



# CHRISTMAS 2011

Part of the  
Caversham Group  
Ministry

Vicar: Rev. Derek Chandler

St Barnabas Vicarage  
20 St Barnabas Road,  
Emmer Green, Reading

Tel: 0118 9478239

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St Barnabas Parish Centre Office

Open: 8.30am – 10.30am  
Tuesday and Thursday

St Barnabas Road, Emmer Green,  
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Tel: 0118 9476310

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# HOWEVER YOU DRESS IT UP



CHRISTMAS  
STARTS  
WITH  
CHRIST

## THE PERFECT GIFT

*Derek Chandler*

Christmas shopping can be a nightmare. Searching for the perfect gift is not easy. Thinking about it, there are now, and long have been, two variations on the Christmas theme. There is the version in which Christmas is a largely commercial enterprise. At its best, this version of Christmas is an exercise in generosity and an opportunity to turn away from professional pursuits and remember the fundamental importance of family. At its worst, it is an unseemly weeks-long binge of expenditure and acquisition, an exercise in rank consumerist materialism, where we do not celebrate the power of God so much as we observe and demonstrate our faith in the power of advertising and credit cards.

The other version of Christmas celebrates the entrance of an eternal God into the whirl of time and history, a God who is Spirit and Love into a world of flesh and violence, a God who became incarnate in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, who came to provide the Way and the Truth and the Life for all humankind. Simply speaking, through Jesus, God became a person in order to enter a personal relationship with us.

Amid the hustle and bustle of this festive season perhaps it would be a good idea to try and stop for a few moments at the manger with the shepherds and wise men and think about what this latter Christmas can give to us. It may not be the latest gift that money can buy but it can be the perfect gift to ease all our frantic searching in life. What a gift that would be.

Wishing you the Perfect Gift for this Christmas

*Derek Chandler*

**St Barnabas PARISH CENTRE Grove Road, Emmer Green**

**OPEN**

Tuesdays and Thursdays 8.30 – 10.30 a.m.

Wednesdays 10.30 – 11.30 a.m.

Everyone welcome to drop in for tea, coffee, conversation and company



## ALPHA IS COMING TO ST BARNABAS

*Marianne Long*

**A**lpha is a practical introduction to the Christian faith designed for people who are neither Church goers nor committed Christians but is very appropriate for anyone wanting to learn more of the Christian faith.

The course consists of 10 weekly sessions and an away day. It provides a relaxed and non-threatening environment in which people can explore the faith of Jesus, ask questions and make friends. The talks are on topics such as “Who is Jesus?” and “Why Did Jesus Die?”. Each session starts with refreshments followed by a DVD on a specific topic and then a time of discussion.

It will run from 5th January to 29th March 2012, each Thursday morning for 1½ hours. The session will start with a cooked brunch followed by a DVD then a discussion time.

All sessions, including the away day, will be held at St Barnabas Church. A crèche will be available if required.

If you are interested in attending an Alpha Course but cannot make a daytime session we will be pleased to hear from you as we are also planning to hold an evening session.

For further information contact us on 0118 9475744, 0118 9479708 or [alpha@saintbarnabas.org.uk](mailto:alpha@saintbarnabas.org.uk)



# Alpha

Many congratulations to the following students on gaining university places and all our best wishes for success in their new courses:

- ✍ Ambreen Masih reading Psychology at University of Surrey
- ✍ Anita Masih reading Digital Photography at Falmouth Arts College
- ✍ Matthew O’Riordan reading Physical Education at Worcester.

## BAPTISM AT ST BARNABAS

*Wendy Howell*

**W**hat is baptism? Simply, it’s the beginning of our life of faith. Baptism is a gift of the Church of England to anyone who has a belief in Jesus, however small. Here at St Barnabas Church, we take this seriously and so we have baptism visitors who meet with families before their big day. We have had the privilege and pleasure of baptising over 200 people in the past 10 years since we introduced our Baptism Policy.

Why bring your child to Baptism? Don’t panic! There is no right or wrong answer; it is a purely personal thing. You may already have a faith yourself, or just be wondering what it’s all about, but want to start your child off on the right road, as it were. That’s fine. You are also giving your child an extended family, not only with their Godparents, but also with the family of the Church, in this case, St Barnabas. Many families continue to worship with us after the baptism, as they too are part of the extended family of the Church. If you are not sure, there is another service we offer at St Barnabas, that of a “Thanksgiving Service for the Gift of a Child”.



Did you know that you could be baptised at any age? It’s not just for babies, many older children ask whether they have been baptised and adults often feel the need at some traumatic time in their lives. Recently we have had a request for baptism coming directly from a child rather than the parents and that is really encouraging in this day and age. Not everyone is from the Emmer Green parish. Having attended a baptism as a Godparent recently, one family enjoyed our service so much, they wanted their two children baptised at St Barnabas.

To enquire about Baptism please contact Rev Derek Chandler on 947 8239 or email [vicar@saintbarnabas.org.uk](mailto:vicar@saintbarnabas.org.uk)



# Junior Church & Youth Fellowship

Junior Church meet most Sundays in the school terms during the 9.30 a.m. service, except the second Sunday of each month which is a family service. Youth Fellowship meet twice a month



Come and join the fun!



For more information regarding Junior Church contact Shirley Corti on 0118 947 8343.

For information on Youth Fellowship contact Robin Kent on 0118 948 2959.

[www.saintbarnabas.org.uk](http://www.saintbarnabas.org.uk)

## MY FAVOURITE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

Everyone has special memories of the nativity service, so I asked people what they liked about some of our other Christmas services.

### SCOUTS' CHRISTINGLE—7.00pm 14th December

The sight of that light, which has travelled all the way from Bethlehem, coming into the dark church really feels like Christ bringing light to the world and is THE Christmas message for me. The year the Scouts collected the light in Caversham and hiked it to St Barnabas was particularly special. Looking out of the church down a dark, damp, and misty road and seeing the faint light gradually get brighter as the Scouts appeared out of the gloom was fantastic.—*Robin*



There's a strong feeling of togetherness as we light our candles and show that God is the Light of the World.—*Janice*

### SERVICE OF LESSONS & CAROLS 4.30pm 18th December

I love hearing the familiar carols and being able to join in—without looking at the words.—*Carol*

I enjoy all the carols and for me it's a key part of Christmas.—*Peter*

It epitomises Christmas for me.—*Brian*

### COMMUNITY CAROL SINGING evening of 20th December

I really enjoy the Community Carol Singing. It's lovely to see everyone involved and joining in.—*Derek*

### MIDNIGHT MASS 11.30pm 24th December

When I get to play the last verse of 'O Come all ye faithful' and I play

for the words ‘Yea Lord we greet thee, born THIS happy morning’. It sends shivers down my spine!—*Alison*

For me it is the start of Christmas. It feels as if I am getting a head-start and beginning Christmas Day before I go to bed.—*John*

It reminds me of the first time I was considered grown-up enough to attend. My family lived a long walk from the village church and walking to Midnight Mass for the first time was a rite of passage.—*Anne*

Midnight Mass is a service of quiet reflection in the midst of all the busyness of Christmas. It’s a particularly friendly service and you feel very close to everyone.—*Des*

### CHRISTMAS MORNING 9.30am 25th December

It gives me a reason to get up but I also love the tradition of the Midnight Mass.—*Janikka*

The show & tell in the Christmas morning service. I will always remember my 17 year old son going to church wearing his new dressing gown and slippers!—*Julie*



My favourite is the Christmas Morning service. You really feel that Christmas has come, all the shopping and preparation are complete and you can stop to celebrate Christmas. I love to see the children (and some adults) come to church and to show their new toys. It’s a day of celebration.—*Jim*

### OTHER SERVICES

Over the years I’ve been to many different types of Christmas service and they are all special.—*Dora*

Christmas begins for me when I listen to Carols from Kings College on Christmas eve. If I miss it, then Christmas doesn’t feel quite right.—*Dorothy*

## HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

*John Notton*

Our new quiet garden is nearing the end of its first season. The cold weather in early 2011 delayed the first planting in the beds, but there is little doubt that the plants have recovered well and given us a good display throughout the year. This is a tribute to the work of the designer and gardeners. The photographs below show the garden in early May soon after planting, and in October with the late summer blossom.



The changes during the season have been a continual source of comment as some plants such as the red *Achillea* “Walter Funke” and purple *Verbena bonariensis* have had long flowering seasons. Others, such as the roses were relatively short lived, but were possibly drought affected. The arrangement of the plants and their devotional significance is already well covered by the planting plan and the booklets which are available in the Parish Centre. Normally, I am not a fan of formal gardens, but this one works for me personally at several levels.



Anemone

The plants are obviously a main feature, and they can affect me in different ways. Often this depends on whether I view them en masse, or as individual blossoms, or fruits, each with its own perfection.



Stachys

I have tried to capture some of my thoughts here in the colours and textures that the plants provide. When close up to the individual plants on a sunny day one can see many insects, and especially bees. The quiet garden now has some bee boxes for the mason bees next year. During the brief ‘summer’ in late September the flowers were host to many hon-



Geranium

eybees and bumblebees busy stocking up for the winter. Some of the plant varieties used have proved to be especially good nectar sources when nectar is otherwise scarce.



Rudbeckia

I wonder what we shall see next year? In one sense it is here already as



Mason bee nest box

the Lenten Roses have been flowering throughout the summer months. They are not supposed to bloom until just after Christmas! I have found that this really is a *quiet* garden. When I listen for noise, the sounds



Carder bee queen

of the nearby traffic are strangely muted. Perhaps, when the ornamental trees in the garden have grown up we shall be able to hear birdsong? When the opportunity exists, I can just sit in the garden and have found peace, and a time to think of things other than daily life. Others younger than me find that the garden allows physical activities and sharing



Rowan berries

between friends. Many folk find it simply a good place to chat and drink a cup of tea, especially after the Sunday morning service. This regular use of the garden shows that it has already been accepted as another, but very special, room in the Church building.



Autumn meets Spring.

Finally, as a garden lover, I am pleased to have been allowed to pull up a few weeds and dead head a few flowers to help our garden remain all these things for others. It really has been wonderfully therapeutic!

## WHAT BROUGHT YOU HERE?

*Steve and Liza Williams*

Derek asked Steve and Liza if they'd be prepared to talk on 'Come to Church' Sunday about why they'd come to St Barnabas. Steve wrote the following poem, which I thought should have a wider audience.—*Felicity*



'What brought you to St Barnabas?'  
Derek rang to ask.  
'Do, please, tell the congregation.'  
(Such an awfully daunting task).

'Er, OK then', we stammered.  
'If that is what you want.  
Do you need us at the altar  
Or just standing by the font?'

So here we are before you  
On this Back to Church Sunday,  
Explaining why we chose this place  
To worship and to pray.

When we first moved into Emmer  
Green  
We came up to the door  
But, put off by the early start,  
We embarked on a church tour.

We tried a couple of others  
As on Sundays we would roam  
But while people were quite welcoming  
We never felt at home.

Until our searching brought us back  
To where we first began  
Honestly! It's almost as if  
God had had a plan.

We were met by smiling Walter  
On St David's Day, I'm sure.  
There certainly was a Welsh theme  
With translations, hymns and more.

Since then we've seen that everyone  
Is met with open arms  
And that you won't be frowned upon  
If you've not memorised the psalms

We've been struck by people's kindness  
And their understanding, too  
And no one seems to mind our children  
Doing what children do

Our minds were set on that first day  
As it all fit into place  
We'd found a haven, friendships, too  
Support on which to base

An onward Christian journey,  
Following a guiding light.  
So, the reason for us coming here  
Is, simply, it feels right.

### *In memoriam*

✠ Owen Jewiss ✠

✠ Joan Rogers ✠

## CHOIR NEWS

*Alison Wood*

In the middle of September four choristers were awarded with their Royal School of Church Music medals. All four had attended seven sessions during the summer holidays learning about all aspects of being a member of the choir with singing being just one of many! Peter Chapman, Peter Drew and Samuel Kent received their red ribbons and Niamh Drew received her light blue ribbon.



Alison with three of the choristers

St Barnabas Church choir have had a busy few months. As well as singing every week at the main service on a Sunday we sang at four weddings during the summer and sang Choral Evensong at the end of September. We are now working hard in preparation for Christmas! We always welcome new members so if you are interested in finding out more please speak to any member of the choir or email Alison Wood at [music@saintbarnabas.org.uk](mailto:music@saintbarnabas.org.uk)

## MUSIC LOVERS' DELIGHTS

St Barnabas will be hosting three concerts in the near future, so get these dates in your diary now! On **Saturday 10 December at 7.00pm** the South Berks Concert Band will be paying a return visit. The following **Wednesday December 14 at 2.30pm** there is an opportunity to enjoy Vivace Voices in concert. Looking a little further ahead, the renowned Reading Phoenix Choir are performing on **Saturday 28 April at 7.30pm**. Further details and tickets from Richard Gash 0118 9475744.

## A GIFT TO LAST

*Jean Rae*

One Christmas when he was young our son received a beautiful wooden train set which had been made with care and attention to detail by my father-in-law. Among the same supply of presents was a Jack-In-The-Box and when it was taken out of its fancy wrapping the expression on our son's face was one of sheer delight. He rocked backwards and forwards with much laughter which became infectious to all those who witnessed the scene. For him, without doubt this was one of the most appealing gifts that particular year and slightly disappointingly the exquisite train set was rather cast aside.

Time passed and the Jack-In-The-Box looked a rather sorry sight as it could no longer spring out of its box – it was irreparable. However, the train set was still going strong and because it was sturdily made it remained in pristine condition. When our son got older the train set was passed to one of his cousins and maybe is still doing the rounds despite the relentless advance of technology on presents for young people.

The Christmas season is an annual reminder that God's gift to the world did not arrive with the ostentatiousness of a baby wrapped in finery and born in a palace but in a stable surrounded by animals. Many people in Jesus' day were looking for a king but the reign of monarchs is transient and in time passes away but Christmas offers its wonderful message, Emmanuel, God is with us. He who resides in heaven, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit willingly descended into our world. He felt our pain and knew our sorrows. He is an ever-present help in times of trouble. He came so that all who believe in him should not perish but have life everlasting; an imperishable gift to last.

## Community carol singing on Tue 20th Dec

4.30pm St Luke's Residential home, 5.30pm Chiltern Court  
and 6.30pm Lyefield Court

Everyone is invited to come and join in—words provided

Come to one or all venues—new singers always welcome

## OWEN ROBERT JEWISS

*Bill Harper*

It is with sadness that we record that Owen, a prominent member of St Barnabas and of the local community, died peacefully on 24th October 2011 after a battle with cancer.

Owen was born in Gravesend in 1933, the son of a merchant seaman. His schooling there was interrupted during the war when the family relocated to Liverpool. When they came back to Kent, Owen went on to study botany at Imperial College, London, completing a Doctorate in 1958. During this period of study he met another botanist, Daphne, who was to become his wife, also in 1958. They set up home in Maidenhead when Owen was employed at the Grassland Research Institute in Hurley, and the family grew with the arrival of their daughters Philippa and Hilary. They were active members of two of their local churches, St Peters and St Marks. The family moved to The Ridings in Emmer Green in 1971. After retirement he remained active on professional matters in many roles. In these later years Owen and Daphne welcomed and enjoyed time with their five grandchildren.



On arrival in Emmer Green they were welcomed at St Barnabas Church. Owen's energy and experience were quickly recognised and within a couple of years he had become a PCC member and been appointed Churchwarden. He remained a PCC member until the time of his death, and was Warden on more than one occasion over a period of some twenty years. At some time or another he has undertaken many tasks, great and small – the full list would be endless. But he was much more than an administrator – he could relate to people with warmth and empathy. His leadership of a house group was greatly valued, and he could be relied upon to be at social gatherings, greeting friends and sharing a joke. This same sensitivity, coupled with his career interest, showed

itself in a keen and practical concern for environmental issues. He will also be remembered as “the man with the camera” -always on hand to record church and community events.

In Reading he served on a number of committees, and was respected and held in affection by a wide circle of friends and colleagues in the town. He was also involved at county level and in the work of the Oxford Diocese. In recognition of his significant service to the Diocese the Bishop of Oxford bestowed upon him the rare award of the Order of St Frideswide. There was a short ceremony at Owen's home on 22nd October with family and friends present – a proud and emotional moment after such an impressive Christian life.

Owen characteristically kept his activities going for as long as he could, and his loss will be immediately felt. It is probably fair to say that for the many organisations he was involved with he will be irreplaceable. For many more individuals the loss will be of a conscientious and engaging friend or colleague. Owen could be as solemn and academic as he needed to be, but a dry sense of humour was never far beneath the surface, and he enjoyed making a point with a twinkle in his eye.

He will be greatly missed, and our thoughts and prayers are with Daphne and his family, who have the greatest loss but the best of memories.



### SCOUTS' CHRISTMAS POST

*Debbie Perrin*

***Support your local community and save money at Christmas!***



The 89th Reading Scouts are once again providing a Christmas Post service for Caversham, Emmer Green and Caversham Park Village. This is a great opportunity to save money (postage is just 25p per card!) and at the same time support the local beavers, cubs and scouts who are currently raising funds to develop their headquarters in Emmer Green. Post boxes will be situated at a number of locations in the area including St Barnabas Church, Martins Newsagents, Caversham Library, and local primary schools. You can post your cards in these locations from **Monday 28th November** and the last collection will be on **Friday 16th December**. All cards will be delivered in time for Christmas.

## CRAFT CLUB

*Wendy Howell*

Well, they say from small acorns mighty oaks grow and that is certainly true of the Tuesday Craft Club, which started very slowly in the summer of 2010. This year has seen it blossom, particularly since our new “term” started in September.



We now have a core group of about 12 people, most of whom appear each week for a coffee, a chat and something naughty but nice! We mainly knit or crochet, picking up tips from each other. One lady learnt to knit during the sessions and after her first rather unusual attempt, is now as expert as those who have been knitting for a long time. Not everyone is from St Barnabas Church. We have mums who have dropped their children off at school and want some me time, plus another lady who is finishing off an Altar rail frontal in tapestry started 18 years ago.

Spending an hour or so with like minded people focuses the mind on the task in hand, rather than doing housework, which can be done later! Why not join us from 9.30am? We are a very informal, friendly group and are open to learning new crafts all the time. For more information please ring Wendy on 946 1365 or Marianne on 947 9708.

### *We welcome the recently baptised*

✠ Rhiannon Fairweather ✠ Bethany Braisher ✠  
William Braisher ✠ Brooke Allen

### *We congratulate the newly weds*

Stephen Jones and Jacqueline Napier ✠ Bill Donne and Tina Dietner

## FOR YOUR DIARY

28th November	First Scout post collection, last on 16th December
3rd December	2-4pm Christmas Fair
4th December	9.30am Toy Service: receiving gifts for Reading Family Aid
10th December	7pm South Berks Concert Band concert (p11)
14th December	2.30pm Vivace Voices concert (p11) 7pm Scouts' Christingle Service
18th December	4.30pm Service of Lessons and Carols
20th December	4.30, 5.30 & 6.30pm Community Carol Singing (p12)
24th December	4.30pm Crib Service: with nativity performed by Junior Church and Youth Fellowship 11.30pm Midnight Mass
25th December	8am Said Communion Service 9.30am Family Communion Service with Show and Tell
5th January	Alpha Course begins in the morning (p 3)

**St Barnabas**  
**Christmas Fair**  
**Parish Centre & Church Hall**  
**Grove Road, Emmer Green**  
**Saturday 3 December**  
**2 - 4 p.m.**  
**All proceeds to charity**

Please send your news, views and reflections of St Barnabas and the wider Emmer Green Community for inclusion in the next Newsletter to Felicity Chapman, either by e-mail: [newsletter@saintbarnabas.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@saintbarnabas.org.uk) or by post to the Parish Centre by 20th March at the **latest**