	Memorial Service and wake Michael Syddall	11.30am
Friday 16th	Memorial Service and wake Bodil Clayton	2.30pm

Saturday 24 th	Casserole lunch	£12.00	12.30pm
			

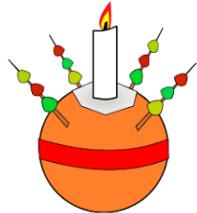
Seasonal Thanks

Peter and I would like to thank all who help produce the Jottings. In its early years I would receive a stack of copies from Derek to deliver in an area of Manthorpe estate. Later I passed this "task" to Beryl Eldridge. That was MANY years ago and she and her husband Dave continue to deliver a copy to our home each month.

"Grateful thanks to them both" and to all who in any way continue with the production and delivery of the Jottings to those of us who are interested in the life of our Community. Christina Banks

Christingle and the first Sunday in Advent

The last Sunday of November was a busy one at St. John's! It was the First Sunday of Advent and also our Christingle service, led by Jill Potts and Joy Hobbs.



Christingle goes back to 1747 when a German bishop, Johannes de Waterville, was looking for a simple way to show the happiness that Jesus could bring. It was popularised in UK by John Pensom in 1948 at Lincoln Cathedral to raise funds for The Children's Society.

So now we do both. We make a Christingle, using an orange to represent the earth, a red ribbon to represent the blood of Jesus, tiny sweeties on four cocktail sticks to represent the worldwide love and goodness of Jesus to his people, and push a candle into the top of the orange to represent Jesus as the light of the world. And we raise funds with our Advent Appeal for The Children's Society charity in UK, who support vulnerable young people and children: young carers, refugees, exploited children and children in poverty.

Sadly, there are many children in the UK who need this help - not just at Christmas but throughout the year. Will you help us by using the envelopes or the cardboard candle boxes displayed in church to make a donation? The Appeal will close on December 31st. Thank you so much!!!

Mission & Social Responsibility Committee

CAR PARK

As you are no doubt aware, the car park does not belong to the Church. However, following the death of Tony Snarey, who allowed us to use his field for over 40 years, productive conversations with Allison Homes over the ownership of the field could mean that it is gifted to us for future use.

In the meantime the car park is not fit for purpose after heavy rain. Tony Snarey's daughter, Helen, has asked the builders if they would kindly agree to upgrade the surface until a final decision is made. This was done on Wednesday 17th December and although it still has many puddles following a downpour, it is an improvement that will, hopefully, last until future decisions are made.

Our grateful thanks to the Snarey family.

Administrator

In Praise of Advent

Regular readers of this publication will know that my favourite time of the year is Advent. A time of Hope and Optimism and an opportunity to reflect before the excitement and clamour of Christmas.

On Advent Saturday I had occasion to call into the Church where I found Christine, June and Kate in the kitchen putting together the foil Christingle packs ready for Sunday.

As usual, at 10 minutes to the hour the church was pretty empty and then suddenly it was as if a coachload had arrived, unfortunately no children but one or two newcomers.

Unfortunately the technology let us down and the computer and screen refused to talk to each other, leaving Joy Hobbs and Jill Potts to ad-lib the service prepared by the Children's Society, and Linda had problems with the hymns on the computer.

However, the explanation of the Orange, the ribbon and the dolly mixture sticks topped by the candle is familiar to all of us. The prayers for the disadvantaged children and adolescents were a salutary reminder to us all that we in Manthorpe are very privileged.

The 5th December, the day before The Christmas Fayre, after the whist drive in the afternoon, Linda stayed on to welcome stallholders to set up their stalls and for Kate and I to set up the kitchen, taking cakes out of the freezer.

Stallholders were well set up for opening at 10 o'clock Saturday morning. For the church Joan ran the bottle stall, Cynthia the cakes, Jill sold her Christmas cards and hand crafted items, while in the church Cynthia had left an honesty box with her birthday cards and Pam and June set up the most amazing Christmas goodies stall around the font. Of course the first team of the day were ready to serve refreshments from the kitchen.

There was no great rush through the doors at 10 o'clock. but Cynthia reckons half her stock had been sold by 10.45!! The sun had come out and old friends turned out as well as new faces. It really is such a social occasion!!

By 1 o'clock the hall had thinned out, Cynthia had sold out of Marmalade and had only two or three cakes left. I understand it was all sorted away by 4 o'clock.

Thank you to everyone who worked so hard to make the event a success and thank you to all those who supported it and spent so much money. The church has made just over £1,200 and we hope those independent stall holders who pay £15 for the pleasure of being there also made a profit.

I think some people who had been busy on Saturday had a lie in on Sunday because there weren't many of us there to benefit from Steve's sermon but we enjoyed it and lit the second Advent candle. Most of those in church stayed on for coffee and conversation.

Because the clergy are so stretched at the moment, we have not had Communion services on a Sunday and we owe a real debt of thanks to Joy Hobbs, Steve Potts and June Miller for stepping up to the lectern and taking the service of Morning Prayer (we have of course had the Eucharist service on Wednesdays).

Still to look forward to the Carol Service tomorrow evening, the Crib Service on Christmas Eve and the Joy of Christmas morning.....

Margaret Booles

A Franciscan Benediction (for the comfortable)

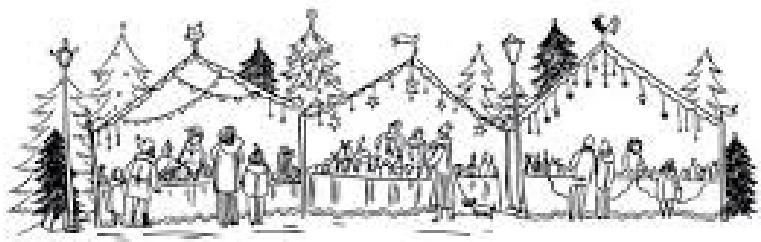
May God bless us with discomfort at easy answers, half-truths and superficial relationships so that we may live from deep within our hearts.

May God bless us with anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of God's creation so that we may work for justice, freedom and peace.

May God bless us with tears to shed for those who suffer pain, rejection, hunger and war, so that we may reach out our hands to comfort them and to turn their pain into joy.

And may God bless us with just enough foolishness to believe that we can make a difference in the world, so that we can do what others claim cannot be done: to bring justice and kindness to all our children and all our neighbours.

Christmas Fayre



Once again we held a Christmas Fayre in the Hall on Saturday 6th December. It was well attended and there were many different types of stalls available to the public. There were Handicrafts, Jewellery, Glass, Pottery, Woodcraft, Candles, Handmade Cards, Artwork, Books, Cake Stall, Bottle stall and Christmas Bits and Pieces.

There was a steady flow of visitors to the fayre who not only purchased some Christmas presents but also enjoyed a cup of tea or coffee with a bit of cake, and absorbed the friendly atmosphere and the welcome in the Hall as well as the Church. All of the stall holders had a good day and have already asked when we will be having another fayre! The whole event was well supported by the church community and the wider community of Manthorpe and Grantham. Although cold outside, there was a warm welcome to all who attended.

Thank you to all who helped by manning the various stalls for church, organising the rotas for the kitchen, those who staffed the kitchen and kept the tea and cakes flowing, the hall users who decorated the windows in the church and especially to all who attended to help make it such a success! Thank you all!

Hope to see you all again next year!

Linda Vincent

Manthorpe Playgroup
enjoying ice cream
during their visit
to the Pantomime.

Have you seen the
pump-house, beautifully
decorated for Christmas
by the playgroup?



THE PLAYGROUP NATIVITY

A rainbow of lights from the stained glass windows danced across the church walls on Wednesday 10th. December. The scene was set for our playgroup's annual Nativity. Proud Dads and Grandpas filled the pews while nervous Mums and Grandmas smoothed long white dresses and tweaked halos and wings while well dressed Kings and Shepherds were guided into position.

Our Vicar, The Rev. Stuart Craddock, welcomed everyone and, with great enthusiasm, joined the precious actors by telling a story some two thousand and twenty five years old.

We sang of how the angel Gabriel told Mary how she would travel to a little town called Bethlehem where the hopes and fears of all the years would be born. An excellent little donkey carried Mary along the dusty road to the Royal City of David where an innkeeper allowed them to stay in his lowly cattle shed when the little baby Jesus lay down his sweet head.

A sparkling angel directed the shepherds and a spectacularly well fed sheep to Bethlehem, as glory shone around. The Kings from the Orient gave their gifts of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh to complete our little play which was blessed by the Fr. Stuart.

The glittering scene and the playgroup staff enjoyed applause from a very appreciative audience and all enjoyed lively renditions of Jingle Bells, how Santa got stuck up the chimney and we wished one another a Merry Christmas.

It is a privilege to be invited each year, for my own memories go back to our Rosemary playing the part of Mary. Ann Bramley



St John's Community Hall

To book the hall please contact

Joan, Administrator 07434 516116

Regular bookings

2nd Mon. am New Layers of Stitch, Mary Bomphrey 07715 171808

3rd Mon. am U3A STEM, John Down 07468 696029

4th Mon. am Bobbin Lace Group, Jean Breckenridge 07929 990708

Mon pm weekly Daisy Chain Yoga, Rachel Metcalfe 079200 96439

Mon eve weekly Pilates, Kristina Hammond 577796

2nd Tues eve Manthorpe W.I., Judy Payne 07913 536 698

Tues weekly Sch.hols ConexusTuition, Karen Shaw 07701 096842

3rd Tues eve bi-monthly Breast Friends, Sara Green 07738 786743

Last Tues eve Grantham Sunflower W.I., Ann Kilroy 07933 0244233

Wed. pm monthly National Trust, Paul Skelton 07818 435 808

Wed. pm weekly Parkinsons UK, Ian Askew 01400 282712

Thurs am weekly Dansana Yoga, Helen Vyse 07513 901 454

1st Thurs pm U3A Psychology, Steve Potts 07434 464712

3rd Thurs pm National Trust, Paul Skelton 07818 435 808

4th Thurs pm U3A Exploring AI, Steve Potts 07434 464712

Thurs pm term time Conexus Tuition, Karen Shaw 07701 096842

Thurs. eve weekly Bridge Club, Peter Simpson 01949 842481

Friday am weekly Daisy Chain Yoga, Rachel Metcalfe 079200 96439

1st Fri pm Church Whist Drive, Joan Lincoln 07434 516116

4th Fri pm U3A Gardening, Caroline Bowman 01476 566411

2nd Fri eve Lincs Wildlife, John Chadwick 01476 561413

4th Fri eve Realize Sound, Liz Langford 07971 400769

Sat am weekly term time First Class Learning, Patricia Newman 07528 800300

One-off bookings this month

7th 12.00 to 3.00pm Wake for Michael Syddall

16th 3.00-5.00pm Wake for Bo Clayton

Parish Matters

Vicar: Father Stuart W. Cradduck 01202569582

Church warden: Linda Vincent

PCC secretary: Rob Vincent

Safeguarding officer:

Parish Administrator: Joan Lincoln 07434516116

www.stjohnmanthorpe.org.uk Email: stjohnmanthorpe@gmail.com

Registers for December

Baptisms **None**

Funerals

Tony Snarey

Dorothy Barber (crem)

Burial of ashes None

Cleaning rotas

January

Church

5th

19th

Brasses

Margaret & Cynthia

Rev and Mr Potts



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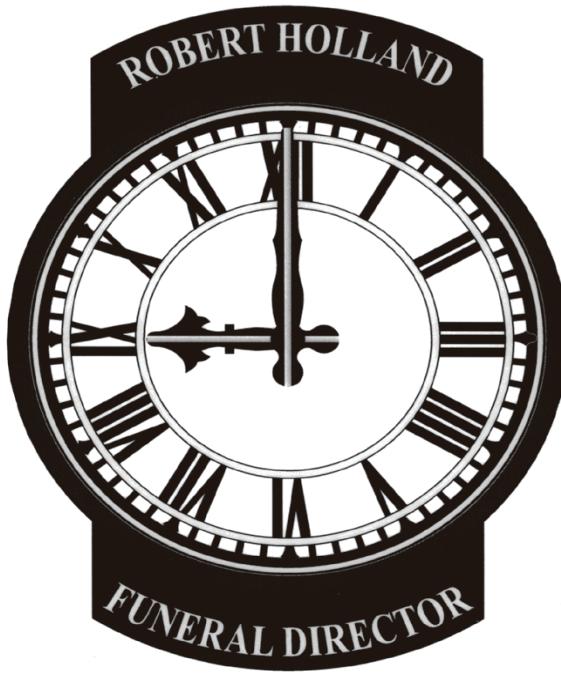
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Articles for Jottings

To ensure entry to the following month's Jottings, please send reports, social events and any news and information to jilldallygate@gmail.com by the 18th of each month.

Don't forget!

If you wish to mark a special anniversary, birthday or remember a loved one, you are welcome to put flowers in our memorial window.



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