

# Wigan South Parish Magazine



- Holy Trinity
- St Andrew's
- St Peter's
- St Aidan's
- St Luke's
- St Thomas'

St Thomas' and St Luke's edition



December 2021

60p

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# Parish Information



## Baptisms

Baptisms are held around the Parish throughout the month. To qualify for baptism parents should live within the parish boundaries or be a regular worshipper at one of the worship communities within the Parish. Godparents should have been baptised and be prepared to attend a baptism preparation session with the parents.

## Funerals

Every parishioner has the right to a service in church, followed by a committal.

## Marriage

You can marry in a CofE Church of your choice if certain criteria are shown to be met.

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If you would like further information or to book a funeral, wedding or a baptism, please attend at one of our churches or see the contact details at the rear of the magazine



# Magazine Deadlines



Please send any material for the magazine to your local assistant editor (see contact details at the back) or [magazine@stthomasstluke.org.uk](mailto:magazine@stthomasstluke.org.uk).

	January	February	March
Deadline for material	16 December	20 January	17 February
Publish date	26 December	30 January	27 February



# A Note from the Editor



As we enter into the last magazine of 2021 I just want to say a big thank you to everyone who has contributed to our parish magazine since it was re - launched in September. Over these four editions I have been so overwhelmed by the amount of information, good news and events going on across the entirety of the parish. We have heard from so many individuals and I personally have learnt about, and been able to connect with, many other members of Wigan South and hear about the wonderful work they do.

There's a lot of work that goes into putting these magazines together; each Worship Community has their own editor who gathers and arranges the local part of the magazine and they have been integral to making sure you all receive the important information. We receive fantastic articles about local history, contributions from our uniformed and church organisations, hear the best stories from our youth and so many other fantastic and interesting reads. There are those who tackle the printing, organise the distribution and deliver the individual magazines to the church buildings or people's homes, come rain or shine. It really is a team effort. If you see anyone who is involved in getting your local magazine to you, give them an extra mince pie this Christmas - they've earned it (not least for putting up with my emails at unearthly hours!)

I am very grateful for those who have provided feedback and comments on the magazine, helping me to rectify mistakes (usually my doing!) and making sure we keep improving to make this magazine the best it can be. As we move into 2022 I would encourage anyone and everyone to continue to let us know what you want to see in your magazine or if you have anything you would like to contribute.

Off the back of recent feedback, we shall now be moving the publication of the

*Thank  
you!*

magazine to the last Sunday of the month, so January's edition shall be here before you know it.

I hope you all have a lovely and refreshing Christmas.

Jess



# A Letter From Eth



'The word became flesh and blood and moved into the neighbourhood. We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one of a kind glory like the Father, like the Son. Generous inside and out, true from start to finish'.

**John 1:14 (Message version)**



I am writing this letter on 17th November. As I did the school run with our Granddaughter this morning we went past a house that had Christmas decorations in the front garden. I was about to say "It's a bit early for those" when I looked down and saw her face. She had that look of total delight and we both ended up saying, in the gloom of that time in the morning, the lights on the Father Christmas and the snowman made us both feel great. It brought joy to the pair of us.

When I came home I read a daily verse from a book by Aled Jones that a good friend bought me and it said, "One of the most glorious messes in the world is the mess in the living room on Christmas Day, Don't clean it up too soon". (Andy Rooney).

So that got me thinking about Christmas and the joy and happiness it brings to so many. Those who know me well will know that I make no secret of the fact that I love Christmas. I love all the simple things about it, the lights, the carols in the shops and all the lovely trees and decorations that will be appearing soon.

We all have that wonder when Christmas comes, when we hear again that wonderful story of Our Lord coming to earth as a child for us. That story of shepherds and kings and animals in a stable. For us, as Christians, Christmas isn't about the huge amount spent on presents and food, or the commercialisation of the festival, it's just the single fact that God loves us so very much he sent his Son as a child for us.

So Christmas will come and we may love every minute of it, or for some, it may be a less enjoyable or even a difficult time of year. But do we then box up the joy and message of Christmas and put it away with the decorations, or clear it away with the mess? We may feel at times that we're not very good at spreading joy and wonder and love. However every time we smile at someone we don't know, every time we do one of those random acts of kindness, we offer a lift, ring or text a friend, brew up at a meeting, simply show kindness to another, we are keeping that joy alive whilst doing some good for those around us. We're keeping the spirit of Christmas out in the open, not stashed away in the attic.

So, when we come to pack away all the trimmings of Christmas, let's keep that wonder and joy at the birth of Our Lord going all year and never underestimate all the little things that happen to show His love for others.

With this in mind, I'd like to take the opportunity of wishing everyone around our Hub every blessing for Christmas and the New Year from all at St Peter's. We thank you for your love and support this year and we truly wish you all the very best.

God Bless,  
**Eth xx**



Within this magazine you shall see details of a number of services taking place local to you over the festive period.

Please check out the magazines for the other Worship Communities in the parish for any other services and events you may wish to join in.

You are sure to receive a warm welcome.



# Get to Know...

**Name:** Mansell George High (this is my name not my school. That was George Fox school and closed in 1997 but caused havoc on application forms for years after!)

**How and when did you become a Christian:** I was born quite young so I spent a few years at home with my family attending school and such. I was sent to church for many years but turned away from it all when I was 20. I worked a number of jobs, assistant manager of a nightclub, pub manager, 16 years retail management and then on line travel agent until after a number of periods of illness I was deemed unfit to work. I haven't got a precise date but as to the how: sometime, a couple of days before Christmas 2010, I struggled out of the drug induced stupor that had been fogging my brain for the last few years. Not recreational I hasten to add, but a hefty dose prescribed drugs to help me through the disintegration and eventual replacement of both hips, including the extra 4 weeks just prior to this time spent in hospital fighting an infection. I, somewhat bleary eyed looked round for a book to read. I love reading and had not been able to concentrate for about 3 years, finally I settled on the book my wife had been pressing on my for a considerable time. So by now, quite late on a chilly December night, I began to read *The Shack*. I read all night and past lunch time the next day, I remember crying for the first time in years and just sitting saying to Linda "I think I understand what they mean by relationship with Jesus" I felt absolutely wonderful and I am so thankful for a patient wife who had been praying for me for years, amongst many others it later transpired, for a good book well written and to a loving God who knew I was ready to accept the truth. I look at the bookshelf now and there are 3 copies of *The Shack* and probably 1 in the car. I think we have given 20-30 copies to random people over the years, and I always pray they will have the same life changing experience that I did.



**Role/responsibilities:** I am a member of the Wigan Deanery synod and by default am on our PCC. I don't have a job (forced retirement due to ill health and disintegrating hips) and I definitely don't have a title. But I do help out leading

the 9am service at St Thomas' about once a month. I enjoy leading a service, it is a tremendous privilege and I truly appreciate the opportunity although there are always worries; the long list of "what ifs" from tech breakdown to the prayers not sounding right on the day (they always sound a bit dodgy to me beforehand). However, I now accept that the best way to deal with it is to let God take care of it and I just try to get the words in the correct order.

**Favourite hymn or bible verse:** I have 2 favourite hymns - 1. Be thou my vision, the version with lots of drums and without the harmony (unless there are really a lot of drums). We had this when we renewed our wedding vows at 30 years. And 2. Days of Elijah. It is a wonderful hymn and if you can, have a look on YouTube of the American servicemen singing in Iraq. I love the "hurrah" after the line "so lift your voice" it is so uplifting although we can't do the shout out just now, I have hopes for the future! When I began the hurrahs, more or less on my own I think I startled a few people for which I am sorry. However, I think it's catching on and I'm sure more people really want to shout they just need encouraging. Or that's what I'm telling myself anyway and as soon as restrictions lift there we will be, all together, shouting hurrah to God.

My favourite Bible verse is Galatians 2:21: *I do not treat the grace of God as meaningless. For if keeping the law could make us right with God, then there was no need for Christ to die.* This verse sums it up for me, being a follower of Christ is something that we live each day of the week, not something we chant on a Sunday. As the theologian Brennan Manning says in "The Ragamuffin Gospel", *"The greatest single cause of atheism in the world today is Christians who acknowledge Jesus with their lips and walk out the door and deny Him by their lifestyle. That is what an unbelieving world simply finds unbelievable."*

**Favourite church memory:** It's difficult to pick out just one as there are so many, St Thomas' is such a warm and welcoming church. I love the special events, and look forward to many more now we are reorded. I remember and miss the church weekend away as I am sure many others do. However, I think I am going to pick the Christmas Day service, always unique and always special, but I will never forget the year Jeremy went up the centre aisle on a scooter!

**Interesting fact:** I once did a mime as Hank Marvin on the stage at Butlins, oh and we have 5 children as well

As we come towards the end of 2021, we prayerfully  
consider our verse for the year:



In nothing be anxious, but in everything,  
by prayer and petition with thanksgiving,  
let your requests be made known to God.

And **PEACE**  
the **OF GOD**

which surpasses all understanding, will  
guard your hearts and your thoughts in

*Christ Jesus*

PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7



# Parish News

Thank you everyone for your continued prayers and support. I continue to do well. I am getting out and about a bit more – and not just for various tests and medical appointments. I am hoping that it won't be too long before I am back with you.

I hope you are all better prepared for Christmas than I am. I have only bought a couple of gifts and both are for our beautiful great niece.

Wishing you all a very happy and blessed Christmas and New Year. Take care and stay safe.

With all our love,  
**Sue and Mike xx**

## CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION



We invite you to our 'Christmas Celebration' to be held in Holy Trinity church on Sunday 19th December at 3pm. A selection of poems, stories, video clips, readings and music will tell the Christmas story.

This year we will be able to sing so our Church choir and members of the Spectrum choir will lead us in singing well known Christmas carols as well as performing choir items.

We look forward to welcoming you.

(No tickets needed this year)



On 12 November, the Church of England published an article about the amazing work of Food Ministry in Wigan. If you missed this, please see below a copy of the story;

## **How church run food clubs in one town are helping more than 200 households to save on their weekly shop**



Up to 250 households visit 'food clubs' each week opened at Church of England parishes in Wigan, providing low cost fresh and tinned goods to members.

The small shops, based at St Thomas, St Nathaniel, St James and Christchurch churches, as well as food deliveries from St Barnabas Church, are supplied by surplus food charities.

A 'Faith café' run at St James Church on Saturdays, serving on average 40 people week, relies on enterprising volunteer cooks working with supplies donated that morning. 'You never know what you are going to get each week' says Revd Mark Wade, who oversees this work for the churches. Guests can pay as they feel they can – including through voluntary work in the café.

Typically, members of the food clubs can choose 20 items per shop for the cost of a small annual membership and a small fee per visit. Research into similar food clubs by Church Action on Poverty, Dignity, Choice, Hope, showed that they save households an average of £780 a year on food bills.

Revd Mark said that the churches are already observing an increase in demand and this was expected to rise over the winter. The long-term, collaborative nature of the food clubs and café, with members acting also as volunteers, means that they give a greater sense of choice and ownership.

People who had never previously visited church before have also attended worship and signed up for Christian enquiry courses such as Alpha after coming to the clubs.

He said: "We have had people come to Alpha who had no connection with the church previously through the love, care and relationship building of the food ministry work.

'We are getting many regular volunteers who valued having been looked after over the last couple of months who have come in and said: 'how can we help? and are now giving their time.'

## **The Christmas Window**

One day in December I passed, in the High Street, a window with nine panes of glass. On each pane was a letter which spelled the word Christmas and it caused me to wonder what Christmas might mean to the thousands of people who passed that scene.

C for crackers.

H for holidays.

R for Rudolph.

I for illuminations.

S for stockings.

T for tinsel.

M for mistletoe.

A for Christmas adverts.

S for Santa.

C stands for the census ordered by Rome.

H stands for haste as Mary and Joseph travelled from their home.

R stands for room - there was none to be had except in a stable outside.

I stands for inn, which was sadly full when Mary and Joseph arrived .

S stands for shepherds watching their flocks in the fields near Bethlehem.

T stands for treasure the Magi brought, gold, frankincense and myrrh.

M stands for Magi wise men from Eastern lands.

A for the angel who brought the news to the shepherds.

S stands for Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Is that all this season brings? It was then I remembered a story that's true and nine different images came into view (above)



# December Holy Days



## **25th December: Was Jesus really born on 25th December?**

Almost certainly not. But the story of how that date came to be chosen as His 'birthday' is one that stretches back long before His birth.

It seems to have started on the Greek island of Rhodes in 283 BC. That year the solstice fell on 25th December, and it was also the year that the Ancient World's largest Sun God statue – the 34 metre, 200 tonne Colossus of Rhodes, was consecrated.

By 46 BC, Julius Caesar had made 25th December the official winter solstice. In AD 274, the Roman Emperor Aureilian chose the winter solstice to be the birthday of the Sun God. He also decreed that Sol Invictus (the unconquered sun) was 'Lord of the Roman Empire'.

50 years after that, and Constantine had become the first pro-Christian Roman Emperor. He wanted the Church to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ on 25th December. Perhaps it was that to him, Jesus was more or less the same person as the mighty Sun God. Or perhaps he felt that the ancient Sun God's association with goodness, light, warmth and life would help ease the people's transition from paganism to Christianity.

Whatever the reason, the Church went along with it, and chose 25th December to be the date of Christmas. And in an ancient mosaic in the crypt of St Peter's Cathedral, Jesus is portrayed as adorned with sun rays and riding in a chariot – just like Sol Invictus.

As for the huge, bronze 200 tonne Sol Invictus? He fell over during an earthquake and was sold off for scrap metal in 654AD by an enterprising Arab scrap merchant. Meanwhile, Jesus lives on...

### 3rd December: Birinus – an apostle to the English

Thousands of our churches are currently involved in various mission initiatives across the UK. If it is tough going at times, we should spare a thought for poor Birinus, a priest from Lombard, who was sent here on his own 14 centuries ago. Pope Honorius I gave him the daunting task of being the apostle to Wessex.

It was about 635 that Birinus first sailed across the Channel. He planned to convert all of Wessex, and then press on into the Midlands, where no Christian preacher had ever yet been. But once he began ministry in Wessex, Birinus found the West Saxons so pagan that he decided he better just stay and concentrate on them.

So Birinus began his ministry, endlessly travelling around Wessex, and preaching to whomever he encountered. Gradually he became known, and his message began to seep through.

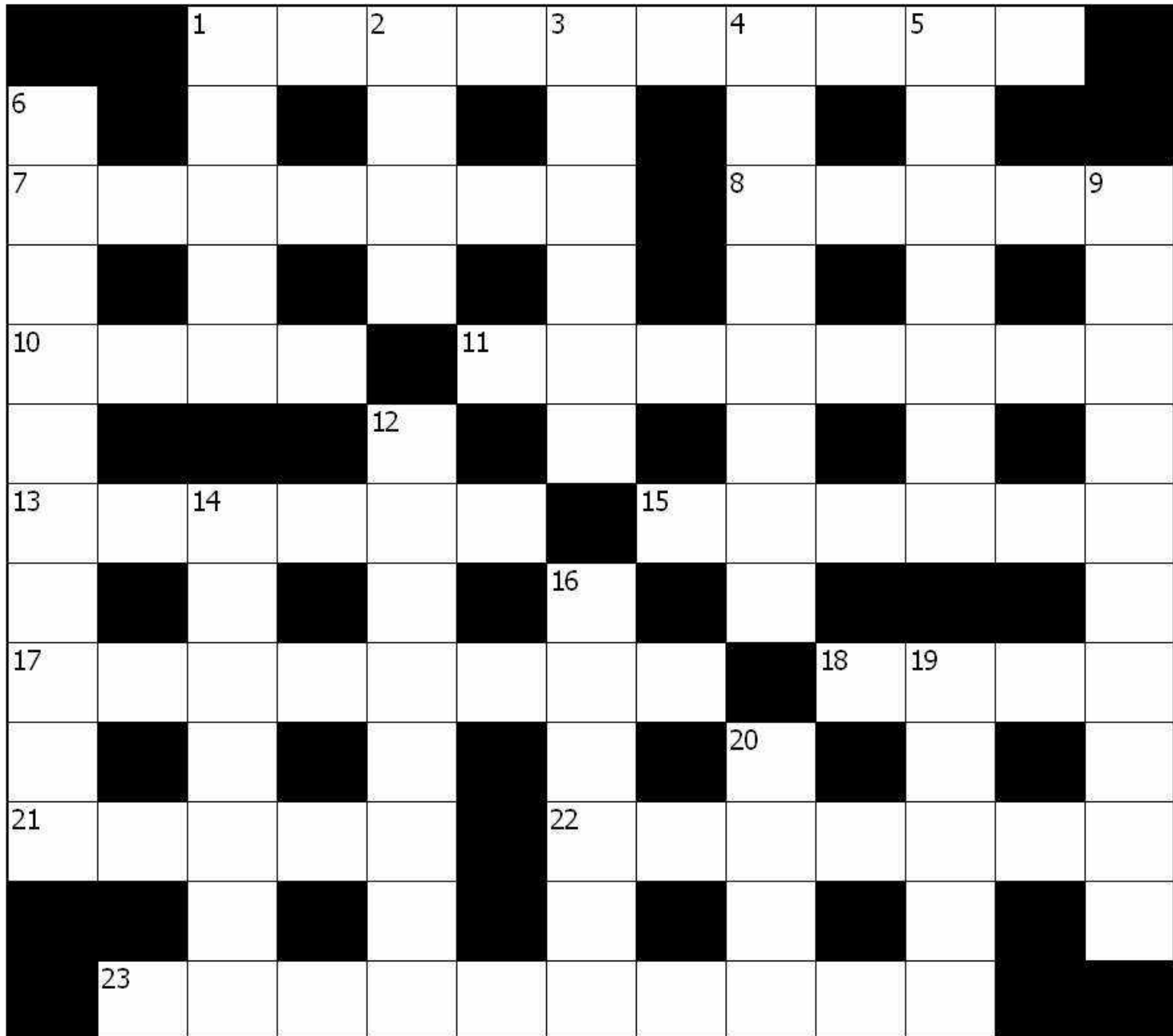
Then a great breakthrough occurred: the King of Wessex, Cynegils, asked Birinus for instruction in the Christian faith. His daughter was going to marry Oswald, the Christian king of Northumbria, and for political reasons Cynegils now wanted to convert. So Birinus taught and baptised Cynegils and his family, and in return they gave him the Romano-British town of Dorchester as his see, and Birinus became the first bishop of Dorchester.

It was an excellent strategic move: Dorchester was on a main road and river in the centre of an area of dense Anglo-Saxon settlement. From his new 'headquarters', Birinus spent his last 15 years going on to build many churches around Wessex, and to baptise many people. Towards the end of his life Birinus dedicated a church at Winchester, which later became the ecclesiastical centre of the kingdom. (There is no record of Wessex bishops at Dorchester after 660.)

Any lesson in all this? Bloom where God plants you, and be faithful to your calling, however tough things may look at first, and however obscure the place. Birinus' obedience and faith planted Christianity in a key part of Britain, and so helped shape British history for centuries to come.



# Crossword



## Across

- 1 Provisional meeting place of God and the Jews (Exodus 25:9) (10)
- 7 David's third son, killed when his head got caught in a tree during a battle with his father (2 Samuel 18:14-15) (7)
- 8 They ruled much of the west coast of South America in the 15th and early 16th centuries (5)
- 10 Small deer of European and Asian extraction (4)
- 11 Seized control of (Numbers 21:25) (8)
- 13 Terror (Luke 24:5) (6)
- 15 First World War heroine shot by the Germans in Brussels, Nurse Edith \_\_\_\_\_ (6)
- 17 Stormy (8)
- 18 A bitter variety of this, together with lamb and unleavened bread, was the Passover menu for anyone 'unclean' (Numbers 9:11) (4)
- 21 Arson (anag.) (5)
- 22 How John Newton described God's grace in his well-known hymn (7)
- 23 Habitation (Isaiah 27:10) (10)

## Down

- 1 '\_\_\_\_\_ and see that the Lord is good' (Psalm 34:8) (5)
- 2 'The wicked man flees though no one pursues, but the righteous are as \_\_\_\_\_ as a lion' (Proverbs 28:1) (4)
- 3 One of the exiles, a descendant of Parosh, who married a foreign woman (Ezra 10:25) (6)
- 4 He escaped from Nob when Saul killed the rest of his family and joined David (1 Samuel 22:19-20) (8)
- 5 City and lake in Central Switzerland (7)
- 6 'Offer your bodies as living \_\_\_\_\_, holy and pleasing to God' (Romans 12:1) (10)
- 9 Pouches carried by horses (Genesis 49:14) (10)
- 12 One who accepts government by God (8)
- 14 Aromatic substance commonly used in Jewish ritual (Exodus 30:1) (7)
- 16 He asked Jesus, 'What is truth?' (John 18:38) (6)
- 19 Are (Romans 13:1) (5)
- 20 'You are to give him the name Jesus, because he will \_\_\_\_\_ his people from their sins' (Matthew 1:21) (4)



# What a Christmas



The Bethlehem manger, shepherds, wise men, Jesus, Mary and Joseph – it's all so familiar to older people, who are shocked to hear that younger generations may be hazy or ignorant of them. Aren't they part of everyone's education?

Yet the first Christmas was restricted to just a few. What 21st Century Christians proclaim as the most significant event in history began in a remote corner of the Roman Empire, without the pomp and publicity we associate with kingship and power. What modern media have called 'The Greatest Story Ever Told', escaped everyone's attention in first century Palestine.

This year, Christmas is going to be a busier celebration than last year, but probably not yet back to the normal fuss we usually make each December. The streets will be crowded, but shops may struggle with supplies. Parties will take place, but many people will feel reluctant join in. Family gatherings are allowed again, but the vulnerable may hesitate. Christmas services will be held, but as singing has the potential for droplet and aerosol transmission, music will be muted this year. A Christmas without many carols!

Many will struggle to hold their 'usual' Christmas. Yet God does not neglect us. This may be the very opportunity to rekindle or deepen our faith in what really matters about Christmas. Away from the hordes, perhaps completely alone this Christmas, we may sit quietly and allow our heavenly Father to draw near to us. We may picture Mary inviting us to gaze with her at her Son, born to save us from our sins. In the silence of our imagination, we may join the chorus of angels announcing His birth to the shepherds:

"Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace to those on whom His favour rests."

It was that chorus which inspired an American Minister, Edmund Sears, to write the Christmas hymn, 'It Came Upon a Midnight Clear'. Sears, troubled by the world's turbulent history and failure to hear the Christmas message, was himself recovering from a breakdown. Written in 1849, his words have a timeless ring

about them:

Yet with the woes of sin and strife  
The world has suffered long;  
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled  
Two thousand years of wrong;  
And man, at war with man, hears not  
The love-song which they bring;  
Oh, hush the noise, ye men of strife,  
And hear the angels sing.

**Ven John Barton**

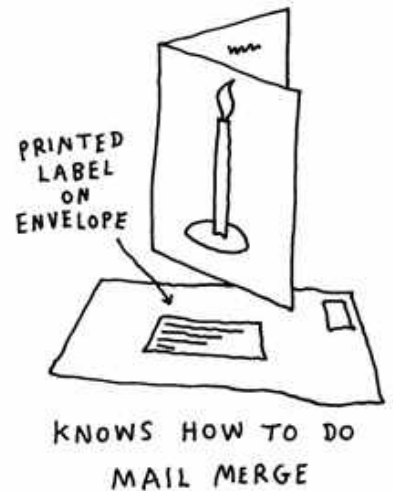
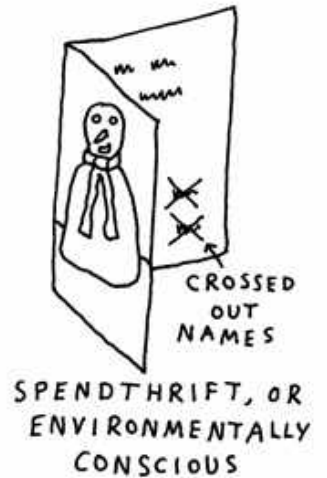
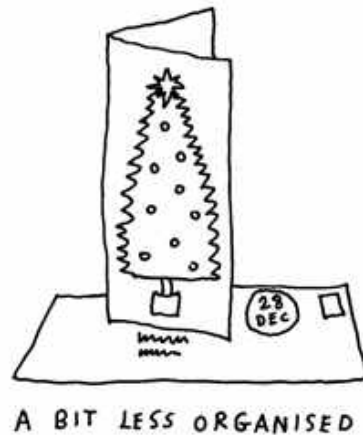
## **Advent**

Waiting is not popular in our culture, when so much can be obtained simply at the press of a button! Advent, when we wait for the coming of Christmas, is also an opportunity to learn what it means to be waiting for the promised return of Jesus. He says: 'It's like a man going away: he leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with their assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch. Therefore, keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back' (Mark 13:34-35).

We live between Jesus' first and second comings and this parable reminds us of the need to watch and wait, as disciples living faithfully for Him. It reminds us of two kinds of waiting: passive and active. Imagine you're at the railway station, awaiting the arrival of a train. On the platform a man is asleep, as he thinks there is plenty of time before the train arrives. He is passively waiting. There is also a small boy on the platform who is excited about the train coming. He can't sit still and constantly looks down the track to see if the train is coming. He is actively waiting, for he expects the train to arrive at any moment.

Advent gives us a choice: how will we wait for Jesus' coming? Passive waiting doesn't require much attention on our part. We can live our Christian life pre-occupied with our own concerns, rather than looking to God. However, active waiting involves an eager expectation, as we await Jesus' return or simply look to him coming to us today. All we want is to be found faithful as His disciples. There is nothing more important than being ready to meet our Master!

# CHRISTMAS CARDS



CartoonChurch.com

## Crossword Answers

**ACROSS:** 1, Tabernacle. 7, Absalom. 8, Incas. 10, Roes. 11, Captured. 13, Fright. 15, Cavell. 17, Cyclonic. 18, Herb. 21, Sonar 22, Amazing. 23, Settlement.

**DOWN:** 1, Taste. 2, Bold. 3, Ramiah. 4, Abiathar. 5, Lucerne. 6, Sacrifices. 9, Saddlebags. 12, Theocrat. 14, Incense. 16, Pilate. 19, Exist. 20, Save



Together with local businesses, we are working to reduce the amount of food going to land fill. The pantry is regularly stocked with food that is near its sell by date but can still be used to feed bellies not bins.

St Thomas' Church Hall, Ashton in Makerfield

Tuesday 11am—12pm

Thursday 3pm—4pm

Saturday 11am—12pm

Sunday 3pm—4pm

£5 annual membership

Minimum £3 donation per visit with a wide range of foods available

Max 2 visits per week

Additional donations welcome.

Any additional monies shall be used to build a pantry and kitchen behind the church hall.





# Rob Carson's Film Review



## Top 17 films for 2022!

1. The Batman (TBA) Released: 4th March
2. Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness (TBA) Released: 6th May
3. Mission: Impossible 7 (TBA) Released: 30th September
4. Jurassic World: Dominion (TBA) Released: 10th June
5. Spider-Man: Into the Spider Verse II (PG) Released: 7th October
6. The Flash (TBA) Released: 4th November
7. Thor: Love and Thunder (TBA) Released: 8th July
8. Elvis (TBA) Released: 3rd June
9. John Wick: Chapter Four (15) Released: 27th May
10. Nightmare Alley (TBA) Released: 21st January
11. Fantastic Beasts: The Secrets of Dumbledore (TBA) Released: 8th April
12. Top Gun: Maverick (TBA) Released: 27th May
13. Don't Worry Darling (TBA) Released: 25th September
14. The Electrical Life of Louis Wain (12A) Released: 1st January
15. Black Adam (TBA) Released: 29th July
16. Turning Red (U) Released: 11th March
17. Scream (TBA) Released: 14th January

## **Dune (12A)**

**Director:** Dennis Villeneuve

**Stars:** Timothee Chalamet, Rebecca Ferguson, Josh Brolin, Oscar Isaac, Stellan Skarsgard, Jason Momoa, Zendaya, Dave Bautista, Stephen McKinley Henderson, Javier Bardem, and Charlotte Rampling

**Released:** Out Now!

**The Verdict:** Cinema is at its most rich and vibrant when experiencing new worlds and taking large risks, and there isn't a much larger risk than adapting a story for the second time for the big screen that previously had proved divisive and, some might have said, just didn't work. In 1984, David Lynch adapted the story of Dune for the big screen after many more ambitious efforts had fell through and whilst a cult classic, not everyone would argue its perfect at all. So, adapting this story again is a big risk, not least from a director whose work is so perfect but his last attempt at a risky proposition (a sequel to Blade Runner, a cult classic but also a flop upon release) proved so good yet still failed to find its audience. But regardless of how it works financially, this risk has paid off in spades as the movie is a triumph from first frame to last.

Bolstered by a superb cast filled with terrific performances, naturally the stand outs being Rebecca Ferguson and Timothee Chalamet as they deal with a lot of the heavy lifting of the plot but really memorable turns from Skarsgard, Isaac, Momoa and Rampling also with great support from Brolin, Bautista and Bardem to name just a few (Zendaya makes a great impression and you got a sense she'd be in more of the film than she is, but it's mainly laying the groundwork for the now confirmed second part).

This is a film rich in scale, depth, plot and themes with a really great interconnecting plot thread of machinations, characters and destinies (maybe best described as Game of Thrones in space, even if the story predates Thrones by a long distance) and so sumptuous in its visuals that the only way to truly do it justice is to see it on the biggest screen possible - every frame is worthy of going in a gallery and the reaction to most scenes is just to sit open mouthed and in utter awe. This is a movie so terrific from start to finish and so jaw dropping and engaging and exciting and thrilling, that the best thing to say is just to sample it for yourself... you won't, for even a second, be disappointed.

**Rating:** 10/10

# Wordsearch

s	e	c	r	e	t	l	y	n	e	w	j
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**Windsor House, 232 Scholes, Wigan T: 01942 820526 • Whitley House, 439 Gidlow Lane, Beech Hill T: 01942 829200**

**Elliot 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**



# Services during December



Thursday 2nd	9.45am	BCP Communion at St Thomas'
Sunday 5th	9.00am 10.45am 1.00pm 6.30pm	Morning Worship at St Thomas' Toy Service at St Thomas' Toy Service at St Luke's Holy Communion at St Thomas
Thursday 9th	9.45am	BCP Communion at St Thomas'
Sunday 12th	9.00am 10.45am 1.00pm	Morning Worship at St Thomas' Worship Together at St Thomas' Christingle with Holy Communion at St Luke's
Thursday 16th	9.45am	BCP Communion at St Thomas'
Sunday 19th	9.00am 10.45am  1.00pm  6.30pm	Morning Worship at St Thomas' Nativity led by our young people and families with baptism at St Thomas' Family Worship led by our young people at St Luke's Carol Service at St Thomas'
Thursday 23rd	9.45am	BCP Communion at St Thomas'
Friday 24th	4.00pm 8.00pm 11.00pm	Christingle at St Thomas' Holy Communion at St Luke's Holy Communion at St Thomas'
Saturday 25th	10.30am	Holy Communion at St Thomas' (bring your toys along too!)
Sunday 26th	10.00am 11.00am	Holy Communion at St Thomas' Family Worship at St Luke's
Thursday 30th	9.45am	Morning Worship at St Thomas'





# News from our churches



Here we are the last edition of the magazine for 2021 and what a year it has been. In last year's December edition I remarked on the feverish activity which had taken place in the church building in preparation for the start of the reorder scheme. A scheme which, despite unexpected hurdles was completed in July and we are now enjoying the benefits of the flexibility which the reorder has given us. It is a community facility and I look forward to our community in Ashton discovering the many and varied uses to which it can be put. Good examples have been Joanna and Michael's wedding ceremony which was followed by the transformation of the church into venue for the reception and the Halloween trail when several hundred children and parents came to enjoy the hospitality provided.

Whilst mentioning the building, we are still looking for some one with media skills to prepare a promotion brochure detailing the facilities offered. I look forward to hearing from an eager volunteer who can contact me on 205136.

On the subject of volunteers I have been very disappointed with the response to my appeals for help with the various jobs needed to ensure that our church runs as smoothly as possible. The October edition of the magazine set out the areas where we are desperately short of volunteers. To date we have had volunteers to control the heating and for the position of Foundation Governor at St Thomas' School. I am sure that there must be others who can feel the call to assist. I am setting out again what we desperately need :-

- A small team to manage the distribution of the St Thomas and St Luke's edition of the church magazine.
- Volunteers to take on magazine delivery routes. Thanks to those who previously did this and have returned to the task.
- Volunteers to organise our support of the Leprosy Mission basically it involves looking after the envelopes collected in church during leprosy week and possibly a fund raising coffee morning or similar.
- Volunteers to organise our support of Christian Aid week.

- Volunteers to assist the wardens and deputies with the administration of church services in effect the role of sides person.
- As mentioned above, we urgently need a person with media skills to make the facilities which our church can now offer as widely known as possible.
- Volunteers to assist with the maintenance of our two graveyards particularly Heath Road.

Once again I am indebted to our friend David Fearnley for another article for our magazine.

Over the years David has provided many articles all of local interest and of the church groups; Barbara regularly informs her members and indeed the readers of the Mothers Union news. St Thomas' school also contribute regularly and I think that it would be very helpful if other church organisations were to let me have details of their programmes and activities for inclusion in the part of the Hub magazine reserved for St Thomas and St Luke's news. This will keep everyone informed of what is happening in the church and provide useful publicity.

### **MEMORIES OF 1950's ASHTON IN MAKERFIELD**

A few personal recollections of 1950's Ashton:-

Do you remember the electric cables suspended high above Bolton Road, Gerard Street and Warrington Road to power the trolley buses? The sparks given off from the cables and the conductor with a long pole reversing the connecting rod to the cable so that the trolley bus could move in the opposite direction. The trolley buses gave way to motorized buses. The No. 1 ran from Riding Lane, on Bolton Road – Ashton, the fare being 1d.

No double glazing, no central heating, Anderson air raid shelters still standing in some backyards, blackout roller blinds still attached above indoor window frames and gas masks still kept in a cupboard. Few TV's, gigantic whistling pre-war wireless sets, wind-up gramophones, 78rpm records with the little dog logo of the HMV record company. Few indoor bathrooms or toilets.

No bins but a midden at the end of the yard accessed by a hinged door about 4 feet off the ground in the “backs” behind the house. Every so often a council man would enter the midden and spade the contents into the dustcart. Similarly, the outdoor toilet, usually whitewashed inside, consisting of a board with a circular hole and a can with handles beneath, would be emptied by men with big leather gloves and a big hook to drag out the can and manhandle it to the lorry. Large amounts of pink disinfectant powder was liberally spread around. Izal toilet paper or torn up newspapers. In many houses a flush toilet was later fitted into the outdoor building. In winter there was the strong smell of burning paraffin lamps to prevent the outdoor toilet freezing. Things slightly improved with the coming of a tanker lorry that through a long nozzle siphoned the contents into the tanker. Yes we did live through such times.

Foot pedaled “Singer” sewing machines. No fridges but a meat safe. No washing machines but a dolly tub. A blue substance called “dolly blue” was placed in the tub to whiten the washing. A stick with a metal cone at the end called a posser or a stick with a 4 legged stool at the end called a dolly was used to agitate the clothes in the dolly tub. A washboard for hand washing of clothes. Remember the “Robin Starch” packet with the robin bird logo? No tumble dryer but a hand turned mangle whose rollers squeezed out the water from the clothing. A clothes rack above the fireplace to dry the clothes or a clothes horse or maiden in front of the fire. Line after line of drying clothes suspended by clothes props were a regular feature in the “backs” behind the terraced housing.

A loud shout in the street was the arrival of the rag and bone man collecting old clothes in exchange for a dolly blue or a donkey stone that was used to clean, shine and polish the front doorstep. The ringing of a hand-bell in the street was the signal that the Frederick’s ice cream seller had arrived riding a three-wheel bicycle supporting a fridge containing dry ice and ice cream. Mr. Gillett the fishmonger delivering fish with his horse and cart. In summer the visit of a Romany traveller offering to sharpen scissors and knives, to tell your fortune or to sell wooden clothes pegs. Women potato picking in local fields during the school October half-term.

Whatever happened to the things that children made to amuse themselves? Do you remember the cart made from four pram wheels, a board to sit on and steered by a rope fastened to the front axle? Or using a stick with an old

stocking to provide a net to catch cockies (local term/small fish) or stickleback fish in the Skitters stream? Rope swings in Skitters wood? In summer most of Ashton assembled on Gerard Street to view the walking day and the service held on Crompton's football field, Warrington Road. Crowds of people in their Sunday best walking up Low Bank Road for the Holy Trinity walking day and the service on the green at the end of the procession.

**David A. Fearnley.**

## **Always Ashton Halloween Trail**

On Saturday 30th October we were delighted to once again open our doors to about 600 adults and children as they completed the trail around town.

It was the first time that many people had been in church since the refurbishment and we were thrilled with the many positive comments about how lovely it looked and how wonderful the space now is.

COVID restrictions meant that we had to organise things very differently to previous years. The church was set out with tables with family groups being served at tables with hot drinks and wrapped biscuits. Each table was sanitised between groups. At the busiest time, people were queuing outside waiting for a free table, not wanting to miss the opportunity to come in out of the cold.

Children were given goodie bags as they left with the theme of Jesus being the Light of the World. These contained a simple craft, colouring / activity sheet, sweet and information sheet giving the Christian history of Halloween plus an invite to church groups.

We are very grateful to everyone who helped with the preparation and running of the event and to the many donations of biscuits. This could not have happened without you all.

Please pray that next year we are able to run the crafts in church and that more people will step up to help.

**Chris and Anne Wooff**

## **Sunday Club**

Sunday club meet each week during our 10:45am worship. Our youngest worshippers and their families go to the church hall to learn about our mighty God.

Children this 1/2 term have been looking at creation, God's provision for us and our responsibility to be good stewards of our world in line with COP26. They've baked at least twice - bread for harvest and last week cakes for stir up Sunday to encourage us to share the good news of Jesus.

For the weeks of Advent they are learning about the birth of Jesus through the eyes of the Angels, the Shepherds and the Wise Men which shall culminate in the nativity service on 19th December. We hope you can come to this and enjoy our nativity.

We are always looking for more adults to lead/help at Sunday club, even being willing to set up and pack away is a huge help. Prayerfully consider whether you could join the team and share the joy of telling the good news of Jesus to our children.

**Jan x**

## **Angels**

Angels, Gods messengers, play such an important part in the Christmas story. God prepared the way for the arrival of Jesus by sending an angel to Mary then to Joseph. When Jesus was born, reports of a heavenly host of Angels singing in joyful celebration was witnessed by shepherds out in their fields. As you decorate your homes this Christmas, I wonder if you'd consider putting a display of angels or one angel in a window as a reminder of who is to come at Christmas.



If you do add angels to your display, please take a photograph and send it to our web site, Facebook or WhatsApp it to Jan on 07764357403 and she'll get it onto the web site. In church throughout Advent there will be an opportunity to write prayers which will be folded into the body of paper angels which will then be displayed in church.

# St Thomas' School Reporters

This month in our school, we have been very busy. We have been learning so many new things!

A couple of weeks ago, we took a visit to St Thomas's Church where we did fun activities and got to know more about our local community. It was very enjoyable. Whilst we were there we enjoyed completing fun activities such as making prayer wheels, decorating stained glass windows and having a tour around our church. We also enjoyed having some refreshments such as juice and biscuits. We would like to thank all of the kind volunteers at St Thomas's Church. We hope we can visit church again soon!

Very recently, we have started selling poppies. Every day, we go to all of the classes and collect donations for the Royal British Legion. We have also sold other items such as wrist bands, snap bands and poppy keychains. We have had many assemblies on Remembrance Day and have learned about the importance of this time of year.

Reception have been busy making fireworks out of toilet roll tubes that they have brought in from home. Year 1 have been very busy learning the story of Cinderella and enjoying some new maths work. Year 2 have enjoyed learning all about dragons and how they lived. Year 3 have been busy understanding how rocks and fossils are formed. Up in Year 4, they have been designing and making dragon's eyes as part of their English topic. In Year 5, they have been busy learning all about Crime and Punishment and how people used to be treated. In Year 6 this week we have been learning about Rudyard Kipling and we have been reading his Just So Stories. It's been a lot of fun.

On Monday evening, many of us were helping out at Open Evening. We represented our school and answered many questions. Our House Captains and Vice Captains showed parents around our classrooms. Our Ethos Team also helped out parents and said a few words at the front. We really enjoyed getting to know all of the new parents and their children!

**Amelia , Jamie and Archie (Y6 Reporters)**

# Mothers' Union



## Branch Diary:

What a delight it is to be able to tell you that once again this year we will be holding our Christmas Carol Service, but please note that it is on **Wednesday 22nd December**, a week later than usual. I look forward to being able to welcome our members, all the ladies of our Church and also the ladies from other Churches in Ashton. It is an open invitation to come along and enjoy the traditional carols, lessons and fellowship with mince pies and tea or coffee.

It is also a pleasure to be able to resume our post Christmas Meal at Bryn Masonic Hall for all our friends on **Friday 21st January 2022**. I know that this event is always enjoyed and if you haven't yet got your menu then let me know.

## Subs

I hope that you will all have received your subs slips by now. Will you 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 another fraught with difficulties. We have continued to work together as branch and have, at long last, been able to return to actually meeting in person. At the close of the year I would once again like to thank our Secretary, Treasurer and the Committee, all the members of our congregations and our speakers for their continued support to both me and the branch throughout this unusual time.

Lord Jesus Christ, as we prepare for your coming, we read the words of the prophets written long before your birth, giving us hope and encouragement that all people will be united and the land will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord. Help us, Lord, to open our hearts and minds to these truths and to gladly receive you, our Saviour Jesus Christ.

**Amen**

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

with love and best wishes from  
**Barbara**



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**Donations:** Please place any donations in an envelope with your full name and amount written on it. Please post this through the Vicarage door. 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.

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

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- General
- Grave Maintenance
- Heath Road Graveyard
- Heating
- Fit for the Future

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from Barbara & Malcolm

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and **Clifford Harold Unsworth**

From Jack, Barbara, Ann Marie and John

In memory of our parents and loved ones

From Ron and Jean Boon

To the flower guild, in memory of loved ones

From Jean and Les Johnson

---



# The Registers



<b>Holy Baptism</b> 'We welcome them into the Lord's family'	
20 November	Saffron Daisy Darbyshire
21 November	Maryam Khaziravi
21 November	Ghazal Hatefi Roveis
21 November	Lena Hatefi Roveis
21 November	Liam Hatefi Roveis
21 November	Salim Rashidi
21 November	Eli Zohari
28 November	Cobey Ray Jackson
28 November	Autumn Norma Taylor Parkinson

<b>Funerals</b> 'May they rest in peace'		
30 November	Roy Parry	65

# St Thomas' and St Luke's Organisations

## Coffee Mornings

Tues 10am—12pm at St Thomas'  
Barbara Taylor  
205136

## Wednesday Weenies

Wed 1pm—2.30pm in Church Hall  
Jan Cornthwaite  
721626

## Mothers' Union

3rd Wed 7.30pm at St Thomas'  
Barbara Taylor  
205136

## Fairtrade Stall

3rd Sun 11.45am at St Thomas'  
Anne Wooff  
724207

## Asylum Seeker Support

3rd Sun 11.45am at St Thomas'  
Anne & Chris Wooff  
724207

## Fur Clemt Stubshaw

Mon 12pm—1pm at St Luke's  
Jennifer Harrison  
718618

## Litter Pick

3rd Sat 10am—12pm from Church Hall car park  
Chris Wooff  
724207

## Flower Guild

Meta Laites  
723679

## Bowling Club

Henry Hunter  
712709

## Duke of Edinburgh Scheme

Sun evenings in Church Hall  
Ceri Mansell  
727417

**For more information, please visit our website at [stthomasstluke.org.uk](http://stthomasstluke.org.uk)**

## Ashton Pantry Sue Thomas 07877704645

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Thursday & Sunday 3pm – 4pm

## Youth Clubs

GYM (ages 11+): Mon 3.45pm—5pm

JYC: (for Y3—Y6) Mon 5.45pm—6.45pm

Friday Nights: 7pm—8pm

11—18 year olds : Sun 7pm—8pm

## Children's Sunday Clubs at St Thomas' Karen Cunliffe 07721770305

Bubbles: Pre school

Xstream: Y3—Y6

Splash: Reception—Y2

Bell Tower: Y7—Y11

## Girl Guiding Rachel Starkie 718350

Rainbows: Tues 5.30pm

Brownies: Thurs 6.30pm

Guides: Tues 7.15pm

# St Thomas' and St Luke's Church Officials

## Sunday Morning Worship Local Mission

### Leaders

St Thomas': Jan Cornthwaite 721626  
St Luke's: Carole Pye 517318

### Readers

Tricia Hancox 201540  
Alan Harrison 718618  
Carole Pye 517318  
Helen Weavers 07796334457

### Assistant Wardens

St Thomas': Tony Cornthwaite 721626  
Paula Gillespie 711270  
St Luke's: Carol Pye 517318  
John Boon 204082

### St Thomas' Deputy Wardens

Barbara Taylor 205136  
Mansell High 727052

### Assistant Treasurers

St Thomas': Phil Hayton  
phaytonuk@yahoo.co.uk  
St Luke's: John Boon 204082

### Administration, Bookings and Advertising

Sue Thomas 727275  
sue.thomas@churchwigan.org

### Magazine Editor

Jess Bradley 07498323469  
magazine@stthomasstlukes.org.uk

### Freewill Offerings Secretary

Malcolm Taylor 205136

### Electoral Roll Secretary

Sue Thomas 07877704645

### Asylum Seeker Support

Anne & Chris Wooff 724207

### Children, Young People & Families

Sue Thomas 727275

### Flowers

Meta Laites 723679

### Church Architect

Bill Schafer 717300

### St Thomas' Worship Group

Mary Owen 203277

### St Thomas' Organist

Paul Tushingham 711085

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Vacant

[stthomasstluke.org.uk](http://stthomasstluke.org.uk)



St Thomas' and St Luke's  
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