

The Parish of Saint Peter, Doddington

(serving the villages of Doddington and Whisby)

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Welcome to the twenty-first edition of the Church Bulletin,
bringing you up to date with news and developments at Saint Peter's.

A Christmas thought from the Rector

Christmas is upon us. What is it all about? Obviously Christmas is about Jesus? And any "real meaning of Christmas" about which everybody has an opinion, must involve Jesus, and in some sense, be about today.

If you have been watching the news reports from Saint Paul's, in London, you will have seen that someone (a Wise Man perhaps) has put up a large banner asking "What would Jesus do?" The first Christmas was two millennia ago; Christmas 2011 must be about "What would Jesus do in 2012? If in any sense we call ourselves Christians, or a Christian country, then the answers to this question must feed into our thoughts about how we live our lives, run our country, and participate in the life of the wider world.

So yes, the real meaning of Christmas is relevant to questions and protests about bankers and capitalists. (The Archbishop of Canterbury thinks so). The real meaning of Christmas is relevant to decisions about welfare cuts, and enforced homelessness due to Government and Council policies. I can't give any answers. Every politician has a view; every person in the local pub, or supermarket, or bus queue, or at the school gate, has a view. I can offer some thoughts to help us think it through.

To answer "What would Jesus do?", we need to look at "What did Jesus do?" At Christmas, He considered the needs of others to be above His own comfort. So He left the splendour of heaven, to be born outside in a dirty stable, and to die outside on a lonely cross. Jesus said, and demonstrated, that the good thing to do, the godly thing to do, the Christmas thing to do, all the time, is to love and give, sacrificially, for the undeserving and the lost; never to put oneself first; and to put "What is right?" before "What pleases me?".

Are you ready to give it a go? It will cost you. It cost Jesus his life. Happy Christmas for all.

Richard Billinghamurst

Doddington Church Services for the next few months

18 th Dec	7.00 pm	Christmas Carols by Candle-light
25 th Dec	8.00 am	Christmas Day Early Communion
19 th Feb	6.30 pm	Evensong - last Sunday before Lent
6 th April	2.00 pm	One Hour at the Cross - Good Friday
8 th April	8.00 am	Early Communion - Easter Day

Carols by Candlelight

The traditional Carol service will take place at 7.00 pm on Sunday 18 December, after which the congregation is invited back to the Old Rectory, for mulled wine and mince-pies. This is a very well-attended service, so be sure to come in good time.

Church Security

Lead thefts from neighbouring churches continue. Any suspicious activity should be reported to the police immediately.

Fund Raising

The Harvest Supper, held for the first time in the new Coach House, raised £137, bringing the total raised for the Fabric Fund in the course of the year to £1,310. A big thank you to everyone who has worked hard to achieve this.

Re-Lime Washing the inside of the Church

The Parish Project, to scrape down the walls and apply new lime wash to the inside of the Church, under the direction of Antony Jarvis, has been delayed, because of the extensive rebuilding work at Doddington Hall. Cost indications are currently being obtained to have this done professionally. This project is being given top priority in 2012.

Monthly Prayers in Church

Richard Billinghamurst and Frances Clarke hold prayers and bible reading in Church at 10 am on the first Wednesday of the month, for about 45 minutes, followed by a coffee in the Farm Shop & Café. Everyone is very welcome, either at prayers in church, or just to come and chat over coffee and cake in the Café. The next dates are 4 January, 1 February, 7 March & 4 April.

Tail-piece from the PCC Secretary

This is the 21st Doddington Church Bulletin, and it goes to every dwelling in the Parish. It is hoped that is useful, informative, and possibly even encouraging. It takes time to prepare, and a good deal of effort to deliver.

It would be very helpful to have some feedback - there hasn't been any so far. Do people find it useful? How could it be improved? Are there things you would like to raise? What about the timing of Church services, and their frequency? It has been suggested that we should have a one-off mid morning Sunday Communion Service. What do you think?

We are always on the look-out for new fundraising ideas. Do you have any? What have you heard that works in other Parishes?

We have taken the decision that the Church Bulletin should be printed on high visibility coloured paper to make it stand out, and it should be hand delivered. But now that the majority of households have access to Email, perhaps it should be Emailed? Tell the Secretary (contact details below) what you think.

Lastly, may I take this opportunity of wishing you all a very happy Christmas, and a safe and healthy New Year.

Ian Macalpine-Leny, Secretary to the Parochial Church Council

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