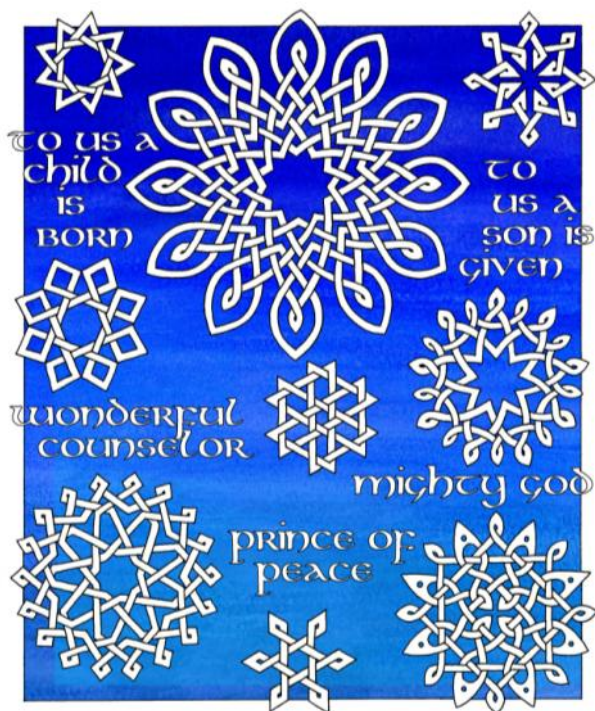


# **St.Thomas' and St. Luke's Ashton-In-Makerfield Church Magazine**

**Price : 50p**



December 2015

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

# Church Services in the Parish of St Thomas, Ashton-in-Makerfield

## Sundays

St Thomas's		St Luke's	
9.00a.m.	Holy Communion	8.30 a.m.	Holy Communion (1st Sunday Only)
10.45 am	Family Worship (1st Sunday Parade & 4th Sunday Family Communion)		Family Worship (2nd Sunday Family Communion)
6.30 p.m.	Evening Worship (3rd and 5th Sunday Holy Communion)	4.15 p.m.	Holy Communion (3rd Sunday Only)

## Weekdays

Thursday 9.45 a.m.	Holy Communion (BCP 1662)	Other services and Saints' Days as announced. Please see weekly notice sheet or visit website for dates, details or exceptions.
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**Parish Office:** St Thomas's Church Vestry, **Thursday 6.30 – 7.30 p.m:** For all enquiries regarding church matters and arranging baptisms and weddings. Contact - 01942 721484.

**Deadlines:** Handwritten material should be given to Malcolm Taylor, and email material to [stthomasandstlukesmagazine@gmail.com](mailto:stthomasandstlukesmagazine@gmail.com)

Deadline	January 2016	February 2016
Hand Written	6th December	10th January
Computer	13th December	17th January
Magazine Release	24th December	31st January

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## Important Parish Information

### Baptisms

Baptisms are held at St Thomas Church at 12.45 on the 2nd & 4th Sundays. Baptisms at St Luke's are at 11 am on the 3rd Sunday.

To qualify for baptism parents should live within the parish boundaries or be a regular worshipper at St Thomas's/St Luke's. Parents and Godparents should also be prepared to undertake baptism preparation classes.

### Marriage

You can marry in a C of E church of your choice if certain criteria are shown to be met. For details please contact the vicar or call in at Vestry Hour on a Thursday evening.

### Funerals

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



## Letter from the Vicar

I wonder what we would do without the information and advice that we find on the internet? Maybe, like a good few people that I talk to, your answer is “very well thank you, I don’t use it!” If you do search though you can find almost anything there. If you are stuck as you write your Christmas cards this year then you can even find ‘the top 10 Merry Christmas greetings for friends’, to give you a head start!



Thinking about that, I wonder what your Christmas greeting style is, and the message you convey? It may be along these lines: “I wrote a letter to Santa and told him to bring you everything you wanted for Christmas, so hopefully he will answer and make all your dreams come true.” (That’s number 4 on the list by the way). I’m pretty sure there are no young children reading this, so I can comfortably tell you that this won’t work! I’ve never yet heard of it happening.

Or maybe your style and your message is more like this: “This is the season of being together. It’s a time of hope and new beginnings. With this card I’m wishing you love and peace during Christmas.” (Number 2 on the list). Now that one is closer to the truth. The truth of new beginning, hope, love and peace that we know from the Bible.



The new beginning is the awesome birth of Jesus – a new beginning for God’s relationship with humankind all those years ago, and a new beginning for us as we recognize the baby Jesus as someone who this year will change our lives if we live as his disciples.

Amongst the competing Christmas messages that many find difficult, do I want to arrive at January feeling disappointed that I gave in to the



# Letter from the Vicar

pressures from advertisers and media for the perfect time and I've once again missed the point?

In the midst of Christmas preparation, we can find the most important message – one of hope, love, peace and the offer of new beginning – the precious gift of the birth of a Saviour. To truly understand the meaning of this message is to accept the gift this year. God offers and we choose, that's the way he works. "Yet to all who receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." (John 1:12).



**Jeremy Thomas**



## Christmas Services 2015



Sunday 6 Dec	St Thomas'	10.45am	Toy Service and Christingle
	St Luke's	11am	
Sunday 13 Dec	St Thomas'	10.45am	Crib Service
	St Luke's	11am	
Sunday 20 Dec	St Thomas'	6.30pm	Carol Service
Thursday 24 Dec	St Thomas'	3.45pm	Posada walk and service
	St Thomas'	11pm	Midnight Communion
	St Luke's	11pm	
Friday 25 Dec	St Thomas'	10.30am	Christmas Communion
	St Luke's	11am	
Sunday 27 Dec	St Thomas'	10.45am	Holy Communion
	St Luke's	11am	Family Worship



## *Bishop Paul's Christmas Message*

### **A family flees for its life.**

A family flees for its life. They have been living under the shadow of a murderous regime and they know that at any time the slaughter may reach them. They have no time. The journey is arduous and dangerous and there is no certainty of what they may find when they reach their destination.

This is a very present reality. It is the type of story we see almost every day on our news reports. The plight of the refugee, desperately crammed into boats trying to find a place of sanctuary. We feel sympathy, powerlessness, frustration. We look at the desperation and wonder how we have got to this in the 21st century. We call out and ask where God is in this suffering.



Yet this is God's story. The family are Jesus' family and the tale is of the flight to Egypt. In it, as we know, the Christ child is being whisked away from Herod's pogrom. In it the only option is to travel to a strange land, a land full of potential danger and to an uncertain future.

So God became a refugee and as such is in the refugee's story. And he calls us to follow him into that story, to get alongside those in distress and above all find appropriate ways to welcome the stranger to our door.



In many ways the welcome of the stranger is central to the Christmas story. It is a harsh story in a difficult setting and it is one we dress up to be a picture postcard at our peril. Jesus's parents had been immigrants in Bethlehem struggling to find a place of shelter where they



## *Bishop Paul's Christmas Message*

could have their child. They had been turned away many times and it was left to the poorest in society to offer a true, sacrificial welcome to the Lord of all. How often is that the case? The rich turn the needy away while those who could be seen to be in need are the ones that offer most love and comfort.

So Christ's story compels us to offer a proper Christmas welcome this year. And Christ's teaching reinforces that command. The command that the God of justice has echoed over the centuries. The command that is writ large throughout scripture. Jesus told us to look after the cold, the homeless, the hungry. Our neighbours. But Christ knew what that experience was like and Christ knew that all of humanity needs that love.

The media image of Christmas is one of self-indulgence. The time to spend, to party, to eat, drink and be merry. Jesus wouldn't want to deny you pleasure – he helped one party in Cana really get swinging.



But if Christ's story, the story of his beginnings, the story of his life is to continue to have lasting relevance and meaning then we should pause in the indulgence of our selves. And this Christmas look to indulge someone else. Support them, love them, aid them and bring them the welcome that so many denied to our Lord.



Then we can use Christmas to remind people that the birth of Christ made a bigger difference to the world than just a picture postcard story.

Happy Christmas.



## **Daily / Weekly Events in our Church - December 2015**

<b><u>Monday</u></b>	Morning Prayer.	9.00am
<b><u>Tuesday</u></b>	Morning Prayer.	9:00am
	Coffee Morning. (Church Hall)	10:00am - 12:00pm
	Church open for prayer.	7.30-8.30pm
<b><u>Wednesday</u></b>	Morning Prayer.	9.00am
<b><u>Thursday</u></b>	Holy Communion.	9:45am
	Princes Pantry. (St Luke's)	11:30am - 1:00pm
	Vestry hour.	6.30-7.30 pm

*These are the usual events in our church, please see the notices for details of other activities taking place. For details of organisations and who to contact see back page of magazine.*

**Streets for Prayer:** This month we are praying for the people who live and work in **Chester Drive, Ripon Drive, Norwich Avenue, Tintern Avenue and Blenheim Road**





# Parish News



## **ADVENT SUPPERS - and Epiphany**

On the three Advent Thursdays leading up to Christmas Eve, we will be reconsidering the Christmas Story from an outsider's point of view - outside.

In the garden of 39 Edward Drive - around a brazier, with boots, coats, umbrellas and gloves - we will think about the Annunciation; the journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem; and the Shepherds - with readings, and carols - finishing with basic supper in front of the stove.



So, at 7 30 pm, for half an hour, drop-in, re-consider, and break bread (com pan) in companionship with other hardy souls - and party together at Epiphany.

Thursday 03 Dec 7.30 30 MINUTES WITH MARY Beer and pizza

Thursday 10 Dec 7.30 30 MINUTES ON THE ROAD Wine and olive bread

Thursday 17 Dec 7.30 30 MINUTES WITH THE SHEPHERDS Port and cheese

Thursday 07 Jan 7.30 30 MINUTES WITH THE MAGI Whiskey/Brandy and smoked ham

***Maurice Smith***

## **THANK YOU**

As we come to the end of another year I want to say thanks to all involved in the production and distribution of our Church Magazine. Month by month many people quietly get on with their particular part. I do however reserve a really big thank you to Rachel our Magazine editor for ensuring that each month we receive a Magazine of which we can be proud.

***Malcolm***



# Mothers Union

## DIARY:

**Thursday 3rd December** Mothers Union Deanery  
Advent Service at Wigan Parish Church 2.00pm.



**Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> December** Christmas Carol Service in  
St Thomas Church at 7.30pm. This special Service is  
open to all ladies of our Church and also the ladies from other Churches in  
Ashton. Come and enjoy fellowship you will made welcome and encouraged  
to join us for Tea, Coffee and Mince Pies in Church after  
the Service.



**On Friday 15<sup>th</sup> January** Our belated Christmas Meal is  
once again at Bryn Masonic Hall. The occasion is open to  
all ladies of the Parish and friends and we look forward to seeing our  
friends old and new at what is always a very enjoyable evening. If you wish  
to come please sign the list at the back of Church.

**Coops Foyer** You will remember that it is at this time of year that we think  
about the young people at Coops and their Christmas celebrations. If you  
would like to donate a gift I will be delighted to deliver it. Please mark the  
parcel male or female.

It is here again, and so quickly, the end of another busy year in the life of  
our Branch. I must take this opportunity to again of thank our Secretary,  
Treasurer and the Committee and all the members of our Parish for their  
continued support throughout the year.

*As we begin our advent journey  
we pray for Gods guidance  
to lead us to the place of peace  
As we carry the burdens of the*

*year gone by  
 We pray for a lifting of our spirits  
 On every step of our star-led way  
 we pray for new grace for the year  
 ahead  
 In seeking the place of the  
 Christ-child  
 We give thanks that the risen Lord  
 accompanies us every step of the way*



*May the salvation of God  
 through the new born Christ  
 fill our hearts with wonder and praise  
 this Advent time and always.  
 Amen*

**Wishing you and your families a very peaceful and happy  
 Christmas.  
 Barbara**

*Thank you Barbara for all your dedication to our branch of the Mothers  
 Union, it is really appreciated.*

### FREE WILL OFFERINGS— OCTOBER 2015

DATE	AMOUNT	NO. OF ENVELOPES	AVERAGE PER ENVELOPE
05/10/15	239.20	68	3.52
12/10/15	279.52	53	5.27
19/10/15	241.66	73	3.31
26/10/15	270.83	76	3.56
TOTAL	1031.21	270	
AVERAGE	257.80	68	3.82



## St. Thomas' C of E Primary School

### Fantastic Fossil Assembly



After expert science teaching from Mrs Haselden about rocks and fossils to her Y3 class, the whole class wanted to pass on their new knowledge to the rest of the school and their families. On Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> of October, all of the Y3 class took part in a very informative assembly. Each child took part in different ways. Some brilliant songs were sung and lots of facts about rock and fossil formation were presented wonderfully to the audience.

Y3 used very impressive scientific vocabulary leaving everyone very impressed and full of new knowledge. It was also fantastic to be able to meet Joey the dinosaur, he was the best dinosaur ever!

Thank you to all our talented Y3 class, we all learned new things from your amazing assembly.

### Teacher gets her hair cut off!



Please don't be too alarmed by the title of this article. Let me reassure you that it was an extraordinary fund raising event run by Mrs Pearson, our Y5 teacher. Mrs Pearson in her spare time has organised and raised funds for Willow Brook Hospice for quite some time. To add even more to the total she has raised, she planned a raffle for the pupils in school. And the prize was quite unbelievable, a chance to cut off Mrs Pearson's hair!

On Friday 6<sup>th</sup> of November during the celebration assembly, the event took place. The atmosphere was tense with nerves. The two winners, a Reception pupil and Y6 pupil, each cut off a plait of hair. Everyone enjoyed the unique event and admired Mrs Pearson's bravery. The hair is being donated to The Little Princess Foundation where it will be made into a wig to help a child with cancer. A big thank you to everyone who bought raffle tickets. The total raised to date from this event and other events run by Mrs

Pearson is £525.00! It has to be said, Mrs Pearson looks wonderful with her new shorter hairstyle!

### **Monthly Pupil Prayer**

*Thank you God for the rocks and soils and all the fossils we find,  
The information these tell us about the past is amazing,  
Thank you for all our teachers who help us learn more about your world,  
Thank you for our school and the resources we have to discover more new things.*

*Thank you for the people who have gone to war to keep us safe & give us freedom,  
We pray for peace in your beautiful world and we ask you to look after the injured and suffering people.  
Thank you for being in my life, I love you more than ever.  
Amen*

By Megan Artus, year 3.

‘The world and all that is in it belongs to the Lord; the earth and all who live on it are his’.

Psalm 24:1

**Christmas blessing to you all,  
Elaine Mateus**



### **St Wilfred's Brunch**

On Saturday 5th December, please come along and join members of St Wilfred's Church for Brunch in St. Thomas' Church Hall between 10am and 1pm.

The event is to raise funds for the Children of Bethlehem and a school for disabled children in Columbia supported by the church.



# 1<sup>st</sup> Ashton in Makerfield Boys Brigade



November has been a very busy month for our Company.

We began with our Annual Christmas Fayre where we raised a total of just over £616 so a massive thank you to all who helped or contributed in any way.

The Hamper was won by Mary Hardman.

The Teddy was called Dusty and was won by Kayleigh Speakman  
Guess how many marshmallows was won by Jan Cornthwaite – there were 324

Guess how many gummi bears was won by an Anchor boy, Matthew Bullen – there were 84.

Raffle prizes were won by Helen Coffey, Wendy Conboy, Jean Boon, Mary Owen, Hilda Herd, Paula Bullen, Nancy Andrew, Linda, Carole Pye, Susan Hurst, Bev Lyon, David Phelps, Kayleigh Speakman, Maureen Dalton, Margery Jackson and Lara Smith.



For the Remembrance Service we were excellently represented by our Company and 6 of our Anchor Boys took part for the first time so well done to all.

All the boys are still working hard towards their badges learning, making and doing.



We are lucky to have an ex-Company young man who is helping some of the Company boys to learn the drums so that we may parade again.

We are now looking forward to the Christmas celebrations, parties etc  
From the beginning of December the Officers and Senior Boys will be going out with Father Christmas and the Rotary Float so look out for us.

Thank you all for your support and we wish you a blessed Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Don't miss  
this fantastic community  
Christmas event!

# Ashton Christmas Lights Switch on and Christmas Markets

**Friday 4th December**

at **Ashton Market** from 5-8pm

- 
- 25 + Stalls
  - Santa's grotto
  - Real Reindeer
  - Funfair
  - Mulled Wine & Food
  - Face painting
  - Choir & Singers
  - Music
  - Lights Switch on at 6.30  
at Ashton Library

Meet  
**Santa**  
and his  
reindeer

Welcome to  
**Ashton**

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Sure Start Children's Centre

Let your child meet Santa in his grotto (FREE). Then take a break where you can watch and enjoy the lights switch on! Your child may be the lucky one to switch on the lights!!

**Wigan**  
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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

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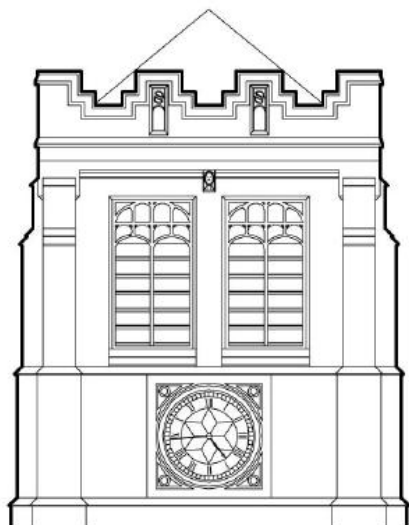
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*All buffets ordered can be delivered to either the venue or the home.*

**We have varied hot & cold buffet menus as well as a varied choice of set meal menus, ensuring that all requirements can be met.**

**All menus can be adapted to suit individual customer requirements.**

**References and Testimonials are available on request.**

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**Directors: G Bailey, C Bailey and L Bailey  
VAT Number 768/1716/00 Company Reg No. 4172616**



# St Thomas' Flowers



DATE	LADIES ON DUTY
5TH DEC	Mrs Laites, Mrs Malley, Mrs Vella, Kayleigh Speakman
12TH DEC	Mrs Edwardson, Mrs Cook
19TH DEC	ALL LADIES—CHRISTMAS FLOWERS
26TH DEC	ALL LADIES—CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

FLOWERS IN CHURCH DURING DECEMBER		
DATE	ALTAR	LADY CHAPEL
6TH DEC	In loving memory of Gwen Dickenson, a dear wife, mother and grandma from Joe and family	In memory of all loved ones from Annie Bailey and family
13TH DEC	In memory of Fred and Hannah Coward	In memory of all our loved ones from Mrs Wood and family & Mr and Mrs Lawton and family
20TH DEC	CHRISTMAS FLOWERS CONGREGATION	CHRISTMAS FLOWERS CONGREGATION
27TH DEC	CHRISTMAS FLOWERS CONGREGATION	CHRISTMAS FLOWERS CONGREGATION

## FLOWER GUILD DONATIONS

**In memory of all loved ones from Marian Bullen**

**In memory of a dear friend Peggy Knocker from Doreen Lee**

**Christmas memories of all loved ones from Margaret and Tony Herd**

# St Lukes' Flowers



FLOWERS IN CHURCH FOR DECEMBER	
DATE	
6TH DEC	Family memories From Pat Roberts
13TH DEC	From Carol Boardman & In memory of loved ones from the Knowles family
20TH DEC	CHRISTMAS FLOWERS CONGREGATION
27TH DEC	CHRISTMAS FLOWERS CONGREGATION



## TANGO

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



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**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**



## The Greatest Gift of All

The following article was first published in Woman Alive, the magazine for today's Christian woman ([www.womanalive.co.uk](http://www.womanalive.co.uk))

We'd been going to church every Sunday for as long as I could remember. Third pew from the front and always on the left hand side. You'd find us there each week; me, mum and David; saying our prayers, singing joyful hymns and greeting the other church goers with polite smiles and brief exchanges.

"How lovely to see you!"

"How are you?"

"We're fine and you?"

"Oh yes. Fine thank you."

"Hope to see you next Sunday."



And on it went, week on week. It always seemed a bit of a surreal experience for me-church. I'd tag along each week with mum and David but would struggle to connect with some of the liturgy: 'word became flesh' and all that. But I never dared to question. Mum and David both seemed to connect with God in a way I never could. They spoke the words of the service with such confidence and enthusiasm and I never caught them counting the number of women's hats during another of the vicar's dreary sermons. I felt a bit of an outsider at time; not part of God's chosen elect. Yet dad always made me feel better.

Sunday was dad's 'relaxing day' after a busy week at work, or so he said. He only came to church for Christmas day and funerals and, even then, he would sit squashed into the pews; twiddling his thumbs and fiddling with his shirt collar. We'd play 'I spy' and then hangman on the back of the service sheet until mum would nudge us back into submission. Dad was my ally. He never stopped mum from taking me to church but sometimes I would hear them arguing about it at night. Mum told me that she prayed for me and dad every day and knew that one day we would come to know 'the amazing nature of God's grace'. I wish I had the confidence that she did. Her faith and belief seemed as solid as a rock compared to my shaky doubts and uncertainties.



Christmas was always my favourite time of year growing up. I loved the bright lights, rich food and general merriment that shone on people's faces. Even at church I felt something special about that time of year. Singing carols with gusto, holding a lit Christingle and dressing up in old tea towels and blankets to re-enact the story of the Saviour's birth. Everything felt special and magical. Even dad got caught up in the merriment; strewing lights all around the house and playing Christmas songs on the radio at every opportune moment. We'd decorate the house a week before Christmas and I'd marvel at every bauble-old and new-home made and shop bought-expensive and tacky. The tree always looked a mismatch of colours and sparkle but, compared to some of my friends' pristine colour coordinated creations, I wouldn't have wanted it any other way.



My favourite Christmas decoration was our wooden Nativity scene. Granny had bought it for my mum and dad when they celebrated their first Christmas together and it was brought out year on year without fail. I always thought the statues of Mary and Joseph looked so peaceful and content; staring down at the newborn babe lying in the manger. Dad always played hide and seek with the figures and we'd find Mary hiding in the wine cupboard or the Wise Men gorging on chocolates. I could spend hours sat in front of that stable; marvelling at a story thousands of years old but still the greatest story ever known. Christmas for me was a time for family; for lots of food, games and endless programmes on the BBC. It was perfect...but then mum grew ill.

Cancer. I loathe that word and everything it represents. It all happened so quickly, or so it seemed to me and David. I think mum and dad had known about it longer but were keeping it a secret; protecting us or so they say. Three months with endless hospital visits and the last few weeks spent in a hospice. Mum stayed strong throughout it all; joking about her hair loss and chatting cheerfully to her endless stream of church visitors. I wanted to tell them to go away. How could they possibly understand what we were going

through? How could this be part of God's big plan for my mum's life? In the end mum passed away peacefully in her sleep; clutching her holding cross and with a look of peacefulness etched across her face. Her pain was no more but ours had only just begun.

Dad took mum's death very badly and shrank away into himself. He barely acknowledged me and David anymore; aside from comments about making sure we ate enough and finished our homework on time. The vicar came to visit us quite a few times but dad would often feign a headache; leaving David to chat away whilst I stayed mute next to him on the couch. Months of this darkness and putting on a brave face continued. I stopped going to church, leaving David to visit alone. Dad said nothing about this; just carried on working and grieving. Endlessly grieving.

Christmas came around before we knew it. Our first Christmas without mum. How would we bear it? Dad didn't want us to get the decorations down from the loft but me and David persisted and eventually he reluctantly agreed. There was no jolly Christmas music playing in the background as usual; the tone was sombre and cheerless as we unpacked and decorated. Adding colour to a dark and empty house. We finally reached my favourite box- the crib scene- and dad and David took a step back, allowing me to carefully remove the paper wrapping of each character and place them in their timeless positions. Eventually I took a pace back and surveyed my finished handiwork but something, or someone, appeared to be missing. Then I saw it; the crib was empty! Where was baby Jesus?



All three of us searched high and low amongst the decoration boxes and in the loft but there was no sign anywhere of the baby. Dad and David shrugged it off as an ornament that had just got lost and could easily be replaced in the January sales. However, to me, the Nativity scene was damaged. It had lost its main purpose and I found myself deliberately avoiding looking at the crib when I entered the living room.

Soon Christmas day dawned bright and clear, with frost settling across the town like a blanket of icing. Me and David sat by the tree; steadily opening



the presents that mum had helped dad to choose and forcing ourselves not to cry. We needed to be strong for dad. Before long there was only one present left under the tree. It was labelled to all the family and had been printed in mum's elegant script. I passed it to dad to open and I could tell he was as shocked as we were by this mystery gift. Gently he peeled back the layers of wrapping and there, nestled inside, was the missing wooden figure of baby Jesus and a note. Fingers trembling, dad read the note aloud in as steady a voice as he could muster.



*My dearest family, I bet you were shocked to find this little baby missing from our Nativity scene this year. I feel that a lot of the time we forget the true meaning of Christmas and the special role that this baby had to play- both then and now. I know my death will have been hard for all of you but I want you all to know that where I am now there is no pain and I am with Jesus and my God. Jesus saved my life and I truly believe that he can save yours too. Death is not the end but the beginning of a new life in heaven with God. I look forward to seeing you again, but hopefully not too soon! Love always, Mum xx*

Dad gently lowered the piece of paper from his face and I saw his eyes were glistening with tears. Without saying a word he came and knelt before me and David; clasping baby Jesus tenderly in his hand, and he prayed out loud- asking God to forgive us our wrongs and to help us to keep Jesus at the centre of our lives from now on.

A strange sense of calm and peace filled my body as dad lovingly spoke these words and I prayed too, earnestly this time, echoing dad's call for forgiveness and peace. We sat like this for a long time; basking in the moment and in the sheer nature of God's glory. Finally we all opened our eyes and seeing the look of peace spread across dad's face, I knew then that everything was going to be okay. This Christmas mum had given us the best gift we could ever wish for- the gift of Jesus.



**Joanna Wooff**



# The Film Review

## With Rob Carson



Spectre (12A) Directed by Sam Mendes

Stars: Daniel Craig, Ralph Fiennes, Christoph Waltz, Lea Seydoux, Monica Bellucci, Dave Bautista, Naomi Harris, Ben Whishaw, Andrew Scott, and Stephanie Sigman

In a Nutshell: So, when you have a movie that is as truly fantastic as Skyfall was, not to mention a James Bond movie as well and a very very successful one... the easy route would be to crank out yet more standard fare for the money machine. But thankfully, all who are involved with this fantastic follow on to that gem have avoided quick speed and general laziness that has led them to crank out yet another Craig/ Bond masterpiece in their sweet time as opposed to just throwing it in your face and hoping you're satisfied. So with all that said, we now have Spectre.... and here comes the review part. To start with, it goes without saying that at this point.... Daniel Craig is terrific as Bond as usual, doing more and more of the emotional back story and soul searching that so helped Skyfall.... acknowledging both time and his own frailty as he goes through the plot. And what plot there is, a labyrinth of twists and turns and beautifully done action.... to say too much would be to unearth its secrets and surprises, and it's far too good to be doing any of that... but what I can say is that it is a beautifully layered story that harks back to all of Craigs' previous Bond outings as well as exploring a thrilling new plotline that is in the mould of proper vintage and classic Bond. You have a great support cast across the board from the dependable Waltz sinister charm to the terrific Andrew Scott as an shadowy new government figure and Ben Whishaw who is just wonderful once more as Q, not to mention Lea Seydoux as Madeline Swann... one of the most terrific Bond ladies yet plus Dave Bautista just having a ball as a deadly henchman. What more do you need? You've got a terrific cast, some of the best action sequences yet... a terrific plot with depth and danger and just about everything you could ever want.... James Bond will return and he'll be welcomed with open arms!

Rating: 10/10

The Walk (PG) Directed by Robert Zemeckis

Stars: Joseph Gordon Levitt, Charlotte le Bon, James Badge Dale, Sir Ben Kingsley, Clement Sibony, Cesar Domboy, Mark Camacho, Steve Valentine, Benedict Samuel, and Ben Schwartz

In a Nutshell: Robert Zemeckis has always been a dab hand at innovation and re-inventing what cinema can do... whether it's own favourite film ever Back to the Future or the animation hybrid of Roger Rabbit, the wonder of Forrest Gump, the visual tricks of Death Becomes Her or the very prescient Back to the Future sequel which is now doing wonders





# The Film Review

## With Rob Carson



at predicting what happened this year. Now, two years after the fine if not stellar Flight... he reinvents what it means to really experience a experience as he takes us up really high onto the high wire of one of the most audacious feats every attempted... Phillipe Petits high wire dance between the two towers of the World Trade Center. Consider it re-invented once more.... because before any other aspects of the movie, the sequence itself where Petit does his thing... is one of the most audacious, jaw dropping and beautiful sequences put on cinema for at least a good few years, and is the best argument you'll ever see for seeing a film at the cinema, or more ideally on a IMAX screen (it's no surprise this film has a special early IMAX release)... with it's depth, vision and wonder all combining for something that will make you speechless and breathless and leave you exhausted in the best way you can. It's helped by a lively fun cast, led by Joseph Gordon Levitt who while sporting a strong French accent that won't be for everyone, so completely becomes the character of Petit, that you can't help but be charmed by this crazy and lovely individual. The plot itself and the events that unfold prior to the big event are maybe less by comparison, but it's still thoroughly enjoyable and engaging throughout and really makes you root for the team leading up to the event while also really building up the suspense to the event itself. All in all, making for a fantastically enjoyable romp that culminates in something so completely unmissable that you'd need to be examined if you let this pass you by... it is a compulsory piece of cinematic history, and something to be cherished and awed at, on the biggest screen you can manage. Just hold your breath and hold on!



Rating: 10/10

### Also Seen:

The Martian (12A) 10/10

Hotel Transylvania II (U) 7/10

Pan (PG) 8/10

Crimson Peak (15) 8/10

### Also Out in December

Victor Frankenstein (12A) (Dec 4th)

Krampus (15) (Dec 4th)

The Night Before (15) (Dec 4th)

By the Sea (15) (Dec 11th)

Sisters (15) (Dec 18th)

In the Heart of the Sea (12A) (Dec 26th)

Daddy's Home (12A) (Dec 25th)

Star Wars: The Force Awakens (12A) (Dec 17th)

Snoopy and Charlie Brown: Peanuts Movie (U) (Dec 21st)



## St Thomas' December Donations



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

Thank you.

### 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.

### **With Thanks for Home Communion:**

Bill Sutton, Marion Bullen, Brenda Percival, David Bowen,

### **Other Donations:**

Visitors from Lake District, Anonymous, Pat Barry, James Peet (for help locating a grave)

With effect from the **May** magazine we will only be showing the total of all donations made in the month, not the breakdown across the different funds. A record of the amounts for each fund will still be kept for accounting purposes.

Funds currently in use are: Africa Fund, Audio Visual, Building & Maintenance, Church Hall, Garden of Rest, General, Grave Maintenance, Heath Road Graveyard, Heating and Youth worker

**TOTAL DONATIONS RECEIVED BY ST THOMAS'  
FOR DECEMBER 2015    £550**

If you want to discuss any issues around wills and legacies please ring the Parish Treasurer Sarah Riley on 01942 722747

## **Loving Christmas Remembrance of**

**Raymond Bullough.** A dear Husband, Dad and Grandad. Also remembering all our Loved Ones at this Special Time  
From Avis, Alison & Philip, Steven, Michelle, Rachel, Kate, Luke & Amy

**John Bailey,** a dearly loved Husband, Dad, Grandad and all loved ones. From wife Annie and Family

**Syd Hibbert,** a loving Husband, Dad and Grandad from Elaine and Family

**Frank Hardy,** a wonderful Husband, Dad and Grandad. Dearly Loved and Missed Always. From Iris, Anita, Jim, Tom, Andy and Claire

### **All Loved Ones** from Elsie Deluce

Special Christmas Memories of my Late Husband  
**William Keith Livesley,** from wife Rita and daughter Andrea

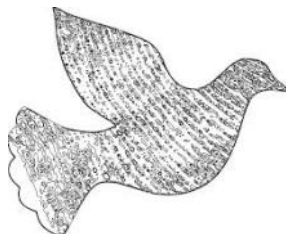
Fondest memories of a much loved son-in-law **Keith** from  
Mrs Hibbert and Family

Loving happy Christmas memories of my dear wife **Jean Millington**  
From loving husband Harry

Loving happy and fond Christmas Memories of my dear wife  
**Nora Heaton,** from her ever loving Husband Fred

## **Anniversary and Christmas Remembrance of**

A dear Brother **Keith** from Elaine



## **Birthday and Anniversary Remembrance of**

My loving Husband **Tony van der Boon** from Olive.  
Birthday (Oct 14th) and Anniversary (Nov 27th)

## **In Loving Memory of**

**Elizabeth Alice Winstanley** and **William Winstanley** and  
All Our Loved Ones from Nancy and George

**Harry Atherton**, a dear Husband, Dad and Grandad from  
Margaret Atherton

Tom and Pat McIlwee, a much loved Mum and Dad, Nan and  
Grandad, from Linda, Karen and families

## **Anniversary Remembrance of**

**Alan Deluce** (23rd Nov) from Joan and Ashley

**Arthur Shaw** (30th Dec), a loving Dad and Grandad,  
from Barbara, Malcolm and Family

A dearly loved Husband, Dad and Grandie, **Fred Waterworth**.  
Still Sadly Missed. From Alice, Susan, Colin & Jeff and Family

**Ted and Betty Grimshaw**, loving and much loved Parents-in-Law and  
Grandparents from Pat and the Boys

**Annie Pennington** (17th Dec) a dearly loved wife, mother and  
grandmother from David and Family

## **Birthday Remembrance of**

**Ken Parkinson** (Dec 6th), a dear Husband, Dad and Grandad.  
From his loving wife and family

**Ina McLaren** (Nov 15th), a dearly loved Mum and Grandma  
From Pauline, Kevin, Susan, Nick, Jack and Scarlett

**Hilda Kilshaw** (29th Dec) from loving husband Tom and Family



## **Christmas remembrance of**

A loving wife Connie from Ken & Dianne

Gordon Bailey, a dear son, brother & uncle from Mum & family

Gordon Bailey a dear dad & grandad from Hannah, Kofi & Zahra

Alan Cross and all loved ones from cousin Annie & family

## **Loving Christmas memories of**

A very dear mum & dad Joyce & Allan Coombes from Angela, Peter & family

## **Anniversary remembrance of**

a dear mum & nanna Nellie Thomas (5th Dec) from the family

## **In loving memory of**

Kenneth Cunliffe from Angela, Peter, Kerry, Kevin & families



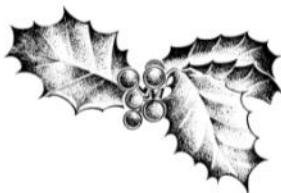


## HOLLY

We sing about the 'Holly and the Ivy' and prickly green leaves and red berries are everywhere in Christmas decorations.

In Scandinavian countries the holly is even known as the 'Christ-thorn' and it seems that the name of the holly actually came from the word 'holy'.

The holly reminds us of the death of Jesus – the sharp prickles on the leaves are like the crown on thorns that Jesus was forced to wear on the cross. The red berries remind us of the drops of blood that came where the thorns hurt his head.



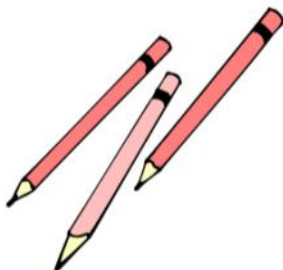
Holly is an evergreen, which means that it does not lose its leaves in the autumn, but keeps them all year round. And because its leaves are always green it is a symbol of eternal life.

## SHARP PRESENTS

A quick way to make little presents for all your class and friends.

You will need nice pencils, glue (spray glue is best) and Christmas wrapping paper with a small pattern on it. Choose round pencils rather than the hexagonal type.

Cut a strip of wrapping paper wide enough to wrap around the pencil and as long as the pencil. Put glue on the back of the paper and wrap it around the pencil. When the glue has dried; trim away any excess paper with small scissors.



**What did the werewolf write  
on his Christmas cards?**  
Best vicious of the season.

**What do  
elves sing to  
Santa?**  
Freeze a Jolly  
Good Fellow!







Dec15 ©deborah noble • parishpump.co.uk



# The Registers



## Funerals - "May they rest in peace"

3rd Sept.	Eileen Moore	Buttermere Avenue	75yrs
7th Sept.	Margaret Sutton	Windsor Road	63yrs
23rd Sept.	Philis Mobey		87yrs
30th Oct.	Gladys Jones	Vicarage Road	98yrs
5th Nov.	Margaret Daniel	Monica Terrace	73yrs
9th Nov.	Robert McManus	Thurlby Close	66yrs
10th Nov.	William Cunliffe	Severn Road	
13th Nov	Valerie Tennant	Belong Nursing Home	83yrs

## Holy Baptism -

"We welcome them into the Lord's family"



25th Oct.	Olivia Rose Marie Brown	Bryn Street
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# Church Organisations in the Parish of St Thomas, Ashton-in Makerfield

## Boys Brigade

**Captain:** Gareth Hamlett (07903866501 )

**Anchor Boys (Tuesday: 5.45 p.m.)**

Olwen Wright (389595)

**Junior Section (Tuesday 6.45 p.m.)**

Kat Duckworth (07517486188)

**Company Section (Tuesday: 7.30 p.m.)**

Contact Gareth Hamlett

## Girl Guides

**Rainbows (Tuesday: 5.30 p.m.)**

Anne Wooff (724207)

**3rd & 4th Ashton Brownies**

**(Wednesday and Thursday: 6.30 pm)**

Irene Taylor (Wednesday) (703410)

Susan Hughes (Thursday) (725291)

**St Luke's Brownies (Thurs: 6.15 p.m.)**

Susan Hughes (725291)

**3rd Ashton Guides & Ranger Guides**

**(Tuesday: 7.15 p.m.)**

Rachel Starkie (718350)

**Music Group** Mary Owen (203277)

**Sunday – 10.45 a.m.**

## St Thomas' Choir

**Sunday - 10.45 a.m. & 6.30 p.m.**

**Practice – Thursday: 7.00 p.m.**

Paul Tushingham (711085)

## Coffee Mornings at St Thomas'

**Tues - 10 a.m.**

**Thurs - (after 9.45 a.m. communion)**

Barbara Taylor (205136)

## Children's Sunday Clubs – 10.45 a.m.

**Bubbles (Pre-School)**

**Splash (R-Y2), Xstream (Y3-Y6)**

**Bell Tower (Y7-Y11)**

Sue Thomas (727275)

sue@stthomasandstluke.co.uk

## St Luke's Over Sixties

**Monday – 2.00 p.m.**

**Meet at Stubshaw Cross Labour Club**

## Wednesday Weenies

**Wed – 1.00 p.m.:** Jan Cornthwaite

(721626)

## St. Luke's Donation Secretary

Mike Pye (517318)

## Youth Work

Sue Thomas (727275)

## St. Luke's Treasurer

John Boon

## Duke of Edinburgh's Award (14-18+)

**Sunday 6.30pm Church Hall**

Ceri Mansell (727417)

## The PCC Secretary

Dorothy Burgess (701542)

dottib1@yahoo.co.uk

## St Thomas' Mothers' Union

**3rd Wed: 7.30 p.m.:** Barbara Taylor (205136)

## Flower Guild

Meta Laites (723679)

## Bowling Club

Henry Hunter (712709)

# Church Officials in the Parish of St Thomas, Ashton-in Makerfield

<p><u>Vicar</u>  <b>Rev Jeremy Thomas</b>  (727275)</p>	<p><u>Administrator</u>  <b>Rachael Campbell</b>  721 484 Parish office</p>
<p><u>Curate</u>  <b>Rev Helen Coffey</b>  (721962)</p>	<p><u>Ordained Local Minister</u>  <b>Rev Izzy Schafer</b>  (717300)</p>
<p><u>Readers</u>  <b>Malcolm Bold</b>      <b>Carole Pye</b>  (276379)                      (517318)  <b>Alan Harrison</b>  (718618)  <b>Tricia Hancox</b>  (201540)  <b>Scott Campbell</b>  (711086)</p>	<p><u>St Thomas' Church Wardens</u>  <b>Ken Laites</b>  (723679)  <b>Paula Gillespie</b>  (711270)  <u>Deputy Wardens -</u>  <b>Barbara Taylor</b>  (205136)  <b>Nigel Robinson</b>  (726597)</p>
<p><u>Electoral Roll Secretary</u>  <b>Paul Weston</b>  (202649)</p>	<p><u>St Luke's Church Warden</u>  <b>Carole Pye</b>  (517318)</p>
<p><u>Treasurer (St Thomas)</u>  <b>Sarah Riley</b>  (07712 584954)</p>	<p><u>Church Architect</u>  <b>Mr B. Schafer</b>  (717300)</p>
<p><u>Church Hall Secretary</u>  <b>Rachael Campbell</b>  721 484 (Parish Office)</p>	<p><u>St Thomas' Organist &amp; Choirmaster</u>  <b>Paul Tushingham</b>  (711085)</p>
	<p><u>F.W.O. Secretary</u>  <b>Jackie Wilson</b>  (712368)</p>
<p><u>Gift Aid Secretary</u>  <b>Clare Hayton</b>  (273183)</p>	<p><u>St Thomas' Donations Secretary</u>  <b>Anita Archer</b>  (760082)</p>
<p><u>Magazine Co-ordinator</u>  <b>Jack Stuart</b>  (726972)</p>	<p><u>Magazine Editor</u>  <b>Rachel Webster</b>  (273453 - contact for advertising)</p>