



St Chad's Newsletter

Christmas 2008

Open doors, open hearts, open minds

Christmas Services

Christmas Eve

4pm Children's Crib Service

7pm Traditional Service of
Lessons and Carols

11.30pm Midnight Mass



Christmas Day

8am Holy Communion with Carols

10am United Parish Eucharist
Our children invite you to come and share two
stories of Christmas (everyone welcome)

*With All Good Wishes
for a very Happy Christmas*

Emmanuel

means "God with us". At Christmas we celebrate the fact that in Jesus God speaks to us in a language we can understand. We call acts of worship "celebrations" because that's what they are meant to be: celebrations of the way the God of love and joy and creativity has come to us and shares our life. He was born and grew up in a human family and in human communities - and so that is how we experience him now too: not as intellectual exercise, because God is beyond all knowing, but in relationship and in the ordinary stuff of our human existence. That is what faith means: we will never have complete certainty or all the answers, but we discover that as we take that hesitant step of faith, and as we participate in the life of the church, then understanding grows. We believe in order to understand, and not the other way round.

God longs to bring joy (which is not the same as happiness) into our lives. We don't believe that if you are a Christian everything is going to turn out all right - because of course it doesn't. But we do believe that there is nothing in our human experience, however dark, which can separate us from God's love. We can discover him in the midst of the celebrations and challenges of our everyday human lives, sharing it all with us and enabling us to live each day more fully. Ask yourself in the days before Christmas: what brings me the greatest joy? time with my children or grandchildren; walking the dog; a meal with those I love; a hot bath; a beautiful piece of music..... Spend more time doing those things. And discover the joy that comes from giving yourself away: Jesus was born in a stable and with his parents became refugees. So this would be a good time to find out more about the Ark, our day centre for the homeless and vulnerable, and to be generous with your time or your money. In doing so you will discover God With Us:

Emmanuel.

Mark Thomas

Darwin and Us

Wonder need not diminish as understanding grows. In any case, the understanding we gain always poses further questions, imposes upon us the need for further enquiry and exploration. Discovery is accompanied by amazement and makes us ask what more there is to find. The new discovery may surprise or shock or disturb, and yet is often met by an inexplicable sense of confirming recognition.



Religion and science are different, but not at odds. Both seek understanding, ask questions which lead to more questions, have their moments of discovery. Neither is fixed and finished; neither is the exclusive preserve of the expert; both demand patience, humility, and honesty. Though different, they inter-penetrate. The more science discovers of the working of man, world, and universe, their origin, proportions, and balance, the greater our appreciation of God. Religion, for its part, speaks of the need for – and bears witness to the existence of – values in universe, world, and man. Both science and religion concern relationships – intricate, delicate, and sometimes fragile, yet of vital importance.

We tend to devise ‘-isms’ and to align ourselves with one or another of these. We say that the Bible’s stories of creation are myth without recalling that myth is the only way of embodying certain sorts of truth. We try to understand literally what is meant to speak to – and speaks from – a much profounder faculty within. Our debates must ultimately converge, for at that unimaginable point of convergence is God.

Cameron Wilson

Charles Darwin was born in Shrewsbury on 12 February 1809 and christened in St Chad’s. There will be many special events throughout 2009 celebrating his life and work. Look out for events in the church and elsewhere:
www.darwinshrewsbury.org

St Boniface and the Christmas Tree

According to tradition, St Boniface chopped down the pagan god Thor’s Oak tree at Geismar, Germany and claimed a tiny fir tree growing in its roots as the new Christian symbol. He told the heathen tribes:

"This humble tree's wood is used to build your homes:

let Christ be at the centre of your households.

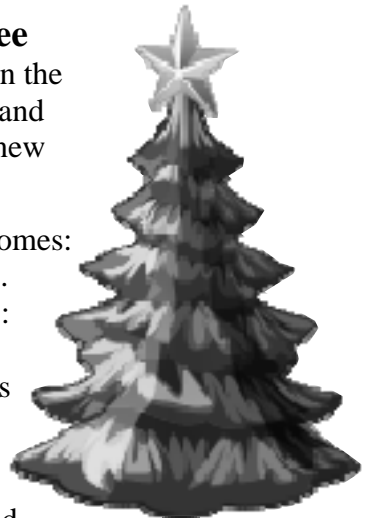
Its leaves remain evergreen in the darkest days:

let Christ be your constant light.

Its boughs reach out to embrace and its top points
to heaven:

let Christ be your comfort and your guide."

So the evergreen became a sign of Christ. To find out more, come and join us on Christmas morning



Sunday Services

- 8am** Holy Communion
- 9.30am** Parish Eucharist (every Sunday except 1st)
1st Sunday: Family Eucharist (aiming to last 45 minutes)
- 10am** Eucharist at **St Alkmund's**
- 11.15am** Methodist Worship
- 6pm** 1st 2nd & 4th Sundays Evensong
3rd & 5th Sundays Methodist Worship
- 7.30pm** 3rd Sunday Prayer and Healing Service

Children are always welcome. Our Junior Church takes place during the 9.30am Eucharist and a crèche is available.

Weekday Services

Morning & Evening Prayer

Said daily at 8am & 5pm (Thursday 8am - Silent Prayer)

Holy Communion Wednesday 11am Friday 8.20am

St Alkmund's Tuesday 1.05pm Short Eucharist (25 mins)
Thursday 10.30am BCP Communion

Special Services

For details of special services and any changes to standard service times please see our website: www.stchadschurchshrewsbury.com or contact the church office. For **Weddings, Baptisms, Funerals** or other individual enquiries, please contact the Vicar via the church office.

The Church is open 8am - 1pm

St Aidan's chapel is open 8am - 5pm

Vicar	Revd Mark Thomas	343761
Assistant Priest	Revd Chris Walker	241568
Church Office	(Weekdays 10am-1pm) info@stchadschurchshrewsbury.com	365478
Website	www.stchadschurchshrewsbury.com	