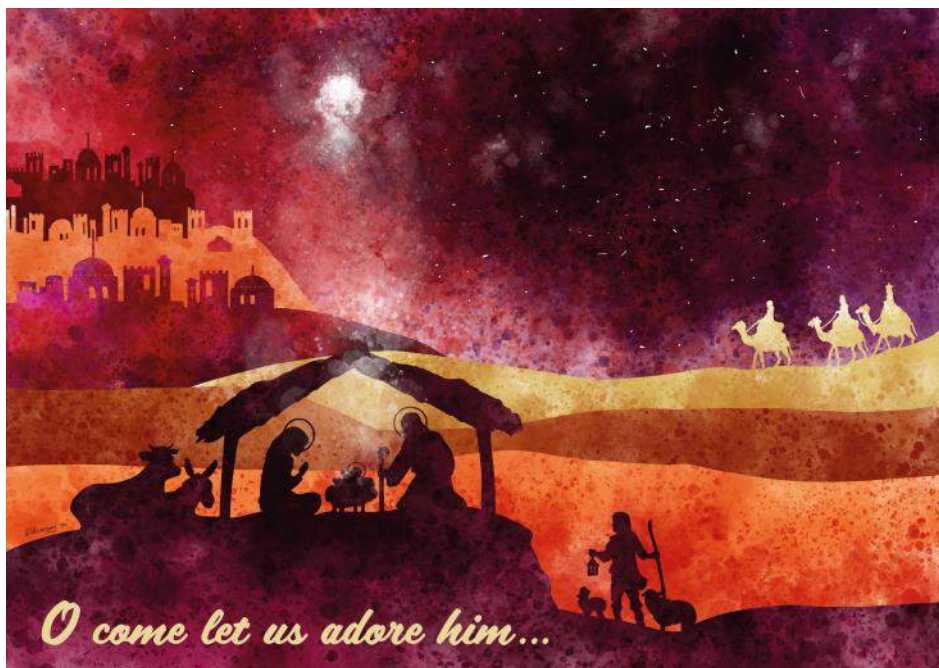


St Thomas' and St Luke's Ashton - in - Makerfield Magazine



December 2020 50p

www.stthomasstluke.org.uk

Church Services in St Thomas' and St Luke's

Sundays

St Thomas'

1st Sunday

9am Communion
10.45 All Age
Worship

2nd Sunday

9am Morning

**SUSPENDED AT
PRESENT**

in the hub
in the hub

at 11am

Communion

Family Worship

Family Worship

Weekdays

Thursday 9.45am
Holy Communion (BCP)
in St Thomas'

Please see weekly notice sheet or visit
website for additional services details or
exceptions.

Deadlines: Handwritten material should be given to Malcolm Taylor and email material to magazine@stthomasstluke.org.uk

| Deadline | January | February |
|------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Hand Written | 18th December | 15th January |
| Emailed | 25th December | 22nd January |
| Magazine Release | 3rd January | 31st January |

| | |
|---|----|
| <u>Deadlines</u> | 2 |
| <u>Letter from David</u> | 4 |
| <u>Mothers' Union</u> | 6 |
| <u>News from our churches</u> | 8 |
| <u>Poem by Joanna Wooff</u> | 12 |
| <u>School Report</u> | 14 |
| <u>Crossword</u> | 16 |
| <u>Green grow'th the Holly</u> | 18 |
| <u>Christmas Foretold</u> | 19 |
| <u>Wordsearch</u> | 20 |
| <u>Bible Bite</u> | 21 |
| <u>Glimpses of a New World</u> | 22 |
| <u>Christmas Prayers</u> | 24 |
| <u>Christmas throughout the Christian World</u> | 25 |
| <u>St Thomas' Donation & Remembrance</u> | 36 |
| <u>The Registers</u> | 38 |

Booking Baptisms and Weddings

If you would like to book a wedding or a baptism, please email office@stthomasstluke.org.uk or ring 01942 727275.

Important Information

Baptisms

Baptisms normally held at St Thomas' Church at 12.45pm on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month.

Baptisms at St Luke's are at 11am on the 3rd Sunday.

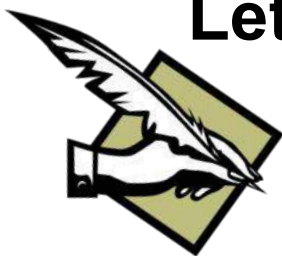
To qualify for baptism parents should live within the parish boundaries or be a regular worshipper at St Thomas's or St Luke's. Parents and godparents should have been baptised and be prepared to attend a baptism preparation session.

Funerals

Every parishioner has the right to a service in church (if church is open), followed by a committal.

Marriage

You can marry in a CofE Church of your choice if certain criteria are shown to be met. For details please contact the church office on: 01942 727275or office@stthomasstluke.org.uk



Letter from David



It's that time of year, when TV adverts try very hard to get our attention whether its with over-long epic dramas, or short ads which leave us scratching our heads wondering what had actually just been advertised. One way the creators of commercials can grab our attention is with familiar tunes.

As I sit here writing this, I can't get that traditional carol 'God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen' out of my head. Its certainly not one of my favourites, for me the tune is dreary, and I can't get on with the idea of 'merry gentlemen' at all (where are the merry women?) but the thing is, it's not down to 30 seconds of telly in between Emmerdale and Coronation Street, that I'm stuck with this carol, its because of the Church of England's call to prayer for advent.

"Comfort and joy" is the strapline for the campaign and so I'm stuck with "glad tidings of comfort and joy" populating my brain!

I think the campaign has got it just right - comfort and joy are two blessings we can all bring to the life of the churches and communities in South Hub to the churches themselves, but more importantly to each other and our community whether that's a wide circle of friends and acquaintances, or one or two people, we can bless with comfort and joy this Advent.

In the approaching Christmas season, I think we are probably all pretty familiar with the joy part of that, but what about the comfort?

For Christians, Advent, is both a new beginning and a time of waiting. A new start because advent marks the beginning of a new year in the church's calendar, and a time of waiting to celebrate Jesus' birth. And the waiting this year is heightened by what's happening in the world. As I'm writing this, we're all waiting to hear news of the Covid-19 vaccines which are being trialled around the world.

And as you read this, are we in a form of lockdown, who knows, again we are waiting. Friends, one thing we do know in this time we're living through is that things will be different. So, let's try and make it a positive difference.

Back to the question of how are we at comforting?

People around us are suffering we ourselves may be suffering, and as South Hub, we need to do comfort more.

In Paul's letter to the Romans we see what church should be:

"Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep." and this is the encouragement from the Church of England's advent campaign.

We are invited to pray this advent and you can get more information about this from any church leader in the hub.

We can all take on this challenge by being open with those we encounter, about how we are doing and feeling, and to pray for comfort for each other and for ourselves.

In the short book of James in the New Testament, we read:

"Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise."

Jesus is the ultimate comforter and as his disciples today, we can be comforters too.

But brothers and sisters, let's not lose sight of joy:

"...let nothing you dismay, for Jesus Christ our saviour was born on Christmas day!"

David Halliwell

Ordained in Training South Hub



Mothers' Union

Branch Diary

Under this heading in the December magazine in a normal year I would be telling you about the Christmas Carol Service a special time when we welcome to all ladies of our Church and also the ladies from other Churches in Ashton to come along and enjoy the traditional carols ,lessons and fellowship.

Also a reminder that our post Christmas Meal at Bryn Masonic Hall for all our friends. I know that this event is always enjoyed but in present circumstances we cannot yet make any plans for it to go ahead.

Subs

I hope that you will all have received your subs slips by now. Will please let me have them as soon as possible at 32 Townfields or to any committee member. If you find this difficult please ring me on 205136 and I will see that they are collected.

Coops Foyer

We still hope to support the young people at Coops Foyer if you would like to donate a gift for the young people this Christmas I will need to receive it soon so that I can deliver it. Please mark the parcel male or female.

Thanks

Another year passes by and what a year ! However I do once again need too thank our Secretary, Treasurer and the Committee and all the members of our Parish and indeed our congregations for their continued support for me and for the branch throughout this most trying time. A special thanks to those members who in these difficult times kindly agreed to deliver the MU Worldwide, a letter from the MU and a subs request to all our members.



Mothers' Union



Advent: Hope

Blessed are you, Lord our God,
who has promised us your salvation
through the prophets,
and that in you we will find healing and peace.
We come to you,
for in our coming we turn away from the darkness
and enter into the light of your presence and your love.

Mighty God and Saviour,
we pray for your Church throughout the world,
that it may witness to you
not only in word but also in deed.
May the Church reflect your love for the world
and show your acceptance and forgiveness
for all peoples.
We remember at this time
all who are persecuted for their faith
and all who are prisoners of conscience.
Come, Lord,
for our hope is in you.

Especially this year may this special time of Christmas bring you
peace and joy!

with love and best wishes from
Barbara



News from our churches



We are taking the opportunity through our Parish news of introducing Dalj and Ruth Singh who will be with us for two and a half years while Dalj completes his training as an ordinand:

Hello to everyone in South Hub from Dalj and Ruth Singh. Dalj is a first year ordinand with St Mellitus College in Liverpool. We have been based in Newton-le-Willows since 2006 when we moved from Manchester and through our church family of St Mark's, Haydock, we set up the thriving young adults and families activities.

We met at University in Manchester in the 1990s with Ruth later training as a Paediatric Nurse and Dalj joining Greater Manchester Police as a constable and later a sergeant. In 2008, Reuben was born, followed by Priya in 2012.



Dalj served as an officer with GMP up until 2017 and Ruth worked in St Helens as a Health Visitor. In August 2017, we packed up our house and moved to South India to volunteer at Hebron School. We served as dorm parents to teenage boys, taught PE and ICT, assisted with Junior school activities, headed up the school clinic and later served on the Senior Management Team as Head of Dorms. Our contract finished in June 2020, just in time for Dalj to start ordination training.

However we finished the last stages of our three year contract, living in the curate's house on Greenfields Crescent as the global pandemic meant we had to be repatriated in April back to the UK out of a locked down India.

We are grateful for the opportunity to serve at St Thomas' and are all looking forward to getting to know people. It's hard making new friends when you can't see their whole face through a mask!

Dalj and Ruth

Our church has over the years been the spiritual home of many people and indeed families. Some have worshipped at St Thomas for the whole of their lives. We always regret their passing and often remain unaware of the work which they have done in the background out of their love for Christ Jesus and His church.

I was sad to hear of the recent passing of one such person, I mean Freda Melling who, for as many years as I can remember, and that's a lot, and until her illness in recent times, did all the washing and ironing of the altar linen. A good and faithful servant who looked for no reward she will be sadly missed by her family and many friends.

Our church lives and prospers because of a quiet army of willing volunteers to who we remain eternally grateful.

There is certainly a lot going on in our church at the moment, the place has seen feverish activity as we rushed to prepare the church building for the start of the latest re-ordering. Carpets to be removed and disposed of, furniture moved along with books and other pieces of equipment etc. I would like to thank the team of volunteers who came to our rescue and really put in great shift.

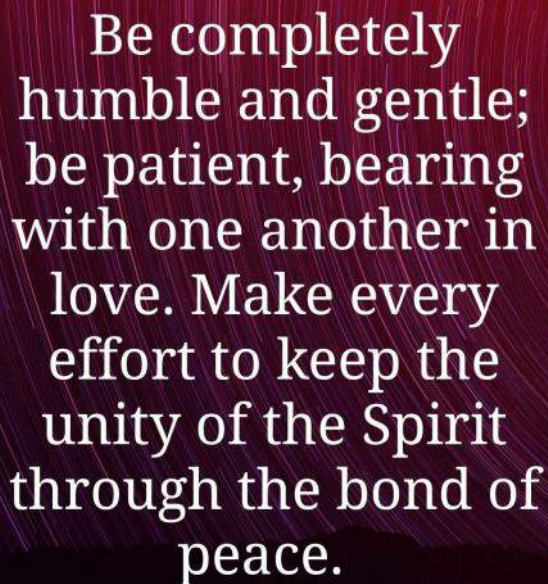
We have been successful in selling the short pews from the sides, most going to members of the congregation. Again a team effort in ensuring safe delivery and thanks to those who preserved a little memory and helped with a donation.

After preparing the church hall for the continuity of our services the move was frustrated by the imposition of the November

lockdown and we did however, hold two funeral services in the hall. They seemed to be well appreciated by the families, especially as the services were followed by a burial in our church yard. The first of the funerals involved a horse drawn hearse, quite a sight on our hall car park.

At the time of publication of this magazine work will already have started on the re-ordering. It is a lengthy job with an anticipated completion in May of next year. When completed we will have a church building which will benefit in comfort not only our worshipping communities but also the community of our township of Ashton by providing a venue which will be available for many uses. There has been some sadness at the changes being made to a building loved by many. We must look to the future just as our predecessors did when the building was consecrated in 1893 as did those responsible for the various re-orderings carried out since that time. We sincerely trust in our Heavenly Father's guidance as we do our utmost to follow His plans for us as His disciples here in the Wigan South Parish.

Malcolm



Be completely
humble and gentle;
be patient, bearing
with one another in
love. Make every
effort to keep the
unity of the Spirit
through the bond of
peace.

Ephesians 4:2-3

ACT Foodbank

Thank you to everyone who has been donating food to the foodbank in these difficult times and to Andrew and his team for all their work putting hampers together and delivering them as well as distributing food on a Friday morning.

If you would like to donate any non perishable items, the please bring them to the:

- red wheelie bin outside the foodbank cabin ; or
- The food cabin on a Friday morning between 9.30am & 11.00am (food will be distributed from the church hall doorway)

Larger items can be left at the vicarage by arrangement.
If you want to leave food items for our asylum seeker friends, these can also be left at the vicarage but please make sure your bags or boxes are clearly labelled so we know who they are meant for.

Thank you very much for your support





This Christmas

This Christmas
Let us show love
In all its shapes and forms
Loving neighbours as ourselves
Through life's daily trials and storms

This Christmas
Let us show joy
Seeking happiness in the mundane
Coping with restrictions and lockdowns
Bringing a smile to those in pain

This Christmas
Let us show peace
Providing a soothing word or support
Praying for peace between our nations
Fighting injustice like we ought

This Christmas
Let us show patience
Bearing with each other through the highs and lows
Understanding one another's weaknesses
Drawing lots on our favourite tv shows

This Christmas
Let us show kindness
Being on the lookout for those in need
Supporting local food banks and projects
Living out our daily creed

This Christmas
Let us show goodness
Trying to live like Jesus would
Shouldering each other's burden

This Christmas
Let us show faithfulness
Holding true to the gospel story
Refraining from panic buying and over indulgence
Celebrating the Christ child in all of his glory

This Christmas
Let us show gentleness
Being the first to provide a listening ear
Nurturing and caring for mankind
Showing humanity God is near

This Christmas
Let us show self control
Standing firm against the tides
Living in the world but not for it
Allowing Jesus to be our guide

This Christmas
Let Christ reign

Joanna Wooff





St Thomas' School

Reporters



Keep up to date with what the children have been up to in school over the last month.

Children in Need

On Friday 13th November we celebrated Children in Need's 40th Anniversary by dressing up in spots, wearing Pudsey ears and giving money. We talked about how lucky we are! We have raised £225.85!!

Anti-Bullying Week

We have been talking about bullying in class this week. What kind of bullying there is, why people bully and how you can put a stop to it. The three types of bullying are Physical Bullying, Mental Bullying and Online Bullying. Sometimes bullies bully people because they get bullied by their parents or sometimes because people who are being bullied won't respond and people will think them cowardly not you. The best way to stop bullying is to tell someone about it.

Remembrance Day

On Wednesday the 11th we had a two minutes silence to remember all the soldiers who fought in war for our country and we said a prayer to remember all the loved ones who we have lost. We also thanked the veterans who are still living today healthy and stronger than ever.

Abbie and Joshua



A beautiful display of artwork completed by Y5- well done

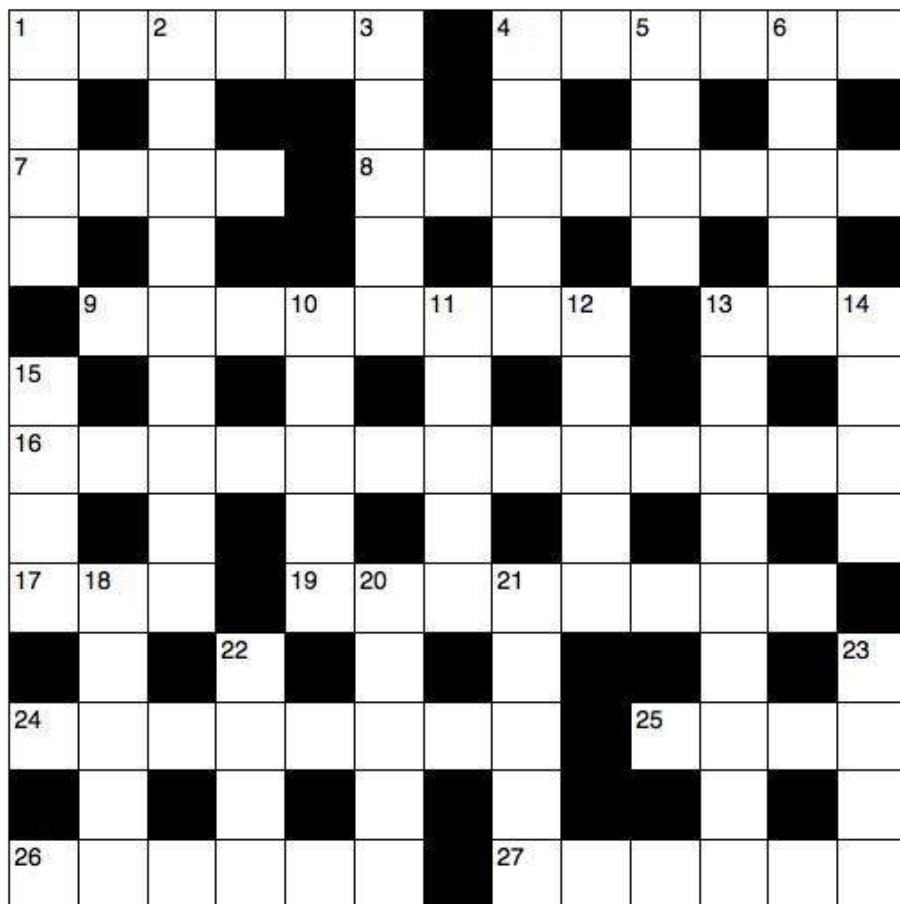


A picture to colour for Christmas. Colour in one star each day as you count down to Christmas!
Read the Christmas story in Luke 1:1 - 2:21

Dec20 © Deborah Noble • parishpump.co.uk



Crossword



Answers on page 26

Across

- 1 Rely (Psalm 62:7) (6)
- 4 'He stretches out the heavens like a — , and spreads them out like a tent to live in' (Isaiah 40:22) (6)
- 7 What the dove carried the olive leaf in, when it returned to Noah's ark (Genesis 8:11) (4)
- 8 Annoy (1 Samuel 1:6) (8)
- 9 Judah's last king, who ended his days as a blind prisoner in Babylon (Jeremiah 52:11) (8)
- 13 'They all — and were satisfied' (Luke 9:17) (3)
- 16 Eliphaz the Temanite was one; so was Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite (Job 2:11; 16:2) (4,9)
- 17 National Association of Evangelicals (of the USA) (1,1,1)
- 19 Popular song for New Year's Eve, Auld — — (4,4)
- 24 Able dock (anag.) (8)
- 25 The number of stones David chose for his confrontation with Goliath (1 Samuel 17:40) (4)
- 26 Elgar's best-known 'Variations' (6)
- 27 Soak (Isaiah 16:9) (6)

Down

- 1 Money owing (Deuteronomy 15:3) (4)
- 2 Conciliatory (Titus 3:2) (9)
- 3 'Do this, whenever you — it, in remembrance of me' (1 Corinthians 11:25) (5)
- 4 A group assisting in the governance of the Roman Catholic Church (5)
- 5 One of the gifts Joseph's brothers took with them on their second journey to Egypt (Genesis 43:11) (4)
- 6 'Reach out your hand and — — into my side. Stop doubting and believe' (John 20:27) (3,2)
- 10 Be outstandingly good (2 Corinthians 8:7) (5)
- 11 'What — — that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?' (Psalm 8:4) (2,3)
- 12 Horse's feet (Judges 5:22) (5)
- 13 Notice (Deuteronomy 17:4) (9)
- 14 Comes between 2 Chronicles and Nehemiah (4)
- 15 One of Israel's northern towns conquered by Ben-Hadad (1 Kings 15:20) (4)
- 18 Narnia's Lion (5)
- 20 One of the two rivers in which Naaman would have preferred to wash (2 Kings 5:12) (5)
- 21 Avarice—one of the evils that come from inside people (Mark 7:22) (5)
- 22 Knight Grand Cross of St Michael and St George (1,1,1,1)
- 23 Jacob's first wife (Genesis 29:23) (4)



Green grow'th the Holly

Kirsty Steele

A music manuscript from about 1515 and attributed to King Henry VIII has the words:

*Green grow'th the holly,
So doth the ivy,
Though winter blasts ne'er so high
Green grow'th the holly.*

The next three verses take us through spring, summer and autumn, so this is clearly not a Christmas carol, unlike the familiar 'The Holly and the Ivy'. What may not be known is that holly and ivy are two of the very few native ever-green trees, and in past times must have been especially popular in providing greenery during winter months.

With its shiny spiky dark green leaves, holly is surely one of the most easily recognised trees in this country. Though often bush-like, holly can grow up to ten metres high with a straight trunk and pyramid shape. It is *dioecious*, meaning each tree is either male or female, explaining possibly why the one in your garden never has any berries!

Nowadays we associate holly with Christmas wreaths and garlands, cards and carols. Pre-Victorian times saw holly branches used as Christmas trees, with the spiky leaves representing Christ's Crown of Thorns and the red berries as drops of blood. Holly brought into the house was regarded as protection against evil spirits and as a refuge for good 'faeries' who would guard the residents of the house in return.

It is interesting to note that where no person or animal brushes by a holly, the leaves lack all spines except the one at the tip. This includes upper leaves on mature trees. A bit like people – be nice and they won't be scratchy!

Back to 'Green grow'th the Holly'. The final verse ends:

*The God of life can never die,
Hope! Saith the holly.*

How wise. Where would we be without hope?



Christmas Foretold



From untold glory to a manger of straw
Who could imagine such a thing?
From Eternity stepping down into Time
With very few to welcome Him in.

Mary and Joseph, shepherds and wise men,
In His mother's arms the Baby lies,
Scripture describes these amazing events
As prophecy unravels before our eyes

The Books of the Bible all tell of His coming
His life, His death, redemption's plan,
The King of glory revealed in God's Word
Touching our earth in the form of a Man.

Megan Carter





Wordsearch



| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| f | q | z | u | c | s | d | k | w | v | o | n | o |
| j | f | t | m | d | n | r | t | g | o | d | c | l |
| p | r | o | p | h | e | t | h | a | f | r | v | f |
| p | r | a | y | i | n | g | n | s | f | i | l | q |
| l | w | a | i | t | i | n | g | a | e | s | j | d |
| a | i | t | i | b | a | b | y | v | r | r | e | n |
| l | n | f | t | s | m | u | y | i | i | a | s | b |
| n | s | j | e | v | e | r | y | o | n | e | u | o |
| d | i | o | m | t | a | d | h | u | g | l | s | p |
| a | d | s | p | m | i | u | p | r | s | d | i | e |
| n | e | e | l | f | a | m | i | l | y | c | t | a |
| n | u | p | e | o | p | l | e | a | d | e | r | c |
| a | j | h | p | i | n | c | o | u | p | l | e | e |

Temple
praised
peace
Jesus
Anna
Israel

baby
offerings
inside
everyone
people
Saviour

Anna
prophet
couple
God
Joseph
leader

family
lifetime
Mary
praying
waiting
world

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Luke 2 verses 22-38

God promised the Jews that when times were bad, He would send a leader to save them. He told Simeon it would happen in his lifetime.

God told Simeon to go to the Temple.

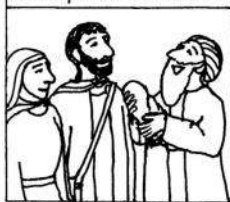


He saw a couple with a baby.

Mary and Joseph had come to give their offerings for their first-born, Jesus, and for childbirth.



Simeon held Jesus and praised God.



I can now die in peace because You have kept Your promise.



I have seen the one You have sent to save Your people and all the world!



Mary and Joseph were amazed! Simeon blessed them, but said...



This child will show what people are really like inside and this will mean pain for you as well.



Anna the prophet was also in the Temple.

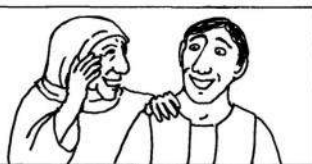


Her family was from the north of Israel and she was very old.



She spent every day praying in the Temple.

When she saw Jesus she praised God.



Anna spoke about Jesus to everyone who was waiting for God's Saviour.



Glimpses of a new world



In a new book, *Rowan Williams* considers the impact of the pandemic for believers

“THE summer is ended and we are not saved” (Jeremiah 8.20). Anyone who remembers those bleak words from the prophet will probably feel that they have a harsh appropriateness just at present. We still don’t know for how long we will have to live with this pandemic, what the eventual cost will be in lives, jobs, confidence, physical safety, mental, and spiritual well-being. For all of us, some much more than others, the effects of the pandemic continue to bite deep.

Over-excited commentators are happy to hand out blame. Easy enough to do, and there are indeed some hard questions to be answered about slow and half-hearted responses and inflated claims. But it’s a lot more difficult to acknowledge that we have genuinely been overtaken not only by practical challenges that no one had fully foreseen but by *feelings* no one had foreseen.

Some of the more insightful commentators have noted that the pandemic has set a large question mark against the assumption of guaranteed security that has been the backdrop to the lives of more prosperous communities and individuals for decades — the narrative that we are steadily “taming” our environment.

Most of the human race has not, of course, enjoyed that luxury anyway; and one thing that should come into focus in the light of the pandemic is this new and unwelcome solidarity in uncertainty. The British theologian Andrew Shanks has written a good deal about “the solidarity of the shaken” — the possibility of discovering real community on the far side of recognising a vulnerability in which we’re all involved.

That’s one of the things that a community of faith might well be thinking about at the moment. The Christian gospel repeatedly tells us that we are always involved in a situation of shared failure and shared insecurity; it tells us that this is overcome only when we stop denying it by closing our hearts to each other; and it announces that our closed hearts can be and are broken open to each other through the action of God in Jesus and the Spirit.

Faith does not deny the fragility we all share, nor does it make light of the cost and pain of it. It invites us to confront our shared fragility with honesty and compassion, recognising our need of one another, our need for the neighbour to be well and safe — instead of falling back on our fearful attempts to be safe at the neighbour's expense.

TRUST that we can face the truth without being destroyed; hope that the crisis we seem caught in is not the last word about what's possible for human beings; and love, the full-hearted will for the well-being of the entire world we inhabit. This is the landscape we live in, the landscape whose contours we have to try to make more real to those around us. The great question, as and when we have emerged from the immediate shadow of the pandemic, will be: What have we learned? Christians should be able to prompt, and to build on, some answers.

Perhaps we have learned more about our dependence on one another; perhaps we have learned something of the need to accept the limits and risks of living in a world we are never likely to tame successfully and totally.

Or perhaps we have had our eyes opened to who is least safe in our neighbourhood — and not just our immediate neighbourhood, but our global neighbourhood: those who have never shared the security we take for granted; those who have lived for years with the isolation and frustration that we so chafe at; those whose jobs are the first to be lost; those enduring depression and other mental challenges; those with partners or relatives who've become mentally or physically abusive; those in front-line care work who have given their lives in the fight to control the virus; those who have lost loved ones either to the virus itself or because the treatment needed for other conditions could not be delivered in time.

Ultimately, the question for us as a society is whether we have grown through the solidarity into which we have been forced. Simple solutions are not yet in sight as we move into a hard winter. But, to go back to the very first of these reflections, what if the change has already begun? What if something of a new world has been seen afresh and has kindled a new force of longing for generous, equitable, joyful living together?

Pray that it is so; act as if it were.

Christmas prayers

Church of England



Holy Jesus,
by being born one of us,
and lying humbly in a manger,
you show how much God loves the world.
Let the light of your love always shine in our hearts,
until we reach our home in heaven,
and see you on your throne of glory.

Lord Jesus Christ,
your birth at Bethlehem
draws us to kneel in wonder at heaven touching earth:
accept our heartfelt praise
as we worship you,
our Saviour and our eternal God.

Loving Jesus,
you were born in a stable but worshipped by the angels.
Be with all who are lonely,
and with all who feel distant from celebrations.
Be for us a living hope that lightens their hearts.

The kings, Lord,
brought myrrh, frankincense, and gold.
Lord, we have nothing of our own to bring;
we bring you what you have given:
our lives for your life.

Jesus, Saviour, son of Mary,
you know us and love us,
you share our lives
and hear our prayer.
Glory to you for ever.

May God, who has called us out of darkness
into his marvellous light,
bless us and fill us with peace.

Amen.

Christmas throughout the Christian world

Christianity.org



For nearly four weeks leading up to Christmas Christians recognise a period called Advent. It means 'coming'. It is a time of spiritual preparation. 'Coming' refers to Jesus' first coming as a baby, but it also looks forward to a day when Jesus is expected to return in triumph at his 'second coming' to establish perfect justice and a new order of peace.

Originally Christians marked Advent as a time when they refrained from excessive eating and drinking. Then Christmas Day reintroduced them to the joys of feasting. Christmas celebrations lasted for twelve days, with gifts exchanged as a climax at Epiphany (6 January). Today, however, Advent is more likely to be associated with accelerating festivity, with the days following Christmas something of an anti-climax until 'twelfth night', on which decorations are removed. Many Christians worldwide are trying to revive the spirit of Advent by setting aside time to pray and address global poverty.

Christmas Day is celebrated as the anniversary of Jesus' birth, although the actual date is not known. Most Christians celebrate it on 25th December. However, the Orthodox Church (the ancient churches in Eastern Europe and parts of Asia) follows a different calendar and celebrates on 7th January. Christians make a point of taking communion on Christmas Day. Many make it the first thing they do as the clock strikes midnight.

On 6th January the Christmas festival continues with a celebration of Epiphany, which means 'the appearance'. Christians remember the visit of wise men (magi) to Jesus, bringing gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. The Christmas tradition of exchanging gifts originally honoured these men, who were the first non-Jews (Gentiles) to worship Jesus. It forms a reminder that in Jesus God was giving Himself for the benefit of the entire world.

Orthodox Christians use this day to recall the baptism of Jesus as a grown man. The significance of Jesus being baptised was that He identified Himself with human beings in all their need. They mark the day by praying for God's blessing on rivers, wells and water sources.

Christmas has never been just an escapist festival for Christians. Those who treat it seriously recognise that not all the world is able to face the days with frivolity or joy. The day after Christmas, Boxing Day, was historically marked as the feast of St Stephen. He was the first man to be put to death rather than give up his belief that Jesus was God. And two days later a day remembering the Massacre of the Innocents recalls Herod's attempt to destroy Jesus by killing all male babies in Bethlehem. Although not so widely marked as Christmas Day, it gives Christians the opportunity to pray for children in today's world who suffer as a result of the actions of adults.

Crossword answers

ACROSS: 1, Depend. 4, Canopy. 7, Beak. 8, Irritate. 9, Zedekiah. 13, Ate. 16, Job's comforter. 17, NAE. 19, Lang Syne. 24, Blockade. 25, Five. 26, Enigma. 27, Drench.

DOWN: 1, Debt. 2, Peaceable. 3, Drink. 4, Curia. 5, Nuts. 6, Put it. 10, Excel. 11, Is man. 12, Hoofs. 13, Attention. 14, Ezra. 15, Ijon. 18, Aslan. 20, Abana. 21, Greed. 22, GCMG. 23, Leah.



Opening Times

| | |
|-----------|------------------------------------|
| Monday | 9am-5pm |
| Tuesday | 9am-5pm |
| Wednesday | 9am-5pm |
| Thursday | 9am-5pm |
| Friday | 9am-5pm |
| Saturday | 9am-4pm |
| Sunday | Closed Except for Mothering Sunday |

Flowertime Florist

5 Bolton Road, Ashton in Makerfield, WN4 8AA

Email: flowertime.ashton@gmail.com

Tel: 01942 715716

'We use the best quality Dutch flowers for all special occasions such as Weddings, Anniversaries, Birthdays, Funeral Tributes and many more. Please call today for your free quotation'

Special Offers

- ❖ ***5% Discount on Orders Under £100 (Minimum Spend £25 to receive discount)***
- ❖ ***10% Discount on Orders Over £100***

Please present this voucher at Flowertime Florist to receive any of the above discounts. One voucher per customer.





- Quality Workmanship
- FREE No Obligation Quotes
- Trustworthy & Reliable Service
- Over 25 Years Experience
- All Aspects of Decorating Covered
- No Job Too Small

Tel: 01942 716389
Mob: 07765 078295



MOBILE SCRATCH & SCUFF REPAIR

ScratchFix Limited

IAN BOARDMAN- SMART REPAIR TECHNICIAN

Tel: 01942 274586 Mobile: 07769 717836



Mobile: 07769 717836

SCRATCHFIX LIMITED

SAVE UP TO 50% ON BODYSHOP COSTS

Don't be without your car for days.. Most repairs completed within the hour at your home or workplace

- Key and vandal scratches
- Textured bumper scuffs
- Wing mirror scrapes
- Alloy wheel repairs
- Cracked bumper repairs
- Stone chips
- Colour coded bumper scuffs
- Full body polish

Alan Jones

FUNERAL DIRECTORS LTD

Local Independent Family Business

Traditional and modern funeral services

Horse-drawn or limousine driven funeral processions

Memorial Monuments and Services

Pre-paid Funeral Plans

*Professional funeral services in the Wigan areas.
To discuss any funeral plans please don't hesitate to contact us today.*



Ashland House
87 Old Road, Ashton in Makerfield

Tel: 01942 271824 24 Hours



Danesbrook House
21 Ladies Lane
Hindley

Tel: 01942 525504

Dove Cottage
51 Johns Avenue
Haydock

Tel: 01942 724777

Millbrook House
56 High Street
Golborne

Tel: 01942 272027

info.alanjonesfunerals@gmail.com

www.alanjonesfuneraldirectors.com





☎ 01942 727985
✉ sales@eaveswaytravel.com
www.eaveswaytravel.com

5* Cruiselink Service - Private Hire - Excursions

- ▶ Eavesway Cruiselink - taking thousands of people to and from their cruise holiday each year in style and comfort
- ▶ Executive Coach Hire - perfect for school trips, sporting events and days out
- ▶ Eavesway Exclusive - the very best in luxury coach travel, ideal for corporate hospitality and special occasions

*Eavesway Travel Ltd.
Bryn Side, Bryn Road, Ashton-in-Makerfield, Wigan, WN4 8BT*



bowen & leeming opticians



Mon 9:00 - 17:30
Tues 9:00 - 17:30
Weds 9:00 - 17:30
Thur 9:00 - 17:30
Fri 9:00 - 17:30
Sat 9:00 - 13:00
Sun - Closed

49 Gerard Street,
Ashton-in-Makerfield,
Wigan,
WN4 9AG

01942 722386
info@bowenandleeming.com

RB | R BANKS & SON FUNERALS LTD

Brian Halliwell Dip F.D M.B.I.E.

ESTABLISHED 1921

Independent Funeral Directors • Monumental Masons

A local family run business, R. Banks & Son are one of the largest independent funeral directors in the Wigan area

Founded in 1921 and now with ten funeral homes across the Wigan area the company has established itself by gaining a reputation for excellence, professionalism and sympathetic attitude.

'Golden Charter' Pre Arrangement Funeral Scheme

- Inflation proof
- Peace of mind that painful decisions will be made rationally
- Tailored to your individual needs
- All necessary disbursements included i.e. Crematorium/
Burial fees, Church fees and Doctor's fees.
- One up front payment or monthly instalments

Golden Charter
Funeral Plans



24 hour service • Caring family firm

www.rbanksandson.co.uk

**FINANCE NOW AVAILABLE
on Funerals & Memorials**

*Subject to status,
written details on request*

**Head Office: Halliwell House, 758/768 Ormskirk Rd, Pemberton, Wigan WN5 8BB
T: 01942 222156**

Local Offices: Clifford House, 1 Grove Lane, Standish T: 01257 422011

Hallbank House, 407 Wigan Road, Bryn T: 01942 271392 • Parsonage House, 100 Railway Road, Leigh T: 01942 261415

Windsor House, 232 Scholes, Wigan T: 01942 820526 • Whitley House, 439 Gidlow Lane, Beech Hill T: 01942 829200

Elliott House, 20 Shuttle Street, Tyldesley T: 01942 887312 • Bentham House, 220 Spendmore Lane, Coppull T: 01257 793880

Stretton House, 23 Hall Green, Upholland T: 01695 622099 • Templeton Lodge, Templeton Road, Platt Bridge T: 01942 863936



C & A Hornby Ltd
Plumbing and Heating Services
11 Rydal Close,
Ashton in Makerfield, Wigan,
WN4 8AU.



Gas Safe: 11641 _

www.cahornbyplumbing.co.uk

Telephone: Phil on 01942 727890 or 07867 576164

A local family run business, established for over 20 years and CRB checked.

Contact us for:

All your plumbing needs including emergencies, repairs and replacements.



Boiler replacements and repairs including full systems and upgrades.



Gas Fire replacements and repairs.



All domestic gas work including emergencies.

Boiler and Gas Fire Service, Landlords Gas Safety Certificates,
House Move Gas Safety Certificates.



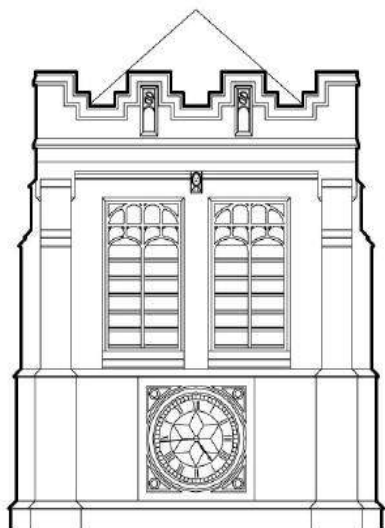
All bathroom work undertaken - complete bathroom
refurbishment with design service.



All kitchen work undertaken - complete kitchen refurbishment with
design service.



Rental Property Maintenance.



56 Belvedere Road,
Ashton-in-Makerfield,
Lancashire, WN4 8RU.

RIBA 
Chartered Practice

t 01942 717300
e info@schaferassociates.co.uk
w www.schaferassociates.co.uk

Schafer Associates | Chartered Architects



All Vehicle Repairs Carried Out

**Includes: Servicing,
Diagnostics, Clutches,
Timing Belts and more.....**

**Please phone 07845 180838
or call in for a FREE quote**

McG Auto Repairs Ltd
Cranberry Lodge Garage (behind
Macwest Motors)
Wigan Road Ashton in Makerfield
WN4 0BZ

www.mcgautorepairs.co.uk

TANGO

**TANGO at St. Marks
Church Haydock support
and resource families within
the Haydock/Ashton area
by providing food; clothing;
furniture and household
items.**



**If you have any items of furniture
that you no longer want
TANGO will collect Free
Of Charge from your
home.**



**If you want more
information about TANGO
or to arrange a collection
please ring: 01744 607388**





St Thomas' Donations & Remembrance

Please place your donation in an envelope with your full name and amount written on it. Please post through the vicarage door while church is closed. Please make cheques payable to **St Thomas' PCC**. If you want the donation to be for something specific, please write clearly on the envelope.

GIFT AID

If you are a UK tax payer and would like church to be able to claim back 25p for every £1 you donate, please complete a Gift Aid form or state on your envelope that you are a UK tax payer, would like the donation to be Gift Aided and include your full name and address.

REGULAR GIVING

Many people are asking us how they can give their usual weekly offerings. We do appreciate your concern for the finances of the church as the plate offerings help towards the payment that has to go to the diocese each month. We need to continue these payments as the outgoings of the diocese will remain the same while church is closed. Please consider switching to the Parish Giving Scheme by phoning 0333 002 1271 as we can get the tax back much quicker this way.

If you want to continue giving by envelope, please take them to the vicarage, or to Malcolm and Barbara's (32 Townfields), clearly marking the envelopes if it is for more than one week.

Funds currently in use are: Africa Fund, Asylum Seeker, Audio Visual, Church Hall, Building & Maintenance, Garden of Rest, General, Grave Maintenance, Heath Road Graveyard, Heating and Fit for the Future.

Unless otherwise stated donations will go into the General Fund.

If you wish to discuss any issues around Wills and Legacies please ring the Parish Treasurer Sarah Riley on 01942 722747.

St Thomas' Donations & Remembrance



From **Mary Swift's** family.

Anniversary Remembrance of **Arthur Shaw** (30th Dec) a loving
Dad and Grandad
From Barbara, Malcolm & family

Anniversary remembrance of **Ted and Betsy Grimshaw**
Loving and much loved parents-in-law and grandparents from Pat
and the boys

Christmas Remembrance in loving memory of **Peter Raymond**
Margaret and family

Loving Christmas memories of **Gordon Lyon** – who will never be
forgotten
from Marie, Barbara, John, Malcolm & Rob
David, Sharon, Ruby & Geena

THANK YOU

Thank you for the many donations following our appeal for help
funding the churchyard maintenance.



St Thomas' Donations & Remembrance



Freda Melling

A lovely Mum, Grandma and Great Grandma who shall forever
be in our hearts. With all our love always,
Linda, Alex & Hannah, Megan, Jess & David
Paul, Lauren, Dave & Sebastian, Michael & Sophia
Susan & Andy, Stuart & Thora, Marc, Sophie, Archie & Jude
and Ryan, Sarah, Alfie & Darcey

In loving memory of Freda, a lovely friend.

Joan & Cyril Foster
Freda Middlehurst & family
Karen Cunliffe & family
Derek & Doreen
Debra & Dave
James Banks
Margaret & John Leather
Bernard & Maureen Hosker
Stan & June Yeates
Meta & Ken Laites
Jean & Les Johnson
Shirley Barnett

Barbara & David Gratton
Debbie & Mike Duff
Alyson Holden
Joan & Ken Chadwick
Anne & Brian Evans
Garvin & Geraldine Graves
Pat & Barry Tatham
Janet & Phil Rigby & family
Barbara Oakes
Sharon & Ray Edwardson
Shelia & Allan Ward
Jan & Tony Cornthwaite

In loving memory of my cousin Freda Melling
From Sandra Ferry



The Registers



Funerals - "May they rest in peace"

| | | | |
|---------------|----------------|-------------------|----|
| 6th November | Barbara Mayers | Alexandra Road | 80 |
| 11th November | Karen Williams | Monmouth Crescent | 55 |
| 17th November | Ada Bond | Princess Road | 91 |
| 18th November | Harry Wood | Glebe Avenue | 77 |
| 19th November | Joseph Henshaw | Windsor Road | 80 |
| 19th November | Freda Melling | Eastwell Road | 82 |
| 20th November | Theresa Magee | Moorland Road | 84 |
| 23rd November | Mary Swift | Severn Road | 84 |

Lord of all love,
be with us today in the stillness
and comfort us as we remember our loved ones.

Be with us as we look back,
remembering all whom we mourn,
and be with us as we look forward
to the journey that lies ahead.
Give us the strength to talk of hope
and the courage to show love.
In Jesus name. Amen.

Church Organisations in St Thomas' and St Luke's

| | |
|---|---|
| <u>Coffee Mornings at St Thomas'</u> Tues 10am-12pm Barbara Taylor 205136 | <u>Flower Guild</u> Meta Laites 723679 |
| <u>Children, Young People and Families</u> Sue Thomas 07877 704645 | <u>Asylum Seeker Support</u> Anne & Chris Wooff 724207 |
| <u>Church Architect</u> Bill Schafer 717300 | <u>F.W.O. Secretary</u> Vacant |
| <u>Wednesday Weenies</u> Wed 1pm-2:30pm - Church Hall Jan Cornthwaite 721626 | <u>Messy Tots</u> Wed 1pm-2:30pm - Church Hall Sue Thomas 07877 704645 |
| <u>Duke of Edinburgh's Award (14-18+)</u> Sun evenings Church Hall Ceri Mansell 727417 | <u>St Thomas' Mothers' Union</u> 3 rd Wed: 7:30pm Barbara Taylor 205136 |
| <u>Fairtrade Stall</u> 3 rd Sun 11.45am Anne Wooff 724207 | <u>Fur Clemt Stubshaw</u> Mon 12-1pm at St Luke's Jennifer Harrison 718618 |
| <u>Litter Pick 3rd Sat 10am - noon</u> Chris Wooff 724207 | <u>Bowling Club</u> Henry Hunter 712709 |
| <u>Girl Guides</u> Rainbows (Tues 5:30pm) Danielle Wood 07841 649475 3 rd & 4th Ashton Brownies (Thu) 3 rd Ashton Guides/Rangers (Tues 7:15pm) Rachel Starkie 718350 | <u>Children's Sunday Clubs St Thomas'</u> Bubbles (Pre-School) Splash (R-Y2) Xstream (Y3-Y6) Bell Tower (Y7-Y11) Karen Cunliffe |

Church Officials in St Thomas, St Luke's and Wigan South Parish

| | |
|---|--|
| <p><u>Hub Leader</u> Rev Jeremy Thomas 727275</p> <p><u>Assistant Hub Leader</u> Sue Fulford</p> | <p><u>Sunday Morning Worship</u> <u>Local Missional Leaders (LML)</u> <u>St Thomas'</u> Jan Cornthwaite 721626</p> <p><u>St Luke's</u> Carole Pye 517318</p> |
| <p><u>Ordained Local Minister</u> Rev Izzy Schafer 717300</p> | <p><u>Saturday FM</u> 4pm-5pm - St Thomas' School LML Nicola Burgess 706841</p> |
| <p><u>Readers</u></p> <p>Tricia Hancox 201540 Alan Harrison 718618 Carole Pye 517318 Helen Weavers 07796 334457</p> | <p><u>Parish Church Wardens</u> Anita Archer 07863 298336 Paula Gillespie 07716 667763</p> |
| <p><u>Parish Treasurer</u> Sarah Riley 07712 584954</p> <p><u>St Thomas' Assistant Treasurer</u> Phil Hayton 273183</p> <p><u>St Luke's Assistant Treasurer</u> John Boon 728900</p> | <p><u>St Thomas' Assistant Wardens</u> Tony Cornthwaite 721626 Paula Gillespie 711270</p> <p><u>Deputies</u> Barbara Taylor 205136 Mansell High 727052</p> |
| <p><u>Prayer</u> Carol Foster 733263</p> | <p><u>St Luke's Assistant Wardens</u> Carole Pye 517318 John Boon 728900</p> |
| <p><u>PCC Secretary</u> Tricia Hancox 201540</p> | <p><u>Parish Electoral Roll Secretary</u> Sue Thomas 07877 704645</p> |
| <p><u>St Thomas' Organist</u> Paul Tushingham 711085</p> | <p><u>Worship Group</u> Mary Owen 203277</p> |
| <p><u>Church Office, Church Hall</u> <u>Bookings / Magazine Advertising</u> Sue Thomas 721484 office@stthomasstluke.org.uk</p> | <p><u>Magazine Editor</u> Jess Bradley magazine@stthomasstluke.org.uk</p> <p><u>Magazine Distribution Coordinator</u> Jack Stuart 726972</p> |