

LLANDUDNO

Cylchgrawn Plwyf

Parish Magazine

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50p

December 2009

Services

Holy Trinity Church, Mostyn Street

Sundays

- 8.00 am Holy Eucharist
- 10.30 am Sung Eucharist (1st, 3rd, 4th
& 5th Sundays)
- Matins followed by
shortened Eucharist (2nd
Sunday)
- 5.00 pm Evening Prayer
- 6.00 pm Exploring Worship - in
Church Hall (2nd Sunday
unless notified otherwise)

Weekdays

- 8.30 am Morning Prayer (Tue, Wed
Thurs & Fri)
- 9.00 am Holy Eucharist (Wed)
- 11.00 am Holy Eucharist (Thurs &
Major Saints' Days)
- Holy Eucharist in Welsh
(Sat)
- 5.00 pm Evening Prayer (Tue, Wed,
Thurs & Fri)

oOo

The Rector is in Holy Trinity church on most Saturday mornings from 11.30 - 12.00 to see parishioners on any matter – for confessions, spiritual guidance, the booking of baptisms or weddings etc.

St. Tudno's Church, Great Orme

- 9.00 am Morning Prayer (Sat)
- 11.00 am Open Air Service (Sun
from end of May to end of
September)
- On the first Sunday of
each month, the service is
followed by a shortened
Eucharist in the church.

The pattern of Sunday and Weekday services sometimes changes. Please check the calendar in each month's magazine and the weekly bulletin.



Plwyf Llandudno
Parish of Llandudno

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Llandudno

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The deadline for copy for any edition is the 7th of the previous month. Please leave copy in box near pulpit in Holy Trinity Church or e-mail:

editor@llandudno-parish.org.uk

Copy may be on disk, printed or handwritten.

From the Rectory

Mention December and everyone naturally thinks of one thing – Christmas! This is hardly surprising as the festive season is celebrated by almost everybody whatever their religious commitment or lack of it. For Christians Christmas is the great festival of the incarnation – the celebration of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ and what could be more important than that?



But if we mention December to church folk, they should surely also think about **Advent** as well, an important season in its own right: *'a season of expectation and preparation, as the Church prepares to celebrate the coming of Christ in his incarnation, and also looks ahead to his final advent as judge at the end of time'* (Common Worship – Times and Seasons).

Surely if we wish to keep Christmas properly, we must first keep Advent faithfully. We need to listen attentively to the Advent theme of the coming

of the Lord expressed in the prayers of the liturgy, the scripture readings and of course to the words of the great Advent hymns. It is especially important not to forget the Advent teaching on judgement and the End Time because these are an important aspect of our faith.

Unfortunately, because of the modern tendency to celebrate Christmas in advance (the first Llandudno hotel 'turkey & tinsel' decorations appeared in October!) it is becoming harder and harder to attend to the themes of Advent. Carols seem to take over from Advent hymns almost as soon as the season begins. We can't fight against this, even if we wanted to. Schools and organizations of many kinds expect to hold their Christmas services and events in the run up to the festival. But we can and must do everything we can to see that Advent gets a proper 'look in' and that at least for faithful church folk the season is kept as well as it can be in the circumstances.

So I do wish you a very happy and blessed Christmas and that when the great day comes you may all know the peace and joy of the new-born King. But firstly may I wish you a wonderful Advent, full of the promise of the coming of the Lord.

Why I am NOT going to Rome

Since Pope Benedict made his recent invitation to disaffected Catholic Anglicans to become part of the Roman Catholic Church whilst retaining something of their Anglican identity, several people, knowing of my Catholic Churchmanship, have asked whether I will be considering this offer.

I have to say that in a way it is very tempting. Part of being an Anglican Catholic is to experience a longing for the visible unity of the Church and the recognition that this would inevitably mean accepting the Bishop of Rome as the chief Bishop of Christendom. Is not this invitation a step towards this goal? Furthermore there is much in the Roman Catholic Church which is very attractive.

However, I won't be responding to this invitation for a number of reasons. Firstly despite all their present problems I continue to believe that the Churches of the Anglican Communion are an authentic part of the Church Catholic. Indeed I believe that the Church in Wales is the ancient catholic Church of this land – the church of Dewi Sant and St Tudno among so many others. I believe the Bishops of the Anglican Church are Bishops of the Church Catholic and share in the apostolic succession which for me is an essential element in the ministry of the church. There is so much that I value in being part of the Anglican Church with its variety of theological traditions and

ways of expression.

Moreover I belong to a part of the Anglican Catholic movement which sees as authentic developments such as the ordination of women to the sacred ministry. Many Catholic Anglicans argue that it is wrong for Anglicans to proceed with the ordination of women until other parts of the Church, such as the Roman Church and the Orthodox Church have accepted it too. However, sometimes you have to do what you think is right even if you know the others will take a long time to catch up! So I do not share some of the concerns of those traditionalist Anglicans who may well respond positively to the Pope's invitation.

However our Communion is beset with many problems and if I ever felt that it was becoming impossible to be a catholic in the Anglican fold then maybe I might reconsider my position. But my hope that I will remain a faithful member of the church in which I was baptized, confirmed and ordained and in which I hope to live and to die.

Resignation of Area Dean

Canon Peter Russell Jones has decided to resign as Area Dean of Arllechwedd. We thank him for his leadership of our Deanery over a number of years. It is anticipated that a new Area Dean will be appointed very soon. Canon Peter remains as Vicar of Conwy.

Fr John

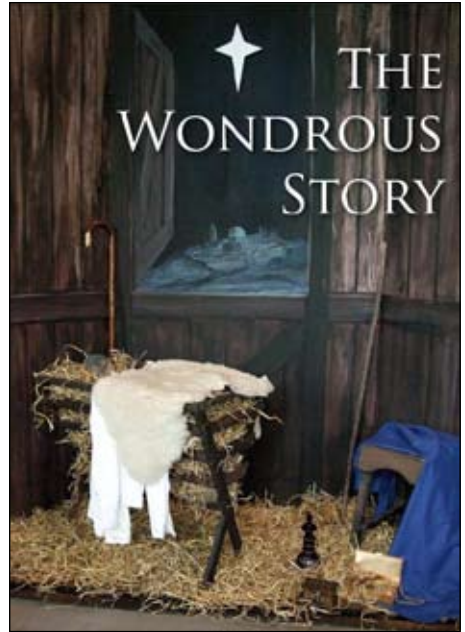
News and Notices

The Magazine

June Dwyer has had to retire as the magazine's treasurer. Her major task was that of seeking advertisers and the current ones are due for renewal. I would like to thank June for her hard work and request that someone comes forward to replace her.

I would also like to thank all those who contribute towards the Magazine and who distribute it and would appeal for more to join the team. It is no longer a secret that I write the 'Great Hymns' feature and that, together with Christine's nature notes, enables us to fill 28 or 32 pages easily enough. But there are only a certain number of species on the Great Orme or half-decent hymns which have a story to tell. Both Christine and I have other responsibilities both within and external to the Parish and we need your help before we run completely out of steam.

One edition that did receive some comment this year was the tribute to Effie Rowlands. Sandra supplied me with a load of old photographs which proved of great interest. So if you have old photographs with a theme of the parish, the parishioners or the town etc, please let me see them. There must also be boxes of old colour slides out there too that I could scan. The team wishes all our readers a very merry and blessed Christmas.



Who could forget this splendid event held in August? The tableaux and the flower arrangements were absolutely stunning.

As reported at the time, the photographs of the event were not reproduced in the magazine but were being withheld for publishing in full colour. This was done in response to requests for a permanent souvenir.

I am pleased to report that the 12-page full colour booklet is now available from the Mustard Seed shop at a price of £1.50 each or £5 for four.

Though the booklet has a number of biblical quotes, it is accompanied by a

leaflet containing four pages of additional notes. This means that as well as being a souvenir of the occasion, it is also a stand-alone depiction of Christ's life from his birth to his death, resurrection and glorious ascension.

The Wondrous Story booklet would be ideal to include with Christmas cards to your closest friends and relatives and would be an unusual and appreciated Christmas stocking filler.

Though the photographs are wonderful and have been beautifully printed, they were not taken by professionals. Consequently, some of the photographs were of insufficient quality to reproduce. I apologise if your creation has been omitted from the final selection.

I would like to thank Christine Jones, Maggie Leitch and Judith Williams for the photographs and Rev Jane Allen for the leaflet text.

Andy Leitch

St. Tudno's

Many thanks to everyone who helped to put away the benches for the winter. We did this on a beautiful October morning, when it was a real pleasure to be out on the Great Orme and the 'many hands' made 'light work' (we hope!) of moving the benches. The benches may have gone but St. Tudno's is still open during winter: on Saturdays, Sundays, Wednesdays and bank holidays (including Christmas day) and Morning

Prayer is said there at 9.00 am each Saturday.

Carols by Candlelight will be on Sunday 20 December, at 3.00 pm and at 5.00 pm. There is no heating in the church but a warm welcome, plenty of people and plenty of candles should make up for this! The paths will be lit (weather permitting) but it might still be useful to bring a torch if you are attending the later service. If you would like to come along in the morning to help set out the lights or the candles, please let us know. We plan to clean the church on the morning of Saturday 19 December, ready for carols by Candlelight and for a wedding in the church on Christmas Eve (this will be performed by Special Licence from the Archbishop of Canterbury as St. Tudno's is not licensed for weddings). So if you could help with this we'd be very pleased to hear from you. Hot drinks will be available both days.

**Christine Jones
Stephanie Searle**

Sponsor-a-Slate: the alternative Christmas gift

In recent years 'alternative' Christmas gifts such as 'give a goat' have become quite popular, though there doesn't seem to be much guarantee that one's gift is actually turned into a goat. If you would like to give an alternative gift which can be guaranteed to be what it says it is, why not sponsor a slate in someone's name?

St. Tudno's Church was last re-roofed in 1855 and after more than 150 years in that very exposed location the job must now be done again. The 1855 restoration was paid for by a single benefactor, Mr. William Henry Reece, but we are now looking for many benefactors to share in this work. For £10.00 you can sponsor a slate in a name of your choice and the name will be engraved on a slate when the roof is replaced (hopefully next year). It is estimated that 1000 new slates will be required and so far a quarter of these have been sponsored.

Sponsor forms are available in both churches, from Fr. John or me or can be downloaded from the parish Web site. If you are a UK tax payer and can Gift Aid your donation, your £10.00 becomes worth £12.50 to St. Tudno's. Messages can be written on the sponsor forms as well as names (but only the names will go on the slates) and the sponsor forms will become part of the parish archive and an accessible record of the names on the roof.

For a limited period only, Sponsor-a-Slate gift certificates will be available with the sponsor forms, for you to give to your friend or loved one – but please don't forget to return the sponsor forms!

Happy Christmas, from the Friends of St. Tudno's Church

Christine Jones
(Friends' Secretary)

Thank you messages

I would like to thank everyone at Holy Trinity and Mothers' Union for the kindness shown to me during Peter's illness and untimely passing. The lovely cards and flowers, telephone calls and messages of sympathy have been a great comfort to me during this sad time.

Thank you all.

Jenny Bicknell

Greetings in the Name of our Lord Jesus.

We do appreciate the most generous gift of £200.00 from Llandudno Parochial Church Council to the Barnabas Fund to help Christians who are suffering for their faith. As requested we have designated your donation to the Holy Land Fund (Project 65-377). We are so glad that you share our concern for these needy brothers and sisters. Gifts made through the Barnabas Fund make a real difference to people who often have nobody else to help them.

Would you remember in your prayers the Christians in South Sudan, northern Uganda, the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo who are being targeted by the rebel movement which calls itself the 'Lord's Resistance Army'. This movement, backed by the Islamic government in North Sudan, has attacked many villages and churches in recent months and is causing immense destruction and fear. It often kidnaps children, whom it brutalises and use

as child-soldiers within its own ranks. Some days after an attack on six people in Sudan in August, their bodies were found nailed to pieces of wood fastened to the ground. Those who discovered the bodies likened it to a grotesque crucifixion scene.

Pray for our Christian brothers and sisters that they will be protected, and for those who are ministering to the child-soldiers who have been rescued from their ordeal.

Thank you for the support for the Barnabas Fund,

Yours sincerely in His service,

Rosemary Sookhdeo
Director, Barnabas Fund



by Gemma Harvey, 13, who is currently working towards her Baden Powell Award, the highest badge in the Girl Guides. All the girls (bottom) walked wearing water-themed hats, Gemma's hat had a silver tap and water (above)

If you would like to join 1st Llandudno Guides (10 -14yrs) please call 01492 874770.

Marie Lidgett

1st Llandudno Guides

1st Llandudno Guides raised £65 in aid of the WaterAid charity by taking part in a night walk along Llandudno Promenade. The walk was organised

Hymn Quiz

Many thanks to everyone who bought a quiz sheet this year and had a go at finding the answers. We had five complete correct sheets returned. The Rector drew one of these and the winner was Betty Plunkett – congratulations. We are pleased to report this has raised £66 for the Trygs funds.

Wendy & Peter La Trobe





As usual, Holy Trinity was beautifully decorated for the Harvest Thanksgiving.



Members of the Mothers Union, pictured after their November meeting with our own Vernon Morris who talked about his experiences in the Metropolitan Police.

Calendar for December

Tues 1st	10.00 am	'Julian' Meditation group – Stella Maris
Sun 6th	Advent 2	
		Morning Services as usual
	5.00 pm	Christingle Service
Fri 9th		Ysgol y Creuddyn Carol Service
Thurs 10th	10.00 am	Guild of St. Raphael Meeting
	11.00 am	Eucharist with Ministry of Healing
	7.30 pm	Son et lumiere
Fri 11th		St. Raphael Guild visit to Chester
Sun 13th	Advent 3	
		Services as usual
Mon 14th	1.30 pm	'Cruise' Carol Service
Thurs 17th	7.30 pm	'Hospices' Carol Service
Sun 20th	Advent 4	
		Morning services as usual
	3.00 pm & 5.00 pm	Carols by Candlelight at St. Tudno's
Thurs 24th	Christmas Eve	
	11.00 am	Eucharist
	11.00 am	Wedding at St. Tudno's

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Christmas Eve	(also see above)
5.00 pm	Crib Service (collection for Christian Aid)
11.30 pm	The Midnight Mass of Christmas
Christmas Day	
8.00 am	Eucharist
10.30 am	Eucharist with Carols

Sat 26 **St. Stephen the first Martyr** (Boxing Day)
11.00 am Eucharist

Sun 27 Christmas I (St. John Apostle & Evangelist)
Morning Services as usual
No 5.00 pm service

Attendance Figures for September/October

St. Tudno's (September)

6 September	11.00 am	Morning Service	35
	11.45 am	Shortened Eucharist	28
13 September	11.00 am	Morning Service	50
15 September	7.30 pm	Compline by Candlelight	13
20 September	11.00 am	Morning Service	33
26 September	11.00 am	Eucharist for Friends of St. Tudno's	15
	4.00 pm	Re-dedication of Boer War Memorial	55
27 September	11.00 am	Morning Service	34
	4.00 pm	Evening Prayer	13

Holy Trinity (October)

		Weekday Eucharists up to October 3rd	20
October 1st		Holy Eucharist at Trinity Centre	7
October 4th	8.00 am	Holy Eucharist	18
Trinity 17	10.30 am	Sung Eucharist	93
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer	5
October 6th		Parish Fellowship Holy Eucharist	8
		Total of other weekday Eucharists	19
October 11th	8.00 am	Holy Eucharist	14
Trinity 18	10.30 am	Choral Matins	76
		Shortened Eucharist	35
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer	6
	6.00 pm	Exploring Worship	30
		Total of other weekday Eucharists	27
October 18th	8.00 am	Holy Eucharist	14
Trinity 19	10.30 am	Sung Eucharist	83
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer	7
		Total of other weekday Eucharists	21
October 25th	8.00 am	Holy Eucharist	22
Harvest T'giving	10.30 am	Sung Eucharist	92
Trinity 20	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer	6
		Total of other weekday Eucharists	22

The Parish Share or 'Quota' for 2009 is £73442

The Quota is the sum of money that we have to contribute to pay the stipends of our clergy. In 2007 and 2008, we partially paid this sum from our reserves. This year the increase is £5030 more than 2008 (7.35% more) and we do not have the reserves.

If you are able, please consider revising your regular giving so the Parish can pay its dues.

If you are a payer of income tax or capital gains tax, please declare regular giving and donations as 'Gift Aid' so HM Customs and Revenue might refund to us the tax you paid on earning your gift.

If you make a donation of £10, the Parish receives an extra £2.50 at no cost to you.

Please contact Stan Whittaker, the Gift Aid Secretary. (Tel: 596796)



CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

St. Tudno's Church
Sunday 20 December at
3.00 pm and at 5.00 pm

There is no heating in the church but the welcome will be warm



PARKING ARRANGEMENTS AT HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

The following is a summary of the arrangements, rules and conditions for all parking in the grounds of Holy Trinity Church as set out by the Parochial Church Council. The co-operation of all those people using the facility will be appreciated.

1. **Entrance** for parking purposes in the **main car park** shall **only** be through the south access at the rear of the Church. Vehicles using the main car park should exit by this means.
2. The west access may only be used as an entrance by church officials, vehicles dropping and collecting people, and other deliveries/collections.
3. **Only church officials on church business are permitted to park in the seven spaces in the west car park** (ie by the hall entrance).
4. **Everyone** except a church official on church business **must obtain a parking ticket** from either of the two machines. If a machine is unserviceable, please use the other machine. **Church officials** on church duty using either car park **must possess a valid permit to park**.
5. The **ticket or permit must be displayed prominently** on the dash/windscreen so that its details may be clearly visible from outside the vehicle.
6. Vehicles should be parked neatly within the marked spaces.
7. Those attending Holy Trinity Church services on Sunday mornings may do so without obtaining a ticket but the Pay & Display arrangement will operate from 1pm.
8. Vehicles are parked at owners' risk.
9. The parking will be monitored at regular intervals and action may be taken against anyone infringing these conditions.
10. The current tariff is displayed on the machines.
11. The Parochial Church Council reserves the right to change or amend these conditions if it deems it necessary.

A H Leitch
Secretary, Llandudno PCC

v1 18 Nov 2009

From the Parish Registers

Holy Baptism

Elysia Michaela Pearce

The Departed

Oct 20th: Peter Bicknell aged 63
(Service at Holy Trinity followed by
Internment at Lawns Cemetery, Llanrhos)

Oct 23rd: Charles Cant aged 75
(Cremation at Colwyn Bay)

Oct 23rd: Peter Robert Hall aged 81
(Cremation at Colwyn Bay)

Oct 28th: Janet Mary Myfanwy Akehurst aged 91
(Service at Holy Trinity followed by
Internment at Great Orme Cemetery)

Sidespersons

Dec 6th	Pat Ridler Mary Rees Alun Barret Eira Jones	Judith Williams Mary Rees
Dec 13th	Annabel Jones Angela Pritchard Barbara Yates Adele Arrowsmith	Dec 24th Christmas Eve 11.30 pm & Dec 25th Christmas Day 10.30 am Volunteers needed please
Dec 20th	Stan Whittaker Joyce Crosby	Dec 27th Dorothy Trent John Ridler Alun Barret Sandra Davies

Marvellous Mosses

Over winter, when the trees have lost their leaves and herbaceous plants have died down, it becomes easier to see the little plants like mosses. There are about 150 common species of moss in Britain, and numerous rarer ones, and the size and shape can vary considerably. For example, there are mat-forming species, such as the mosses found in lawns (often *Hypnum cupressiforme*); small, cushion-formers seen on walls and roofs (often *Grimmia* or *Bryum* species); and species which branch to produce fronds and look like miniature forests (such as *Thuidium tamariscinum* found in woodland).

In the mountains of Snowdonia some of the large mosses may be found, such as the *Sphagnum* species which form peat bogs and *Polytrichum commune* which can form cushions with stems more than 40 cm (16") long and at first glance hardly looks like a moss at all.

In the photograph, the cushion-forming moss is dark green *Grimmia pulvinata*, in which the leaves taper to silvery hairs. The mat-forming moss has pale green tips to the little branches which gleam brightly in the sun and is probably *Homalothecium sericeum* (precise identification of mosses often requires examination with a microscope). If you look closely at the cushion you should be able to see the round capsules which will bear the spores.

Mosses generally grow pretty slowly but they are often important in the colonisation of new areas by plants. For example, the *Grimmia* pictured is able to grow on bare rock but the cushion can trap particles of soil and eventually enough may build up to enable other plants to grow there. Two features which help mosses like this to live in such a harsh environment are an ability to retain a fair amount of moisture within the cushion and, when this dries out, an ability to withstand desiccation and to take up water again when it becomes available.

Formation of peat from *Sphagnum* is a very slow process and use of peat in potting composts threatens the habitats from which the peat is extracted. Fresh *Sphagnum* has also been gathered and sold for lining hanging baskets, though fortunately there are now other materials available as harvesting from peat bogs is rarely sustainable. However in the South Island of New Zealand and in Chile the *Sphagnum* is considered to grow fast enough to allow careful harvesting, with different areas being harvested by hand on a three to five year rotation. It is *Sphagnum's* ability to hold water like a sponge which makes the peat and the fresh product so attractive in horticulture but the ability of dry *Sphagnum* to absorb fluids and its mild antiseptic properties have given it a long history of use as a wound



Cushion-forming and mat-forming moss species growing together on limestone.

dressing. During the two World Wars, *Sphagnum*, after suitable processing, was used to make wound dressings and gathering the moss was considered as essential war work.

A less well known use of mosses is in the study and monitoring of pollution. The leaves of mosses are only one cell thick and lack a protective cuticle, so they readily absorb materials from the atmosphere. Mosses growing in different areas can therefore be analysed for the elements or chemicals which they contain. In the 1970s, British scientists

pioneered the use of 'moss bags' in pollution studies. Gauze or net bags of moss are hung wherever samples of the atmosphere are required and the technique is now used worldwide and has been extended to monitoring pollution of fresh water sources by using aquatic mosses.

Take advantage of the winter to look out for mosses. Many of them thrive in damp conditions, so a British winter suits them nicely, and they are pretty and fascinating little plants.

Christine Jones

Great Hymns — O Little Town

At the forefront of the Christmas children's carols/hymns is 'O Little Town of Bethlehem'. It may come as a surprise to learn that the lyric is not English but many will find comfort in that it was penned by the rector of Holy Trinity Church, albeit of Philadelphia, USA.

Phillips Brooks was born in Boston in 1835 and graduated from Harvard in 1855. After a brief period as a teacher he began in to study for ordination in the Episcopal Church. He graduated in 1859 and was ordained deacon, beginning his ministry at the Church of the Advent in Philadelphia.

The following year, Brooks was ordained priest. In 1862 became rector of the Church of the Holy Trinity, Philadelphia, where he remained seven years, gaining an increasing name as both preacher and patriot. He was a man of great physical bearing, standing six feet four inches tall.

At Holy Trinity, Brooks preached to great congregations. During the Civil War he supported the North and opposed slavery. In 1869, he became rector of Trinity Church, Boston. His preaching became so renowned that he was invited in 1880 to preach at Westminster Abbey and at the Royal Chapel at Windsor before Queen Victoria.

On April 30, 1891 he was elected sixth Bishop of Massachusetts, and on the 14

October was consecrated to that office in Trinity Church. He died unmarried in 1893, after an episcopate of only 15 months.

Tradition has it that Brooks was inspired to write the lyrics after attending a Christmas service at Bethlehem in 1865. However, there is evidence that he was not entirely impressed. For he wrote to his father on December 30, 1865: 'We ... waited for the service, which began about ten o'clock and lasted until three (Christmas). It was the old story of a Romish service, with all its mummerly, and tired us out. They wound up with a wax baby, carried in procession, and at last laid in the traditional manger, in a grotto under the church. The most interesting part was the crowd of pilgrims, with their simple faith and eagerness to share in the ceremonial. We went to bed very tired.'

In Rome, whilst returning home, he wrote to his Sunday School: 'I remember especially on Christmas Eve, when I was standing in the old church at Bethlehem, close to the spot where Jesus was born, when the whole church was ringing hour after hour with the splendid hymns of praise to God, how again and again it seemed as if I could hear voices that I knew well, telling each other of the "Wonderful Night" of the Savior's birth, as I heard them

a year before; and I assure you I was glad to shut my ears for a while and listen to the more familiar strains that came wandering to me halfway round the world.'

Perhaps with his favourable memories foremost, Brooks wrote these five stanzas for Holy Trinity's Sunday School Christmas Service of 1868:

*O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie;
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by:
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee to-night.*

*For Christ is born of Mary;
And gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth;
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to men on earth.*

*How silently, how silently,
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him still,
The dear Christ enters in.*

*Where children pure and happy
Pray to the blessed Child,
Where misery cries out to Thee,
Son of the Mother mild;*

*Where Charity stands watching
And Faith holds wide the door,
The dark night wakes, the glory breaks,
And Christmas comes once more.*

*O holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us to-day.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel.*

The meter of the poetry is irregular at a nominal 8.6.8.6.7.6.8.6. Nevertheless, it is easy enough to fit this lyric to a tune written in common meter (8.6.8.6) x 2: eg *Winchester Old* ('While Shepherds Watched'). Try it.

There cannot be a hymn more in our psyche than 'O Little Town of Bethlehem' and few will imagine it being sung by a congregation, to anything but *Forest Green*. But hardly anyone in the USA associates the words with anything but *St. Louis*, named after its composer Lewis H Redner, a wealthy estate agent and the organist at Holy Trinity. Rather than compose a tune in double common meter, Redner elected to write one in the unusual 8.6.8.6.7.6.8.6 meter.

Redner later stated: 'As Christmas of 1868 approached, Mr. Brooks told me that he had written a simple little carol for the Sunday-school service, and he asked me to write the tune to it. The simple music was written in great haste and under great pressure. We were to practice it the following Sunday....

Carol 599. CHRISTMAS. Words by *Bishop Phillips Brooks.* L. H. Redner.

1. *mf* O lit-tle town of Beth-le-hem! How still we see thee lie; A-bove thy deep and
mf 2. For Christ is born of Ma-ry, And gath-er'd all a-bove; While mor-tals sleep the
mp 3. How si-lent-ly, how si-lent-ly, The won-drous gift is given! So God im-parts to
mf 4. O ho-ly Child of Beth-le-hem! De-scend to us, we pray;(cr)Cast out our sin, and

Lewis Redner's tune *St. Louis*. Note how irregular stanza 2:1 has been accommodated by forcing 'Mary' to three syllables. This version remains popular in North America.

Neither Mr. Brooks nor I ever thought the carol or the music to it would live beyond that Christmas of 1868.

'My recollection is that Richard McCauley ... printed it on leaflets for sale. Rev. Dr. Huntington, rector of All Saints Church, Worcester, Mass., asked permission to print it in his Sunday-school hymn and tune book, called *The Church Porch*, and it was he who christened the music *Saint Louis*.'

The Church Porch was published in 1874 but the fourth stanza had been dropped. Stanza 4:4 was originally written as 'Son of the undefiled.' Redner provides some insight: 'The fourth line led to some amusing criticism lest it should smack of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. Brooks then changed that line to 'Son of the Mother mild,' (and so it appears in the Christmas program of 1868), but he afterwards decided to omit the fourth verse altogether from the carol.'

Being reproduced in a book for children is one thing but acceptance by mainstream hymnals is another. It was 18 years later when the 1892 edition of *The [Episcopalian] Church Hymnal*

republished the hymn. The General Convention of the American Episcopal Church only authorised the words and different publishers of rival musical editions clearly had doubts over *St. Louis*. As well as *St. Louis*, four alternative tunes were published between the rival editions.

The hymn was introduced into the UK by William Garrett Horder in *The Treasury of American Sacred Song* in 1896 and it appeared with music in his *Worship Songs* of 1905. Horder printed two tunes: *Bethlehem* by Sir Joseph Barnby and *Christmas Carol* by Sir H Walford Davies (1869-1941) (both notated 8.6.8.6.7.6.8.6 though the latter can easily accept a common meter lyric). As originally published, the first three stanzas of the latter have a three-bar introduction and are sung by sopranos, each followed by the last stanza sung as a refrain in harmony. It is a very fine tune though tricky in its original form for congregations.

I have discovered several other tunes published in the USA. One from 1903 sounds as if composed for the fair-ground organ with the fifth line sung by

girls and the sixth by boys. As a bonus, there is a refrain which attempts to reproduce Brooks' use of an internal rhyme in line three. It fails miserably:

O little town of Bethlehem,
Of thee in song we tell;
And hail with joy this Christmas day, (!)
Our Lord Emmanuel.

Also in 1903, a version was published in the USA which swapped the first four lines of stanza two with last four lines. Thus it begins 'O morning stars together'. And it was this version together with the missing fifth verse that appeared together with the tune *Forest Green* in the *English Hymnal* of 1906. The Musical Editor of the *EH*, Ralph Vaughan Williams, would not normally have found or (exceptionally) composed an alternative tune for a hymn if he considered the existing tune as having 'fine melody.' He would probably have considered *St. Louis* as too sentimental. *Christmas Carol* might have been re-

jected for reason of copyright, it being difficult for congregations, published too late for inclusion or because of RVW's dislike of 'specially composed tunes – that bane of many a hymnal.'

Forest Green was named after the village in Surrey where, in 1903, RVW had collected the folk song 'The Plowman's Dream,' sung by a Mr Garman. It is a typical ballad tune in double common meter in the form AABA where the first two and last pairs of lines are essentially the same. It is not difficult for the tune to become a dirge or to run away. A device of the arranger was to begin the seventh line a beat early and hold the first syllable for two beats. Despite the potential confusion to congregations, *Forest Green* became the *de facto* tune in the UK and the hymn gained rapid popularity.

The 1919 supplement to *Hymns, Ancient and Modern* may have had copyright issues with its upstart rival and substi-

661 8.6.8.6.7.6.8.6.

CHRISTMAS CAROL. [2ND TUNE.] H. WALFORD DAVIES, MUS. DOC.
(SOPRANOS.)

1 p O lit - tle town of
2 For Christ is born of
3 p How si - lent - ly, how

Christmas Carol (above) was specially written by H Walford Davies for *Worship Songs* (1905). It should not be confused with the long-lost *Wengen* (below) by the same composer and favoured by *Hymns, Ancient and Modern* for a short while.

Hymn 642. WENGEN.—D.C.M. H. WALFORD DAVIES.

To be sung in Unison.

O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie! A -

FOREST GREEN. (D. C. M. Words irreg.)
In moderate time ♩ = 80. *English Traditional Melody.*

Forest Green's debut in the English Hymnal of 1906. Though not annotated, the arrangement was by Ralph Vaughan Williams who owned the copyright.

tuted the tune *Wengen*, also by Walford Davies. *Wengen* is sung in unison and the last line of each stanza is repeated. There exists confusion between Walford Davies' two tunes and there are references to *Wengen* where they should properly be *Christmas Carol*. *Songs of Praise* (1925) reproduced the five stanzas and *Forest Green* as per the *EH* (the editors overlapped) and the *Revised A&M* of 1950 added *Forest Green* to *Wengen*.

There have subsequently been several other tunes by various composers but most hymnals have settled down to *St. Louis* and (sometimes) *Forest Green* (North America) and to *Forest Green* and a simplified arrangement of *Christmas Carol* (UK). Most modern hymnals print just four stanzas though the *New*

EH of 1985 retains the fourth, asterisked. The order of the lines in the second stanza can vary as described earlier though the words invariably are entirely those of Brooks, unchanged.

Forest Green is often accompanied with a descant by Sir Thomas Armstrong (1898 – 1994), one time organist at Christ Church, Oxford, Principal of the Royal College of Music and student and friend of RVW. The tune is set to numerous other lyrics in North American hymnals.

Christmas Carol is usually heard today in an arrangement for choirs. It differs from Walford Davies' original setting in that sopranos sing stanza one, followed by stanza three, and concluded by the last stanza sung in harmony.



Bishop Phillips Brooks, Lewis Redner, Sir Henry Walford Davies and Ralph Vaughan Williams.