

The Messenger

Parish Magazine of
St Michael and All Angels, Middlewich
with St John the Evangelist, Byley



Winter brings snowy church gates!

December 2011/January 2012

50p

Service plan for December 2011

4th December– 2nd Sunday of Advent, Christmas Lights Weekend

8.00 am	Middlewich	Communion
9.15 am	Middlewich	Communion
11.00 am	Middlewich	No Service
11.00 am	Byley	Morning Prayer
4.00 pm	Middlewich	Christingle

11th December– 3rd Sunday of Advent

9.15 am	Middlewich	Communion
11.00 am	Middlewich	Morning Praise
11.00 am	Byley	Communion
2.30 pm	Middlewich	Baptism
6.30 pm	Middlewich	Church @ 28

18th December– 4th Sunday of Advent

9.15 am	Middlewich	Communion
11.00 am	Middlewich	All Age Worship
11.00 am	Byley	Morning Praise
6.30 pm	Middlewich	Carol Service

Saturday 24th December– Christmas Eve

4.00 pm	Middlewich	Crib Service
11.30 pm	Middlewich	Midnight Communion

25th December– Christmas Day

10.30 am	Middlewich	All Age Communion
11.00 am	Byley	Communion

There is a Healing Service every Tuesday at 9.30 am (No service 27th)

Communion is celebrated every Thursday at 9.30 am (No service 29th)

See page 4 overleaf for details of January 2012 services

St Michael's Church Office

28 Hightown, Middlewich, CW10 9AN

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Office hours 10am-2pm Monday-Thursday

Administrator: Mrs Pat Pugh

admin@middlewichparishchurch.org.uk

For further contact details please see p20 ...

Suggested Reading for the New Year:

During the period between Christmas and Easter we will be looking at the life of Jesus as recorded in Mark's gospel at our Sunday services, and also in our home groups. I would like to encourage you to do a bit of background reading of your own by suggesting two books which give an overview of Jesus' life, and its historical context, in an accessible & readable way.

The Jesus I Never Knew (by Philip Yancey). Philip Yancey is a trained journalist and is editor-at-large for Christianity Today magazine in America. He offers a new and different perspective on the life of Christ and his work – his teachings, his miracles, his death and resurrection – and ultimately who he was and why he came. Written in a simple journalistic style but with insight and depth this book will help you understand Jesus in a radically new way. From the manger to the cross, Yancey examines the life of Jesus in a fresh and honest way.

Oriel's Diary (by Robert Harrison). Robert Harrison is a writer, radio producer and Anglican vicar! This book is a retelling of the life of Jesus from the perspective of his guardian angel 'Oriel'. It is both factual, fictional and reflective. The events of Jesus' life are taken straight from the pages of the bible. Oriel's story is of course fiction, but Oriel's observations give us a theological reflection on Jesus' life and purpose. Easy to read but full of deep meaning and truth this is a must read for those who don't do normal theology.

Both books are £10 each and can be ordered through the St Michael's Church Book Stall. Contact Ruth Broadfoot to order your copy now! - Tel. 01606 738373 (or speak to me - Simon Drew 833440)

Service Plan for January 2012

1st January– Second Sunday of Christmas

9.15 am	Middlewich	Communion
11.00 am	Byley	Morning Praise

8th January– 1st Sunday after Epiphany

9.15 am	Middlewich	Communion
11.00 am	Middlewich	Morning Praise
11.00 am	Byley	Communion
6.30 pm	Middlewich	Evensong

15th January– 2nd Sunday after Epiphany

9.15 am	Middlewich	Communion
11.00 am	Middlewich	All Age Worship
11.00 am	Byley	Plough Sunday
6.30 pm	Middlewich	Evening Praise

22nd January– 3rd Sunday after Epiphany

9.15 am	Middlewich	Communion
11.00 am	Middlewich	Morning Praise
11.00 am	Byley	Communion
2.30 pm	Middlewich	Baptism
6.00 pm	Middlewich Methodist church	Week of prayer for Christian Unity Service

29th January– 4th Sunday after Epiphany

9.15 am	Middlewich	Communion
11.00 am	Middlewich	Morning Praise
11.00 am	Byley	Morning Praise
6.30 pm	Middlewich	Church @ 28

Letter from the Rector

Dear Friends

The story is told of a school nativity performance. At the end a photographer from the local newspaper had been invited to take a photograph of the assembled children. It took quite a while to organise them and several bits of scenery had to be moved in order to fit them all in.

Only when the picture was published was it discovered that the manger and doll representing the baby Jesus had been removed along with the other props. The picture was perfect – but there was no Jesus.

In 1984 Band Aid produced the hit charity single 'Do They Know It's Christmas' in aid of the famine relief effort in Ethiopia. There was a very public demonstration of a long tradition of charitable work, which takes place at this time of year. Christmas shelters for homeless people, shoebox presents for children in underprivileged countries, carol singers raising money for local charities, and many more worthwhile activities. These efforts express well the understanding of Christmas as the season of 'peace and goodwill to all people'.

But the question also has a different meaning: Do they know its 'Christ Mass'? (The celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ). If we were to ask this question of our own community we might be surprised at how many said; 'No I don't!' Seasonal activities are all well and good but there is perhaps a sense in which we 'can't see the wood for the trees', in this case small brightly decorated evergreens everywhere you look! We send cards, we decorate houses, we give presents, we have parties, we eat lots of food, we sing carols, we support the homeless, and we're nice to our in-laws – but why? Because they are all traditions which have grown up around the celebration of the most important birthday in history – when God became a baby, and they called him Jesus.



Does it matter? If people are having a good time, the children are happy, charities and good causes are receiving extra support and a general sense of peace and goodwill exists isn't that what's important?

I want to point you to just one passage in the bible and its not from the Christmas story. In Matthew 7 v22-23 Jesus is talking about the Kingdom of Heaven; Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons, and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers.

Harsh words but I think the point is clear. It doesn't matter how much good you do, how much goodwill you share – if Jesus doesn't know who you are then its all a waste of time. Do you know it's Christ Mass? Are you going to come to Jesus' birthday party? I hope you are.

Yours in Christ

Simon Drew

Freedom Of Speech:

I recently received a letter from Fiona Bruce MP highlighting a Government consultation on whether to amend Section 5 of the Public Order Act which concerns the use of language in public. The key issue is whether 'insulting words' should be retained as part of the bill. This has been highlighted recently by incidents where Christians have been arrested/warned by police for displaying Christian messages in public – which others have seen as insulting.

Full details of the consultation are available on:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/about-us/consultations/police-powers/consultation-document?view=Binary>

If you feel this is something you wish to contribute to, then Fiona urges us to make our opinion as Christians known to the consultation. So it's over to you –make your voice heard!

Simon Drew

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity:

The week of prayer for Christian unity begins on Wednesday 18th January 2012. Here in Middlewich there will be regular gatherings for prayer together (which will last no more than 30 minutes) they are:

Wednesday 18th January	10:00am	United Reformed Church
Thursday 19th January	7:00pm	St Michael's Parish Church
Friday 20th January	10:00am	Middlewich Community Church
Monday 23rd January	7:00pm	St Mary's RC Church

There will also be a churches together joint service on Sunday 22nd January– 6:00pm at Middlewich Methodist Church.

Confirmation – March 18th 2012 at 6.30 pm.

Have you been confirmed? If you see yourself as belonging to St. Michael's or St. John's, and have not yet been confirmed, this is important for you. Bishop Peter is coming to St. Michael's at 6.30 pm on Sunday, March 18th to conduct a Confirmation Service. If you are someone who has come to faith recently, we invite you to consider Confirmation. It is an opportunity to make the vows made for you at your baptism for yourself in public, and to receive prayer from our bishop. It is, if you like, a coming of age ceremony. For many it is the occasion of their first Communion. If you have not yet been baptised, we will arrange that at a suitable time.

You may have been coming along for years, you may have joined St. Michael's or St. John's from another Christian denomination, and you want to make a public declaration that you now belong to us – then again, please consider Confirmation. It is good to have an opportunity to learn more of the faith in an informal setting, and always good to rededicate our lives to the Lord.

Young people need to be in year 10 or above. I normally hold five preparation classes and then a rehearsal on Sunday afternoons from 5 – 6 pm. The classes will start on Sunday, January 22nd, missing the half term weekends.

If you think you might be interested, please contact me soon. If you are not sure what to do, it would be good to have a chat – do please get in touch.

Liz Woode (01606 75030)

Reception Into Communion (Children/Young People)

Do you have, or know, a child/young person who would like to receive communion but is not yet ready to be confirmed? If so then at the same service as the Confirmation (Sunday 18th March 2012 – 6:30pm), Bishop Peter, will formally receive into Communion. This is known as 'communion before confirmation' and allows for children too young for confirmation but with a faith of their own to partake in the celebration of communion fully.



Children will need to be in school year 5 or above and attend a short preparation course. I will be holding a series of four preparation sessions on Sunday afternoons from 5-6 pm, plus a rehearsal.

These will start on Sunday 22nd January but will not include the Sundays at the beginning/end of half term week.

If you know someone who wants to be part of this course, and be received into communion, please do let me know. If you want to talk it through further give me a ring.

Simon Drew (01606 833440)

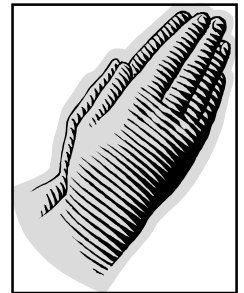
There is always someone available to pray with you after services.

Just ask.

It's good to pray!

Equally, if you would like someone to come and pray with you at any time speak to :

Sylvia, Elaine or Sue Ikin.



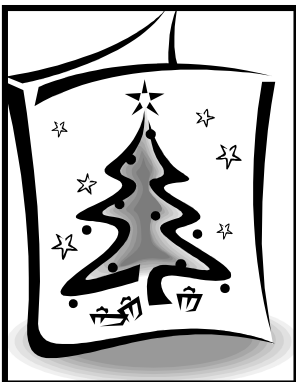
Christmas Card Charity Boards **In Church and at Number 28**

This year's chosen charity is ***Macmillan Cancer Support***
England and Wales Charity No: 261017

Macmillan's Cancer Support improves the lives of people affected by cancer.

They provide practical, medical, emotional and financial support, and push for better cancer care.

Using the Boards



Put a Christmas card on the board to your friends in church, or those you meet in Number 28.
Put the money you save in the box provided. This will be sent to the charity after Christmas, and we'll let you know how much has been raised.

Miriam Sant

Do you know what the Circle of Care is?

Have you heard of us?

The Circle of Care is an integral part of the ministry of St. Michael and All Angels Church and is about Pastoral Care.

We are a group of people who visit, on behalf of the church, those who are ill, lonely, and in need.

We also visit those who are hoping to have their children baptised and we organise Baptism Preparation Evenings.

General visiting includes visiting those who are in hospital, residential care and people living in their own homes.

We visit those who are bereaved and hold a monthly bereavement support group, The Wednesday Group that meets on the last Wednesday of each month.

Our visiting is not confined to the church family. We are willing to visit anyone in need.

We are here to listen and to care, to share stories and to be a friend. You can share your concerns in complete confidence. We don't criticise, make judgments or give advice. We will pray with you or for you if you wish.

Would you like somebody to talk to?

Don't know which way to turn?

You can get in touch with us by filling in the card that is by the post box in church or by telephoning the contact number below and we will contact you. Unless you tell us if you or someone you know wants us to visit we will not know.

Would YOU like to help?

Would YOU like to be a volunteer?

You may like to join our team of visitors. If you do please contact Rev Thia Hughes, Sylvia Bosomworth, Elaine Reynolds, Sue Ikin or Merle Ikin via the Church Office at No 28 Hightown, Tel 01606 738005 We will be happy to tell you more about the Circle of Care and what we do

Future events:

Sunday, 11th December

We are so pleased to announce two new members; the Rt Hon Fiona Bruce MP and Mrs Linda Webber, St Michael Church Warden, are to be admitted to the Mothers' Union at the 9.15am service. Please try to support them on this special day.

Tuesday, 13th December

Monthly meeting: Lunch at Number 28 at 12.30pm followed by a short Advent service at 1.30pm. If you would like to do one of the readings, please give Susan a call on 832148.

Tuesday, 10th January 2012

Let's start the year with a fun meeting – "Games & Quizzes", Lunch 12.30, meeting 1.30pm.

Tuesday, 14th February

Middlewich Branch AGM. Nominations for the committee would be very gratefully received; please let Pam know 832286.

Note: The soup and sandwich lunch, served on Tuesdays in Number 28 is proving to be a real success, so to free up more space downstairs, ***the MU lunch will be served in the large meeting room at 12.30pm.***

From January, the MU 'soup day' will be the 2nd Tuesday in the month, the same day as our meetings. If anyone is willing to go on the rota to help Thelma at 10.00am in the kitchen, please let me know.

Visitors are very welcome to join any of our meetings, a time for fellowship and some interesting presentations.

"During this Christmastide, a time of feasts and feasting, let's take a moment to stand before the crib and gaze on the infant Christ and know his presence that is, was and ever shall be."

Jo Hulse

Mothers Union Sunday Rota

Duty	December	January	February
Intercessions	Miriam Sant	Jacqui Briscoe	Susan Hawkes
Banner	Chris Overton	Jo Hulse	Chris Overton
Escorts	Edna Rose & Angela Tempest	Susan Hawkes & Pauline Ashley	Pam Jackson & Thelma Ashley
Offertory	Janet Chisholm & Pam Dunning	Edna Rose & Angela Tempest	Pauline Davies & Merle Ikin

Did you know?

1690 On his return from Ireland through Cheshire William III apparently passed through Middlewich as the bells were set ringing.

1735 Visit of a "Foreign King". Eleven shillings paid to him by the churchwardens. Was this George II? Bishops and Deans were "treated".

1741 Rushbearing ,or the custom of placing rushes on floor of church prohibited.

Christian Aid rep for Middlewich

Churches Together are looking for someone to take over as the Christian Aid representative for Middlewich. Not a huge task but very important to ensure that Christian Aid week collections run smoothly.

If you are interested please speak to Pat Pugh who has been the representative for the last few years.

The Normal week at St Michael's

Monday	9.00 am	Staff Meeting at Number 28 with prayers
	1.30 pm	SMILERS at church (not during school holidays)
	7.00 pm	Rehearsals for the Festival Choir in Church
	7.30 pm	SMAART St Michael's handbell ringers
Tuesday	9.30 am	Healing service and coffee at Number 28
	7.30 pm	Tower ringing practice in church
Wednesday	7.00 am	Prayer in church
	9.30 am	Prayer @ 28
	6.00 pm	Worship group
	7.30 pm	Choir practice
Thursday	9.30 am	Communion
	7.30 pm	Card Group at Number 28
Friday	6.00 pm	BLOG (Club for Years 4, 5 and 6) not during school holidays
	7.30 pm	DYN@MIC (Club for Years 7, 8, 9) not during school holidays
	8.00 pm	AFTER DARK (Club for years 10 and above) not during school holidays

The Christmas Tree (by J. John):

Christmas is hardly complete without a tree. It brightens your home and brings joy to children everywhere. But what's the tree for anyway? The Christmas tree goes back to the eighth century to a missionary from England called St Boniface.

Boniface went to Germany to teach people the Christian faith. There, one December, he encountered a group of people standing beneath an oak tree ready to sacrifice a child to please their god. Boniface immediately rescued the child and chopped the oak tree down. At its foot was a small fir tree. He cut the small fir tree and gave it to the people as a symbol of life. He called it the tree of the Christ-child.

The story continues when Martin Luther, the famous German church leader, cut a fir tree and took it home in the December of 1540. The evergreen tree reminded him that life continued through the winter, when most of nature appeared to have died. He attached a number of small candles to illuminate the tree to express that Christ was welcome in his home.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, the Christmas tree was introduced into England by Queen Victoria's husband, the German-born Prince Albert. Its popularity increased from then on as part of the celebration of Christmas.

Parish Weekend Away – 5th–7th October 2012

We have booked a weekend away for the church family from Friday 5th to Sunday 7th October 2012. We hope to take around 100 people to Cloverley Hall (nr Whitchurch, Shropshire). It will be a great opportunity for us to spend time together with a mixture of fun, relaxation and learning. The weekend is open to all, adults and children. The likely cost will be around £100 per adult for 48 hours full board, with discounts available for children (12 and under) depending upon their ages. Cloverley Hall has 46 bedrooms, a large meeting room, three lounges, a children's/creche room and a games room – all set in 9 acres of grounds. Please do put the dates in your diary – further details and booking forms will be available in the new year.



Welcome to Cloverley Hall Christian Conference Centre

**Unless the Lord
Builds the house, its
Builders labour in
Vain.**

**(Psalm 127:1)
So don't forget to
Pray!**



Cranmer Awards

Six of our young people entered this year's Diocesan heat of the competition, which involves reading from the Book of Common Prayer (not easy!).

Charlotte Buckley, Daniel Carroll, Nathan Carroll, Paul Ellison, Isobel Loney and Kate Olbrich all read their passages extremely well and were a credit to St Michael's. They had all worked really hard and read with expression and understanding.

In spite of strong competition from elsewhere, Kate was the winner in the junior section, Daniel was second and Issy third. Paul and Charlotte were highly praised by the judges. Nathan was second in the senior section.

Kate will be going to London in February to represent Chester Diocese in the National Final: a very prestigious event.



The winner of each age group, as well as their own prize, gets £50 for their church, so, thanks to Kate, we are now £50 better off!

Congratulations to all who took part.

Christine Malkin

Finance at Middlewich

The response to our giving campaign in October has been encouraging, and although it is not possible to predict exactly what the outcome will be, we trust that, by the grace of God and the generosity of His people – all of us - we will finish the year without having to draw down on reserves for our day to day expenditure. As this year, we will keep you updated through the Messenger and by announcements in the services.

The PCC at its meeting on 5th November agreed principles for the 2012 budget, which will be finalised by the Standing Committee in December. This is the first time for many years that we will have a detailed budget to help us manage our finances, something which is much more important now that so much of our reserves have been invested in Number 28. In summary, the agreed principles are:

No draw down of reserves for normal operational expenditure in 2012

Continue to give 10% of voluntary income to our Charities

Expand youth work, pastoral care and community links where possible

Where 'one off' project type expenditure is needed, as far as practicable obtain separate funding

Please join with us in praying that God will enable us to do everything He guides us into, while still matching our expenses and our income

Simon Drew: Rector

Mike Reed: PCC Vice Chairman

Stuart Barber:

Treasurer

Operation Christmas Child

A big thank you to everyone who filled and decorated a shoebox for Operation Christmas Child. 51 boxes were collected (from their temporary home on my study bed) and taken off for further processing.

The collection van looked amazing, with over a thousand shoeboxes in it. We were given a 'thank you' poster which will be displayed in Number 28. As a whole, the campaign did very well at Middlewich, with 100 boxes from another church, and over 300 from the school. What a splendid town we live in!

Well done everyone !

Margaret English

Please turn the lights off!

PLEASE NOTE IT COSTS ABOUT £2,500 PER WEEK TO RUN ST MICHAEL'S!!!

Energy is a huge part of that cost so please - Don't waste it.

Parish Registers for 2011

Baptisms

23rd October

Archie James Ruscoe

13th November

Lilly Anne Elizabeth Short

There were no weddings in November

Funerals

12th October

Diane Helen White

Dane Street

9th November

Walter Bayman

Chester Road

Byley Players Pantomime 2012

'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'

Nightly at 7.30pm

Thursday January 26th : Friday January 27th : Saturday January 28th

also

Saturday Matinee at 2.00pm

Booking Line :- 01606 835582

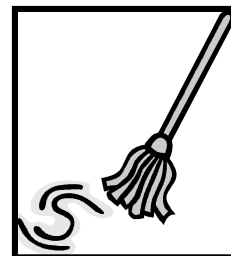


Byley Notices

Cleaning Rota for December/January

December 4th-11th G. Richardson
18th-25th C. Hankey

January 2012 1st-8th C. Wilkinson
15th-22nd P. Bennion
29th-Feb. 5th E. Winnett



Whist Drive Dates

Christmas Whist Drive – Tuesday 13th December
The 1st Whist Drive of 2012 – Tuesday 10th January
February Whist Drive – Tuesday 7th
All at 7.30pm in the Village Hall

Carol Service

Friday 16th December
Join us for our 7.00pm Service
Followed by Mulled Wine and Mince Pies in the Village Hall
When the Christmas Draw will also take place

Carol Singing

Monday 19th December
Meet at Cross Lanes House
6.00pm for a 6.30pm Prompt Start
If you would like a visit from the singers ring Bruce on 01606 832523

Plough Sunday Lunch

Sunday 15th January
At 12.30pm in the Village Hall
Adults - £10.00 : Children Under 12 - £5.00
For catering purposes it is essential to book your meal
Ring :- Bruce on 01606 832523 or Celia on 01606 832313

Bring Your Own Drinks and Glasses

Byley in December 2011

4th December	Morning Prayer Readers Sidesman	Lorraine Reed Celia Wilkinson Anita Halman Alan Percival
11th December	Communion Readers Sidesman	Simon Drew Jean Percival Jonathon Trelawney Nigel Martin
18th December	Morning Praise Readers Sidesman	Tony Woode Anne Nicol Anita Halman Caroline Oakes
25th December	Communion Readers Sideman	Thia Hughes Glenys Richardson Frank Walton Celia Wilkinson

Byley PCC

At the latest meeting of Byley PCC. the Quinquennial report was discussed. This report, prepared by the Church Architect, showed there is a considerable amount of work needed to the fabric of the church building and, whilst there are no serious defects, work will have to be carried out during the next five years to rectify the many repairs that the architect has indicated as being necessary. This will, of course, cost money and the PCC will have to discuss at a future meeting/meetings as to how this finance will be raised. As a first step a meeting is being sought with the architect to ask him to explain some of the points raised and to help us prioritise the work.

Frank Walton, Church Warden

January PCC meeting will be at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall

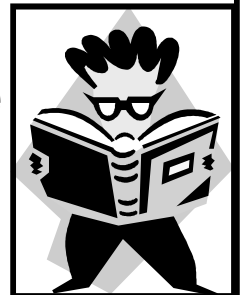
Byley in January 2012

1st January	Morning Praise	Readers	Alan Percival James Bennion
	Sidesman		Frank Walton
8th January	Communion	Readers	Celia Wilkinson Organist
	Sidesman		Anita Halman
15th January	Plough Sunday	Readers	Ruth Bennion Jean Percival
	Sidesman		Eleanor Winnett
22nd January	Communion	Readers	Jonathon Trelawney Vera Farrow
	Sidesman		Glenys Richardson
29th January	Morning Praise	Readers	Jane Holmes Anita Halman
	Sidesman		John Bennion

Byley Readers

For those who like to prepare well in advance, the readers for the beginning of February are:

5th February: Organist
James Bennion



Don't forget to check out the new website...www.at28.org

Middlewich and Byley Church Staff

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John Briggs, Pledges Officer

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Gladys Robinson, Middlewich Flower Guild

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Anne Hardy, Organist

54 Westlands Road, Middlewich, CW10 9HN

01606 832121

annehardy@greenbee.net

Ian Taylor, Middlewich Bellringers

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iantaylor78@aol.com

Glenys Richardson, Byley

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Anne Nichol, Byley PCC Secretary

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annenicol@btinternet.com

Frank Walton, Byley Church Warden

Woodside Farm, Goostrey Lane, Cranage,
Holmes Chapel, CW4 8HD

01477 533284

frankwalton@fsmail.net

**Alan and Jean Percival,
Byley Church Warden and treasurer**

percival.yatehouse@googlrmail.com

The Green, Yatehouse Lane, Byley, CW10 9NS

01606 833808

Christine Hankey, Byley Village Hall

Chestnut Farm, Byley

01606 832938

And Finally.....There is a right place for every soul under the sun!

If you have any articles or photographs for the next magazine, please would you e-mail them by **15th January** to the Church Office admin@middlewichparishchurch.org.uk . You can also place articles in the pigeon hole for the Church Office.

Alternatively, you can e-mail direct to Margaret English at:
margaretetlm@hotmail.com.

The church website address is
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