

Dear Friends,

What is prayer? A question that can either be answered very, very simply or requires a large amount of explanation; and both approaches to the answer would be right. For prayer is at one and the same time something very basic but is also the greatest of all mysteries. Bishop Stephen Cottrell describes prayer as: "...think of God as the great Lover who longs to communicate his love to his people."

The great poetic meditation on Creation that we know as The Book of Genesis describes God as someone who desires to communicate, to have a relationship, whose great love overflows into the creation of the universe abundant with life, animals, plants, and human beings. And the Christian understanding of God as Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit again draws to our attention the fact that at the very heart of God there is relationship. As Bishop Stephen continues: "We are the objects of God's love. We are made in his image and...are able to return the love we receive."

Here, in a nutshell is the answer to our question; prayer is a communication, a relationship of love between God and us. "The Lover (God) coming into the presence of the Beloved (you) saying "love you."

Of course, to have a relationship requires a response from the other person and because God is love then God will never coerce or force a response from us, but will continue to wait for us to freely respond. The response to God's outpouring love is what we call prayer. At its simplest, prayer is the loving communication between God and ourselves in relationship.

Why then does it seem so complicated, so difficult, so mysterious? For the same reason that love is so complicated, difficult and mysterious; for love too is mysterious. We know love when we experience it but words fail when we try to describe it.

"What we call prayer is actually our response to God. In its most raw and basic form, it is the longing of our heart to know God. In response to what we see and experience of God doing for us in Christ – the showing forth of love – we sputter in reply, 'I love you too.'

With prayers and blessings

Sister Sue.

- from the Abundance of the Heart -

Stephen Cottrell, D.L.T. 2006

Sunday School News

Happy New Year!

All Age Worship

The team are so pleased with how well supported this service has been and with the positive comments about it. We welcome any ideas or contributions for this year. If you would like to read, do prayers, play an instrument, sing or contribute in any way please let Debbie know – and this applies to All Ages!

Lessons

We return on Sunday 10th Jan in school.

Please come to prizegiving in church on 17th Jan. Every child who has attended

Sunday School this year will receive a prize.

Christmas Party

We hope you all enjoyed the Christmas party. Thank you to everyone who helped with this, especially Father Christmas, who came along even though he was very busy.

Nativity and Christingle Service

A massive thank you to all our families for their hard work for this service. It has been lovely to have us all working together and we hope everyone enjoyed how we retold this special story. I am writing this before we have even reached the service so I can't inform you how much we raised at Christingle – will announce it at prizegiving and we'll have a full report in February magazine

**Happy New Year and best wishes for 2016
From us all**

Calendar for January

January	3	Epiphany
	10.30	Parish Communion Rev'd Roland Nicholson
	6.30	Evensong Canon Sue Williams
January	10	Baptism of Christ
	10.30	Parish Communion Dr John Darch
	6.30	Evensong Canon John Hartley
January	12	
	7.30	Mothers' Union
January	17	Second Sunday of Epiphany
	10.30	Parish Communion Sunday School Prize giving Canon Sue Williams
	6.30	Rev'd Roland Nicholson
January	24	Third Sunday of Epiphany
	10.30	Parish Communion Rev'd Enid Briggs
	6.30	Evensong Dr John Darch
January	26	

	2.15	Little Angels
January	31	Fourth Sunday of Epiphany
	10.30	Parish Communion Canon John Hartley
	6.30	Holy Communion Rev'd Enid Briggs

Church Rotas January

Sidespersons

		<u>Morning</u>		<u>Evening</u>
January	3	J Moss	P Webster	G Calvert
	10	G Tipper	C Davis	S Nelson
	17	N Walsh	M Hodson	S Saunders
	24	A Bibby	P Cowell	N Hogg
	31	G Calvert	P Hughes	M Hodson

Assistant Wardens

January	3	Rita Gorman & Lorna Shaw
	10	Linda Livesey & Sue Nelson
	17	Debbie Summersgill & Marilyn Watson
	24	Derek Haworth & Dorothy Walsh
	31	Jim & Sue Saunders

Chalice Servers

Intercessor

January	3	Graham Tipper & Linda Livesey	Frank Ashton
	10	Eileen Peake & Rita Gorman	Geoff Gill
	17	Geoff Gill & Linda Livesey	Debbie Chadwick
	24	Graham Tipper & Eileen Peake	Linda Livesey
	31	Rita Gorman & Geoff Gill	Graham Tipper

Flowers

January	4	General Clean up	All Arrangers
	10	Mrs.M Lomax	Joan Moss
	17	Marie Smith	Ann Minoprio
	24	Arthur Sharp	Debbie Summersgill & Lorna Bowes
	31	Hilda Hilton	Helen Holroyd & Helen Cooper

Church Cleaning

Week Commencing			
January	4	General Cleaning – All Hands on Deck, please	
	11	Maureen Forrest, Hilda Hilton & Marilyn Watson	
	18	Vicky Dewhurst & Jane Greenough	
	25	Di Ibbotson & Sue Ellison	

“From Darkness to Light”

A large congregation thoroughly enjoyed and entered into the spirit of this truly special,

joyous and memorable service marking the start of the Advent season.

The church was in darkness as the choir began singing and as they processed to the choir stalls, more and more of the candles were lit along the length of the centre aisle. The service itself then flowed seamlessly through readings, hymns for the congregation to join in and singing by the choir. The sequence of music from past to present accorded with the movement from darkness into light.

We have not been attending St Mary's for many years, but we were gladdened to see more members of the Mellor Choir than we have ever seen before and their singing really was exceptional. All their hard work was rewarded by the response of the congregation: people from all three churches in the benefice spoke enthusiastically about how much they enjoyed all aspects of the service. We owe a big thank you to Noel for making the holders for the candles which gave so much atmosphere to the occasion and to all members of the choir for their joyful singing, especially Liz for the quality of her solo pieces. The biggest thank you must go to Mike for his organisation and inspiration, as well as the quality of his playing of the organ.

Hopefully, this will become an annual event: if you missed it this year, make sure you don't miss it next!

Jim and Sue

LITTLE ANGELS

We enjoyed a lovely, lively meeting in December when the youngest children from school came to sing to us – their enthusiasm and exuberance was a tonic!

The little angels and carers enjoyed (I think) passing the parcel and each took home a card and a tiny Nativity to hang on the Christmas tree at home.

We meet on Tuesday, 26th January at 2.15pm in the Narthex for an hour of fun and friendship.

Wishing you all a peaceful and happy 2016

Rita Margaret Hilda and Gillian

Mellor St. Mary C. E. Primary School News

May I begin by thanking all parishioners for their contributions to our Christmas activities and wishing everyone a very happy and healthy 2016 from all of us here at School.

Our Spring Term begins for pupils on Tuesday, 5th January, following an INSET day for staff on Monday, 4th. During the morning of this INSET day staff will be discussing their teaching of history and considering how we can continue to improve these lessons for all our pupils. Mrs McPherson, our new history coordinator, will lead the activities and she informs me that we will be looking at an alternative method of learning about chronology, which will include members of staff acting in the role of a character from history, so we look forward to a very interesting morning!

From Tuesday 12th - Thursday 14th January, year two pupils will take part in their final three 'Right Start' lessons. Pupils will think about the best colours and types of clothing to wear to ensure that they are easily seen by drivers, especially when they are pedestrians walking to school during the darker Winter months. They will also

learn what the orange, white and red lights on vehicles tell us and think about the safest places to cross roads, such as zebra or pelican crossings.

On Wednesday, 20th January, a textile artist, Julia Allinson, will be visiting school to work with our year six pupils. The last time Julia visited school, she worked with pupils to create our school altar cloth, which many of you will see in use in our daily acts of worship, so we very much look forward to seeing and using another new textile creation.

Looking ahead in 2016, we are holding a Mellor School Reunion Weekend on Friday 1st, Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd July, so please save this date in your diary for what I'm sure will be a very special weekend.

Michael Oddie (Deputy Headteacher)

Church Magazine

The subscription for 2016 is £5 (less than 10p a week) and will be collected by the distributors when the January issue is delivered or earlier if you wish.

The church magazine is an important part of the church's outreach into the village community - and wider, (one is posted to Dundee) with the calendar of events, church services, readings for each week as well as reports from the church organizations. Please don't put it in the waste paper bag when you have finished reading- pass it on to a neighbour.

Thank you to all who contribute in any way - by subscribing, delivering, submitting articles or information etc - to the success of the magazine., and a special thank you to Ron Hak for the work he puts in to help produce this magazine.

Thank you, Rita Gorman.

Please Support The Magazine's Advertisers

A New Year's Prayer

Dear Lord, please give me...

A few friends who understand me and remain my friends;
A work to do which has real value,
without which the world would be the poorer;
A mind unafraid to travel, even though the trail be not blazed;
An understanding heart;
A sense of humor;
Time for quiet, silent meditation;
A feeling of the presence of God;
The patience to wait for the coming of these things,
With the wisdom to recognize them when they come.

Amen.

Any Questions?

“Any Questions?” on 10th and 17th December came from the narthex of St Mary the Virgin, the 19th century parish church serving the picturesque village of Mellor located in the beautiful Ribble Valley. The panel of experts specially assembled for the evenings comprised Sister Sue, Mother Enid and Reverend John Darch. With some trepidation, in the best Dimbleby Brothers’ tradition, they had no advance knowledge of the questions to which they would have to respond. The audience which faced (confronted?) them was not a scientifically balanced representation of all three congregations in the benefice, but they brought some strongly held beliefs as well as their doubts, uncertainties and enquiries.

The wide-ranging barrage of questions was answered clearly and authoritatively by the distinguished panel and with a perhaps not surprising degree of consensus. However, there were clearly some signs of good-humoured disagreement as to whether the recent unsuccessful attempt to have the Lord’s Prayer “trailer” shown in cinemas had been “A Good Idea”. Sister Sue took skilful advantage of her role as chairperson to allow her co-panellists to jump in with both feet on this issue.

There were lots of opportunities for discussion and exchange of views and the evenings were a thought provoking addition to the Study Groups that have become a tradition. After two hours of intense brain cell activity, the audience thanked all the panellists for their contributions and in particular Sister Sue for taking the time and trouble to organise the evenings.

Jim and Sue

???? The Village Quiz ????

The Quiz will be held on

Friday 12th February 2016

in the School, starting at 7.30 prompt.

Tickets are £6.50 each

and include a Meat-and-Potato Pie Supper
with a Vegetarian option

There will be a bar; soft drinks will also be available.

Quizmaster is Reverend Roland.

Tickets will have to be limited due to the space available, so start arranging your teams of 4 people, and come along and enjoy what promises to be a great evening.

All proceeds from the evening will go to Church.

Tickets are available from:-

Jean Freeman 01254 812366

Debbie Summersgill 01254 813559
Rita Gorman 01254 812566
Alan Smith 01254 672774

MOTHERS' UNION

We held our Christmas Party early in December and welcomed friends and also members from Balderstone Mothers' Union.

The Day School children entertained us with excerpts from their concert 'Back to Buggy' - we thank Mrs. Taylor, the staff and children. We then served 71 suppers, had a quiz and were entertained by our own ladies in 'A Tribute to Cilla Black'.

The evening closed with Carol singing.

My sincere thanks to all who worked so hard in the preparation and on the evening, not forgetting the gentlemen who 'washed up' for us and Canon John Hartley who gave us a blessing.

We meet in January on the 12th and welcome PC Jules Ragen who will talk about 'Safety and Security'.

We send our love and best wishes to Yvonne Hebbard, Irene Holt and Marian Hunt who are not well.

With every good wish for 2016

Margaret Ashton

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Prizegiving Service Sunday 17th January 10.30

Please come and join us to reward the youngsters of our parish for their attendance at Sunday School

The children are the present in our church, not just the future, so we hope you will come along to celebrate with us and share in the joy which they bring to our church.

*See you there
From all the 'Youth Team'*

"A Very Happy January Birthday"

January birthdays from the Baptism, Sunday School and Youth Fellowship registers are:

5th	Mia Thornton	16th	Ebony Varey
5th	Thomas Cleasby	16th	Scarlett Wakes
7th	Grace Hilton	26th	Ellie Mayor
8th	William Joyce	26th	George Rolston
8th	Emily Sheldon	28th	Penelope Burtonwood
12th	Rose Best	29th	Elizabeth Venn-Mills
14th	Brooke Wilson		

Do you have a Special Birthday coming up?
Would you like us to mention it in the Church magazine?
Please let us know.

F.O.S.M.S

We would like to start the New Year with a huge thank you to everyone
In the community who has supported our school fundraising events.

Thank you to all the amazing volunteers who give their time and
Energy to support FOSMS and to all those who attending our events.
Our first fundraiser for 2016 is the school disco which will be held Friday 5th February 2016 in the
school hall, further details of this event and events over
the coming months can be found in the FOSMS newsletter distributed via the childrens' reading
packs.

New members to FOSMs are always welcome if you would like to join
FOSMS please contact Emma Hilton or Vicki Dewhurst via the school .

Our noticeboard outside the school is kept up to date with all our events.
Wishing everyone a happy and prosperous new year .

Kind regards

The FOSMS team.

Thoughts for the New Year - 2016

"Here we are in a month named after the Roman god Janus, an appropriate personification of the start of the new year. This particular Roman god had two faces so that he could look ahead toward the future and back at the past at the same time. As we get rid of an old year and look forward to a new one, we all try to be a little like Janus. We know through experience what we did wrong and what we did right, and hope to do better this year. Some people make ambitious New Year's resolutions; others just take a deep breath and hope for the best...."

"A new year is unfolding—like a blossom with petals curled tightly concealing the beauty within.

Lord, let this year be filled with the things that are truly good—with the comfort of warmth in our relationships, with the strength to help those who need our help and the humility and openness to accept help from others.

As we make our resolutions for the year ahead, let us go forward with great hope that all things can be possible—with Your help and guidance."

FAIRTRADE

The next stall selling Fairtrade goods will be on Sunday, 7th February.

Thank you for supporting this worthwhile cause.

The Fairtrade Team

Saturday Cafe at Mellor Village Hall

Every first Saturday in the month from 10am to 2pm
Hot and cold drinks, bacon sandwiches, soup,
home made cakes to eat in or take out.

Recycled Cards

We have recently given the following amounts to
Charities and "Good Causes":-

November

Mellor School Children in Need Appeal £20

*This payment means that, since we started in
November 2006 we have made donations of over*

£7,000!

That is a lot of 50p s and a wonderful total, all thanks to the cards
you have given to us to recycle. And still there is more...

November

First prize for the Autumn Fayre Prize Draw £100

Cards stall at Autumn Fayre £241.65

December

East Lancashire Hospice £50

Rosemere Cancer Foundation £50

Mencap £50

Northwest Air Ambulance £50

Northern Cleft Foundation-Dr George £50

Motor Neurone Disease Association £50

That is a grand total for November and December of £661.65

*Thank you for all your support -
we couldn't do it without you!*

The Card Ladies

Readers for January

January	3	Epiphany	
	Morning	M Ashton	Isaiah 60: 1-6
		M Eccleston	Ephesians 3: 1-12
		Celebrant	Matthew 2: 1-12
	Evening	M Riley	Ephesians 3: 1-12

		R Gorman	Matthew 2: 1-12
January	10	Baptism of Christ	
	Morning	D Summersgill	Isaiah 43: 1-7
		A Smith	Acts 8: 14-17
		Celebrant	Luke 3: 15-17. 21-22
	Evening	S Nelson	Acts 8: 14-17
		S Brindle	Luke 3: 15-17. 21-22
January	17	Second Sunday of Epiphany	
	Morning	All Age Worship	Isaiah 62: 1-5
			1Corinthians 12: 1-11
		Celebrant	John 2: 1-11
	Evening	M Watson	1Corinthians 12: 1-11
		S Dobson	John 2: 1-11
January	24	Third Sunday of Epiphany	
	Morning	R Jones	Nehemiah 8: 1-3. 5-6. 8-10
		G Gill	Corinthians 12: 12-31a
		Celebrant	Luke 4: 14-21
	Evening	N Hogg	1Corinthians 12: 12-31a
		M Riley	Luke 4: 14-21
January	31	Fourth Sunday of Epiphany	
	Morning	S Gill	Ezekiel 43: 27-44: 4
		W Shaw	1Corinthians 13: 1-13
		Celebrant	Luke 2: 22-40
	Evening	J Saunders	Ezekiel 43: 27-44: 4
		S Nelson	1Corinthians 13: 1-13
		Celebrant	Luke 2: 22-40

Christian Stewardship

Recorder/Gift Aid Secretary Eileen Peake

Electoral Roll Officer

Graham Tipper

Deanery Synod

Sue Gill Debbie Chadwick

Sunday School

Debbie Chadwick 812091

Vision (Formally Youth Fellowship)

Debbie Chadwick

Little Angels

Margaret Baldwin 812360 Rita Gorman 812566

Children's Society

Debbie Chadwick 812091

Social & Fund Raising Committee

Jean Freeman, Rita Gorman, Debbie Summersgill,
Janet & John Hartley, Alan Smith.

Magazine

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Rainbows

Lynn Fish (Wren)

Police

PC Lee Forshaw & PCSO 7721 Jules Ragen
Tel# 01200 458766

Churchyard

Chris Wilson Paul McBride Rob Cooper Tom Shaw
Stewart Woodward Bernard Whalley Gordon Hayes

Volunteers still required

Altar Flowers

Joan Moss 813581

Guides

Hilary Wensley