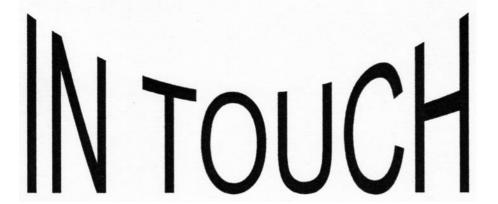


Methodist Church Circuit



December 2019/January 2020

Chairman of the District:

Revd. Stephen Wild M.A.

Superinten	dent Minister:
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Revd. Michael Pullan B.Ed. B.D.	422406
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Local Preachers:

Mr. Len Michell	422409
Mr. Gordon Bird	422550
Mr. C. Savill	423563

Circuit Stewards:

Mrs. Christine Savill	423563
Mr. Mervyn Bird	423117
Mrs. Beryl Read	422977
Mr. Len Michell	422409

	Circuit Treasurer:	Mr.	Christopher Savill	423563
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Gift Aid Secretary: N	Mrs. Stephanie Bird	423117
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Circuit Meeting Secretary: Mrs. Heather Terry 422329

Church Stewards:

St. Mary's:	Mrs. Claire Jenkins	Mrs. June Lethbridge
	Mr. Philip Lethbridge	Mrs. Leigh Kendrick

Mrs. Sue Williams Mrs. Barbara Jones

St Mary's

St. Martin's:

Jei 1 iai y Ji		
Treasurer:	Mrs. Sue Williams	422605
Church Council Secretary:	Mrs. Beryl Read	422977
Hall Booking Secretary:	Mrs. Anne Gurr	422224
Organist:	Mr. Len Michell	422409
Deputy Organist:	Mr. Philip Lethbridge	422404
St. Martin's:		

Church Council Secretary	: Mrs. Jackie Perkins	422814
Church Treasurer:	Mr. Alan Terry	422329

Connextional Link Person: Mrs. Beryl Read 422977 Safeguarding Officer: Mrs. Barbara James 422674

From the Manse

Dear Friends

As we approach '2020' what do we see? – for ourselves, for the church, for the country or for the world. We might argue (or agree) that for '2020 vision' we need to look constantly to Jesus and all He said and did.



When asked by the disciples 'Lord, teach us to pray' He gave them the words we know as the Lord's Prayer - technically a prayer given by Jesus to His disciples.

These familiar words (or this familiar prayer) are well known throughout the world (is it really 20 years since Cliff Richard sang it as the Millennium Prayer?). It might serve as a basis for our activity and vision for the year ahead.

As it has been said:-

You cannot pray the Lord's Prayer and ever once say I. You cannot pray the Lord's Prayer and ever once say My.

You cannot say the Lord's Prayer and not pray for another. For when you ask for daily bread, you must include your brother. OR

I cannot say 'Our', and live only for myself.

I cannot say 'Father', if I don't try to act like His child.

I cannot say 'Who art in heaven', if I am laying no treasure there.

I cannot say 'Hallowed be your name', if I am not striving for holiness.

I cannot say 'Your kingdom come', if I am not helping to hasten that event.

I cannot say 'Give us today our daily bread', if I am dishonest.

I cannot say 'Forgive us our trespasses', if I bear a grudge against someone.

I cannot say 'Lead us not into', if I deliberately place myself in its path.

I cannot say 'Deliver us from evil', if I do not put on the armour of God.

I cannot say 'Yours is the Kingdom, the power and the glory', if I do not give the King the loyalty due to Him from a faithful subject. And I cannot say 'For ever' if the horizon of my life is bounded by time.

The whole thrust of the Lord's Prayer is that when we give God His rightful place, he gives us our rightful place.

May the familiar words speak to us during Christmas and through 2020 and inspire, encourage and humble us in His service

Michael



Letter from Val and Martin

Dear Friends

I am writing this from Rode. We arrived last night and are now awaiting furniture vans! In the end everything happened very fast so there was no chance to let people know we were actually off on Tuesday 12th November. Our new address is:

47 Church Lane

Rode

Somerset BA11 6PN

If ever anyone fancies a trip to the wilds of the Somerset Wiltshire border, there will always be a bed and a warm welcome.

Thank you once again for our leaving gift token and the good wishes. We shall stock the new garden with some plants to remind us of our happy days on Scilly. We have some very special memories, not least the support and fellowship of the Church.

When I woke up this morning, I realised I would miss the deadline for the In Touch unless I wrote this now and then realised this would be the December January issue and so therefore Christmas. I shall be thinking of you all as you decorate the Church for Christmas and when it is the Walking Nativity and candlelit service. I will be with you in spirit if not in body.

May God bless you all at this special time of the year and send every blessing for 2020.

Val and Martin Parker

News from St Martin's

We have been very mindful of the elements this Autumn, with some of our services cancelled as boating has not been possible.

We are forever grateful to those brave souls who do venture across the water to be with us.

This is also a time when many of the congregation take their holidays - traditionally after the tourist season has ended and before the flower season begins.

As a community we have said farewell to Audrey Davis who has been with us for some 25 years. We wish her well in her new home, nearer to her daughters in the Midlands.

This year's Remembrance Service was held with our friends at the Anglican Church; always a moving service when we remember so many Islanders who gave of their lives to ensure our freedom.

The Autumn months have been particularly challenging this year, particularly for people on the move, the elderly, fishermen and farmers. We look forward to the Christmas season with the hope of new things to come.

Val Thomas

Editorial Team

Jean Duncan davidandjeanduncan72@gmail.com

Anne Gurr e.anne.gurr@gmail.com Barbara James bjjethen@gmail.com

This is the Circuit magazine but it needs your contributions to make sure everyone knows what is happening. Please send your contributions to the editor by 15th of the month.

In Touch can be read on line. Just go to our Circuit website www.scillymethodists.co.uk and click on the link to the newsletter. Back numbers of In Touch can also be accessed. If you would prefer to read In Touch in this way please let us know and we can save the cost of a paper copy.

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Some material in this magazine was obtained from www.parishpump.co.uk. We thank them for providing material for magazine editors to use.

The History of Christmas

The Bible does not give a date for the birth of Jesus. In the third century it was suggested that Jesus was conceived at the Spring equinox, 25th March, popularising the belief that He was born nine months later on 25th December. John Chrysostom, the Archbishop of Constantinople, encouraged Christians worldwide to make Christmas a holy day in about 400.

In the early Middle Ages, Christians celebrated a series of midwinter holy days. Epiphany (which recalls the visit to the infant Jesus of the wise men bearing gifts) was the climax of 12 days of Christmas, beginning on 25th December. The Emperor Charlemagne chose 25th December for his coronation in 800, and the prominence of Christmas Day rose. In England, William the Conqueror also chose 25th December for his coronation in 1066, and the date became a fixture both for religious observance and feasting.

Cooking a boar was a common feature of mediaeval Christmas feasts, and singing carols accompanied it. Writers of the time lament the fact that the true significance of Christmas was being lost because of partying. They condemn the rise of 'misrule' – drunken dancing and promiscuity. The day was a public holiday, and traditions of bringing evergreen foliage into the house and the exchange of gifts (usually on Epiphany) date from this time.

In the 17th century the rise of new Protestant denominations led to a rejection of many celebrations that were associated with Catholic Christianity. Christmas was one of them. After the execution of Charles I, England's Puritan rulers made the celebration of Christmas illegal for 14 years. The restoration of Charles II ended the ban, but religious leaders continued to discourage excess, especially in Scotland. In Western Europe (but not worldwide) the day for exchanging gifts changed from Epiphany (6th January) to Christmas Day.

By the 1820s, there was a sense that the significance of Christmas was declining. Charles Dickens was one of several writers who sought to restore it. His novel *A Christmas Carol* was significant in reviving merriment during the festival. He emphasised charity and family reunions, alongside religious observance. Christmas trees, paper chains, cards and many well-known carols date from this time. So did the tradition of Boxing Day, on 26th December, when tradesmen who had given reliable

service during the year would collect 'boxes' of money or gifts from their customers.

In Europe Santa Claus is the figure associated with the bringing of gifts. Santa Claus is a shortening of the name of Saint Nicholas, who was a Christian bishop in the fourth century in present-day Turkey. He was particularly noted for his care for children and for his generosity to the poor. By the Middle Ages his appearance, in red bishop's robes and a mitre, was adored in the Netherlands and familiar across Europe.

Father Christmas dates from 17th century England, where he was a secular figure of good cheer (more associated with drunkenness than gifts). The transformation of Santa Claus into today's Father Christmas started in New York in the 1880s, where his red robes and white beard became potent advertising symbols. In some countries (such as Latin America and Eastern Europe) the tradition attempts to combine the secular and religious elements by holding that Santa Claus makes children's presents and then gives them to the baby Jesus to distribute.



Look out for <u>Christmas cards</u> on the Fairtrade stall. Also copies of the <u>Friendship Book 2020</u> and <u>People's Friend Annual</u> available at £5.99 (both normally £7.99).

NB no 1ps!!



A Sunday School teacher asked her class: 'What was the name of Jesus' mother?'

One child answered: 'Mary'.

The teacher then asked: 'Who knows what Jesus' father's name was?'

A little boy answered: 'Verge'.

Confused, the teacher asked: 'Where did that come from?'

To which the child replied: 'Well you know how they are always talking about 'Verge and Mary!"

As a result of everyone's generosity, I have been able to send £159 to the World Day of Prayer movement. Our contribution will help to fund the grants distributed by the organisation to a wide range of charities across the world.

Action for Children Income 2018/19

It is good to report that I have been able to send £813-95 to the charity this year. This is in addition to the proceeds of the St. Marys Christmas collections, sent separately by Sue Williams. It is a very pleasing sum and well up on last year's figure. A breakdown of the total is listed below. The extra income is due to an increase in donations and the proceeds of one Cameo morning. Knowing Gwen's commitment to Action for Children, I was not surprised when she told me that she was going to ask for donations instead of $90^{\rm th}$ birthday gifts. Also, one of Nick and Angela Jenkins regular visitors made a gift as a thank you for something they did for her. So special thanks to Gwen, and everyone else who has contributed in any way.

Action for Children are always appreciative of our efforts, which in a small way enables them to continue their essential and wide ranging work. One aspect for which there is an increasing need is the provision of support and breaks for children and young people who care for a sick/disabled/vulnerable adult.

I do have some spare collection boxes, so please contact me if you would like one. Every bit of loose change helps!

Please can I again ask you to save unwanted paperback books until next spring, when I will receive them for the roadside box. Seeking donations for books and some of Alan's allotment produce is an easy way to raise funds, as long I have plenty of reading material on offer. Sometimes books are sold and then returned again, which helps maintain a supply. I am grateful to all Chapel folk who have supplied books, to Sue Hodgson at the Charity Shop who has willingly given me some when asked and to a few unknown residents who have added to the box!

Thank you.	Heather
Roadside book and produce box	£380 - 00
(Books £332 – 80, produce £47 – 20) Donation	£255 - 00
(Gwen's birthday £195, Carn Top guest £60) AfC home collection boxes	£76 - 28
Money raised at Cameo December 2018	£64 - 60
Sale of some of the food left by the Marines after the World Gig Championships.	£19 - 15
Chapel copper coin collection	£18 - 92
TOTAL	£813 - 95

A Christmas Reflection

Shepherds in the fields abiding Watching o'er their flocks by night. God with man is now residing, Yonder shines the Infant Light. Come and worship, come and worship, Worship Christ, the newborn King. By James Montgomery (1771-1854)

James was a very sensitive and thoughtful little boy, always writing verses and poetry. His father was a Pastor in the Moravian Church in Ireland.

Then suddenly his parents were sent as Missionaries abroad, having to leave James behind. Tragically both parents became ill whilst abroad and died. The orphaned James was then at Fulness Seminary near Leeds. He took comfort in writing his poems and verses.

In 1794 when James was 23 years old he became the Editor of the Sheffield Irish newspaper and continued for the next 32 years. James was an active worker for the Bible Society and a champion for the abolition of slavery. He wrote many well-known hymns including 'Hail to the Lord's Anointed' and 'Stand up and Bless the Lord'.

One Christmas, James was reading his Bible, St Luke Chapter 2: Suddenly a great company of the Heavenly Host appeared, praising God and saying: 'Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men on whom His favour rests'.

James closed his eyes and saw before him the GLORIOUS ANGELS, the shepherds and the INFANT CHRIST with MARY and JOSEPH. He then began to write his famous Christmas hymn:

Angels from the realms of glory
Wing your flight o'er all the earth.
Ye who sang creation's story
Now proclaim Messiah's birth.
Come and worship, come and worship,
WORSHIP CHRIST THE NEWBORN KING.

With thanks to Trinity Methodist Church, Royton.

The Incarnation: fearfully and wonderfully made

My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. Psalm 139:15-16

You began life as a single cell. For a few hours you were a miniscule but highly complex blob of jelly, until it began to divide: two cells, four, eight, sixteen, a ball, a hollow ball, and then something more recognisably like a living organism. You were still tiny, but developing a nervous system, a head, a body, arms and legs.

Until recently I hadn't thought much about Jesus being an embryo. Somehow, I find that thought even more shocking than His birth. How could God, who made the universe, have become something so completely and utterly vulnerable? Maybe in the past, when the development of a child happened in 'secret', it was possible just to let that part of the Christmas story go untold.

Today, when we see images of a developing child, or even embryos outside the womb, it is harder to ignore the process of Jesus developing into a baby. The incarnation meant that God's Son went through all the stages in the diagram in my developmental biology textbook: 'zygote', 'morula', 'blastocyst', implantation, and so on.

Jesus was there in the beginning, and all life owes its existence to Him. But instead of remaining aloof, He chose to become one of us. The Son of God shared the same kind of DNA as every other organism on the planet. He knows what it feels like to have a body, to feel hungry and thirsty, pain and pleasure, dark and light.

In Psalm 139, the writer is meditating on God's intimate knowledge of Him, which began when He was an embryo. There is nothing God doesn't know about Him, and even darkness cannot obscure Him from God's sight. The incarnation means that God's intimacy with us now extends even further. He became one of us, lived alongside us, and shared our very fragile material nature.

The transcendent God is also immanent, longing for us to relate to Him as Father. He became as fragile as we are so He could rescue us from the messes we so often find ourselves in. With

His help, we can remember what it means to be fearfully and wonderfully made.

Reproduced by permission from Merry Christmas Everyone: A festive feast of stories, poems and reflection, Edited by Wendy H. Jones, Amy Robinson & Jane Clamp (Association of Christian Writers, 2018)

This series is written by Dr Ruth M. Bancewicz, who is Church Engagement Director at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge. Ruth writes on the positive relationship between Science and Christian faith.



Thumb – pointing up to heaven – Praise Index finger – pointing at yourself – Confession Middle finger – the longest – Thanksgiving Ring finger – love – Pray for others Little finger – the smallest – Pray for ourselves.

The gap between thumb and first finger is the time of silence, to listen to what God wants us to say.

For to us a child is born

'For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.' (Isaiah 9:6)

Approaching Christmas, we are very aware of the political and economic uncertainties that face us. The prophet Isaiah also lived in such uncertain times, as the Assyrians had just conquered the northern kingdom of Israel (734-732 BC). This fulfilled Isaiah's warnings to the people, who had turned their back on God and His ways. However, Isaiah is able to bring a word of hope, promising a Messiah who would come like a great light: 'The people walking in darkness have seen a great light' (Isaiah 9:2). These words are fulfilled in the birth of Jesus 700 years later and describe the person of Jesus:

Wonderful Counsellor: He will give us the wisdom we need, especially when we have difficult decisions to make at work or home, or in dealing with our finances or future direction.

Mighty God: He will provide the help and strength to face a difficult diagnosis, family crisis or relationships breakdown, as we trust His plan and purpose for our lives.

Everlasting Father: He cares for us as a father cares for His children, so that we can come to Him when we feel alone or we are really struggling, knowing that He hears and will answer our prayers.

Prince of Peace: He has secured peace by His cross and resurrection, and so we can find in Him true acceptance, forgiveness and peace for our lives, relationships and future.

Christmas is the time to celebrate a God who is faithful to all His promises, 'the zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this'.

A Christmas smile

It was Christmas and the judge was in a merry mood as he asked the prisoner: 'What are you charged with?'

'Doing my Christmas shopping early' replied the defendant.

'That's no offence' said the judge, 'How early were you doing this shopping?'

'Before the store opened' answered the defendant.

Knitting Group

The members of the knitting group have had a very productive year. Throughout the year we have been making scarves and beanies to go in the Christmas shoe boxes. It was with great disappointment that we heard that we will not be doing shoeboxes on the island this year. However, we sent off three huge parcels to Knit for Peace who were delighted to receive them and will find good homes where the scarves and beanies will be needed.

In April we knitted or crocheted 125 butterflies which were sewn onto tape to make bunting for the Royal Cornwall Hospital Trust.

As well as all this we have made a large number of Christmas Angels (many thanks to the other people who have made angels for us) which will shortly be making an appearance around the island. If you find one please take it home with our love or give it to someone who will appreciate it. We could do with some help in distributing the angels offers of help will be very gratefully received.

Anne

Birthdays

In December we send greetings to Pauline Jackson Cocking, Gladys Perkins, Josh Smith and Merryn Smith and in January to Gordon Bird, Stephanie Bird, John Martin Parker, Anthea Roberts, Thomas, Nathan Thomas and Liz Turner. We hope they all have a very happy birthday. Happy birthday to you

To Jesus be true

God bless you and keep you Happy birthday to you.



Children's birthdays



December Louis Asten, Ellen Clark, Megan Woodcock. **January** Layla Guy, Bella Plowman, Jade Thomas.

The Holly and the Ivy

There is no doubt that holly and ivy are synonymous with Christmas. This dates back to the pre-Christian era when pagans used evergreen decorations in their mid-winter celebrations. It is not hard to see why they were attracted to these beautiful plants which offer a promise of better times to come during the most barren time of year.

Early Christians adopted them too and imbued them with Christian symbolism. The red berries of holly symbolize the blood shed by Christ on the cross and the pointed leaves symbolize the crown of thorns. Ivy, because it is evergreen symbolizes immortality or eternal life. In the carol, ivy is mentioned in the first verse but isn't actually mentioned again until the last verse which is a repeat of the first. It has a cameo role because of earlier songs such as 'The Contest of the Ivy and the Holly' in which attributes of holly (male) and ivy (female) are compared. Our ancestors lived close to the earth and the seasons and were open to symbolism. As modern gardeners we might be sceptical of the symbolism but we can embrace the glory of these seasonal plants.

The holly and the ivy
When they are both full grown,
Of all the trees that are in the wood
The holly bears the crown.



Used Postage stamps

Please save your used postage stamps for charity – leave a ¼ inch margin around the stamps.

They will be sold and the money raised goes to charity (probably Cornwall Air Ambulance). Foreign, British Commonwealth, Isle of Man/Channel Islands are worth more – ordinary definitive just a small amount, but volume can increase if we all save them.

Please let me have them or leave on the table in the Manse.

Many thanks Michael

World Day of Prayer 2020

(Formally Women's World Day of Prayer)

I thought it might be helpful to include some early information about next year's World Day of Prayer, in this edition of In Touch.

The World Day of Prayer will be celebrated around the globe on Friday March 6^{th} 2020. Here in the Islands, we are hoping to follow the service prepared by the Christian ladies of Zimbabwe, at the Parish Church during the afternoon. It is entitled Rise! Take your Mat and Walk, and focuses on the hope for full reconciliation within that troubled country.

A planning / preparation meeting will be held in the Anglican Pavilion on Friday February $21^{\rm st}$ at $2.00 \, \rm pm$.

You might like to note these two dates in your diaries for 2020! Everyone is very welcome at the planning stage, but if you would rather just attend worship please come along.

Heather



Rev. Paul Smith hopes to be in Scilly Feb 7 – 10. We will arrange a meeting on St Mary's and St Martin's during that time, when he will speak to us and help us understand the Methodist Conference Report 'God in love unites us'. He will also lead some worship that weekend. Likely meeting on St Mary's Friday evening or Saturday morning. St Martin's before the Sunday service.



A cheerful giver does not count the cost of what he gives. His heart is set on pleasing and cheering him to whom the gift is given. *Julian of Norwich*

What about the gifts of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh?

The story of the coming of the Magi grew in the telling. By the 6th century they had acquired names: Gaspar, Melchior, and Balthasar. By medieval times they were considered to be kings. Whoever they were, we do know from Matthew that they brought three gifts to Jesus.

What about their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh? While we cannot know for sure what was in the minds of first century Magi, one Victorian scholar has offered a possible explanation as to the significance of their gifts. He was the Rev John Henry Hopkins, an American Episcopalian minister, who in 1857 wrote his much-loved Christmas carol, 'We Three Kings of Orient Are'.

Gold, said John Henry Hopkins, was a gift that would have been given to a king. Frankincense had traditionally been brought by priests as they worshipped God in the Temple. Myrrh was a spice that the ancients used in preparing bodies for burial.

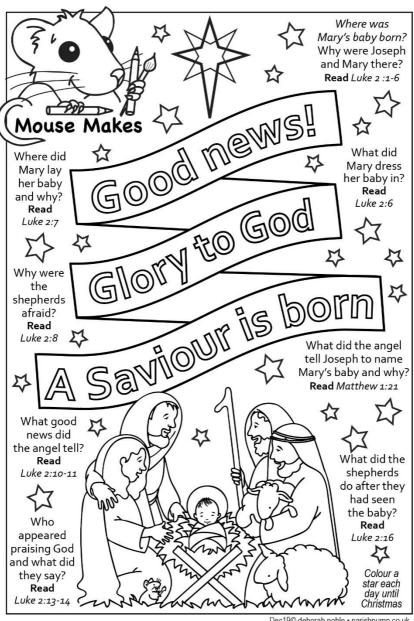
If that is true, then you could say that the Wise Men, in choosing their gifts for this infant, honoured Jesus with gold because He was King of the Jews, with frankincense because He was to be worshipped as divine; and with myrrh, because He would also become a sacrifice and die for His people.

The Wise Men were the very first gentiles ever to worship Jesus. What faith they had! They travelled for months over difficult terrain, they never saw any evidence of Jesus' kingship, His divinity or His sacrificial death. They worshipped Him through faith in God's promises about Him. Isaiah foresaw this response to Jesus: 'Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.' The Magi's eyes of faith saw clearly and far into the future.

Compare that with the High Priest and religious leaders whom the Wise Men saw in Jerusalem when they first arrived. These head priests knew all about the prophecies of their own coming Messiah, but NOT ONE Jewish religious leader travelled to look for Him in Bethlehem. And it is only six miles down the road!

Follow the Christ – the King. Live pure! Speak true! Right wrong! Follow the King! Else wherefore born?

Tennyson



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CAMEO

Tuesday Dec 10th 2019

10.00 - 12.00

Wesley Room

Coffee, Bring and buy, Traidcraft stall

Proceeds to Action for Children

Tuesday Jan 14th 2020

10.00 - 12.00

Wesley Room

Coffee, Bring and buy, Cakes, Traidcraft stall

Proceeds to Traidcraft Exchange Charity

Come and keep in touch with friends at CAMEO

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This Christmas, when Christ comes, will He find a warm heart? Mark the season of Advent by loving and serving others with God's own love and concern.

Mother Teresa of Calcutta

Christmas is not as much about opening our presents as opening our hearts.

Janice Maeditere

SERVICES FOR DECEMBER 2019

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- 1st	9.15am 11.00am 6.00pm	Rev Michael Pullan Rev Michael Pullan Advent Carols at Parish Church
8th	9.15am 11.00am	Gordon Bird Rev Michael Pullan <i>Holy Communion</i>
15th	9.15am 11.00am	David Ward Len Michell
22nd	11.00am 6.00pm	Rev Michael Pullan Walking Nativity and Carol Service
29th	9.15am 11.00am	Beryl Read Stewards
St Martin's		
<u>-</u> 1st	11.00am	Beryl Read
8th	3.00pm	Rev Michael Pullan and Canon Perran Gay <i>United Service at Chapel</i>
15th	11.00am	Christopher Savill
22nd	2.00pm	Rev Michael Pullan
29th	11.00am	Rev Michael Pullan
Park House		
<u>-</u> 1st	4.00pm	Rev Michael Pullan Carols