

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



February 2025

70p

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Parish Information

Baptisms

Baptisms (also called Christenings) are held around the Parish throughout the month. Please come along to the morning service at the church of your choice, and you can talk about booking a date that works well for you and church. Godparents must have been baptised themselves 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.

If you would like further information or to book a wedding or a baptism, please attend at one of our churches or see the contact details at the rear of the magazine. Funeral Directors will book any funerals.

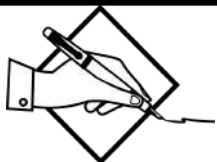
Magazine Deadlines

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

	March	April	May
Deadline for material	13th February	23rd March	17th April
Publication date	23th February	30th March	27th April

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A Letter from Sue

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in.

Matthew 25:35

“The pantry has helped me in loads of ways they helped me to get out of the house and socialise in a safe space, because I’ve got anxiety issues. I couldn’t have survived without the pantry – they are more than generous with their portions and it’s all good quality things what you can make a meal out of. There’s been loads of times when I had nothing to live off and the pantry has saved the day.

They (the debt centre manager) helped me with my debt and got the (Debt) Relief Order. This took a massive anxiety away from me and I don’t feel suicidal anymore.”

Aidan’s Pantry opened in December 2023 and now serves an average of 45 members a week. They find that many people who come in are lonely and as they have plenty of volunteers, there is always someone to listen and chat to them. A few people have said that the food is just a bonus, and more and more people are staying to chat before or after their shop.

The Pop-Up Pantry at Holy Trinity celebrates its first birthday this month. Some of their regulars have not been into church before and it was wonderful to hear that some of them came to services over Christmas! With Rectory next door, staff and 4 or 5 pupils come in every week to help pack away the food ready to be taken up to Aidan’s and will bring a rail of pre-loved school uniforms in periodically.



Ashton Pantry find that many can't afford the £3 for a shop and so have a scheme to encourage members to help in some way, so they can have a free shop with dignity. They are about to launch a Crowdfunder to raise funds that are needed to start the work to refurbish the hall which will provide space for a Pay-As-You-Feel café and other initiatives that will support the financially vulnerable.

All our pantries provide space for support agencies, such as Green Doctors, benefit advice and the library at Holy Trinity. It's not just the people who are coming who are blessed by the pantries, but our volunteers are also blessed through serving our communities.

The pantries also offer an opportunity for us to share our faith and encourage discipleship through conversations and we are all exploring how we can start small groups around our pantry times.

“For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.”

Matthew 18:20

Sue Thomas

Our verse for the year is:

Romans 15:13 NIV

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Parish News

Weekly Events

Mondays

- 9.30am - 10.30am: Mini Street Pop Up Play (St Andrew's)
- 6.30pm: Girls Brigade (St Peter's)

Tuesdays

- 10am - 12pm: Coffee Morning (St Thomas' church hall)
- 6pm: Boys Brigade (St Peter's)

Wednesdays

- 1pm - 2.30pm: Wednesday Weenies (St Thomas' church hall)
- 1pm - 3pm: Knit and Chat group (St Peter's)
- 3pm - 4pm: Hot Spot for Y7 - 11 (St Thomas' church hall)
- 4pm - 5pm: Discipleship Group for Y7 - 11 (St Thomas' church hall)
- 7.30pm: Women's Fellowship (St Peter's)

Thursdays

- 9.30am - 11.30am: Warm Space (St Andrew's)
- 3pm - 4pm: English Classes (St Thomas' church hall)
- 2pm - 3pm: Gentle dance class (St Luke's)

Fridays

- 2pm: Bible Study (St Thomas' church hall)
- 11.30am - 12.30pm: Mini Street Pop Up Play (St Andrew's)

Sundays

- 1pm - 2.30pm: Asylum seeker support (St Thomas' church hall)



Wigan South Hub Churches

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

Bereavement Support Group

We invite you to come to a Safe Space

Don't Walk Your Journey Through Grief Alone

Share your experiences with a group of loving people

St Luke's Church
Bolton Road
Stubshaw Cross
WN4 8UN

10.00am - 11.30am

St Andrew's Church
274 Garswood Road
Garswood
WN4 0TU

1.30pm - 3.00pm



1st Tuesday of every month - Starting December 2023



Warm Spaces

Each Thursday between 9.30am & 11.30am St Andrew's Mission Hall will be open as a 'Warm Space'.

Anyone is welcome to pop in for a cup of tea, coffee, toast and a warm welcome.

Together with local businesses, we are working to reduce the amount of food going to land fill.

The pantries are 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 2pm - 3pm
Sunday 3pm - 4pm

Max 2 visits per week

Additional donations welcome to be used to build a pantry and kitchen behind the church hall.



**St Aidan's Church,
Billinge**

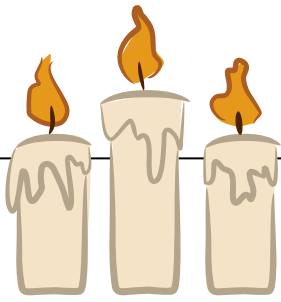
Friday 11am - 1.30pm



**Holy Trinity Church
Downall Green**

Friday 9am - 10am

**Each Pantry has a £5 annual membership
and minimum £3 donation per visit**



Services in February

Sunday 2nd
Candlemas

9am: Morning Worship
 9.30am: Holy Communion
 10am: Holy Communion
 10.30am: Morning Worship
 10.30am: Morning Prayer
 10.45am: Worship Together
 11am: Morning Worship

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

Wednesday 5th

10am: Holy Communion

St Aidan's

Thursday 6th

9.45am: BCP Holy Communion

St Thomas'

Sunday 9th

9am: Holy Communion
 9.30am: Morning Worship
 10.30am: Sta's4all
 10.30am: Holy Communion
 10.30am: Morning Service & Brigades
 10.45am: Worship Together
 11am: Holy Communion
 4pm: Evening Prayer

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

Wednesday 12th

10am: Holy Communion

Holy Trinity

Thursday 13th

9.45am: BCP Holy Communion

St Thomas'

Sunday 16th

9am: Morning Worship
 9.30am: Morning Worship
 10am: Morning Worship
 10.30am: Morning Worship
 10.30am: Holy Communion
 10.45am: Holy Communion
 11am: Family Worship
 6.30pm: Evensong

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

Wednesday 19th	10am: Holy Communion	St Aidan's
Thursday 20th	9.45am: BCP Holy Communion	St Thomas'
Sunday 23rd	9am: Holy Communion 9.30am: Morning Worship 10am: St Aidan's Beacon 10.30am: Holy Communion 10.30am: Morning Prayer 10.45am: Worship Together 11am: Morning Worship 4pm: Holy Communion	St Thomas' St Andrew's St Aidan's Holy Trinity St Peter's St Thomas' St Luke's St Aidan's
Wednesday 26th	10am: Holy Communion	Holy Trinity
Thursday 27th	9.45am: BCP Holy Communion	St Thomas'

February Events

Monday 3rd February

11am: Communion Service at Garswood House
(arranged by St Peter's)

Tuesday 4th January

10am - 11.30am: Bereavement Support Group (St Luke's)
1.30pm - 3pm: Bereavement Support Group (St Andrew's)

Tuesday 25th February

Peace of Mind Dementia Cafe (St Andrew's)

We are pleased to share that the triennial theme for 2025-2027 is: **JOIN US AND JOIN IN.** So we take this time to extend an invitation to all across our Parish to join our local branch.

Whom could you invite to a Mothers' Union meeting or activity this year?

Consider friends, neighbours or colleagues who might benefit from our fellowship and support. Your invitation could open doors to new relationships and community engagement. Perhaps someone reading this is considering joining us. Please just come along to one of our meetings. Remember you don't need to be a mum or a woman everyone is welcome.

Please reflect on the following:-

- The Mothers' Union is a global charitable organisation
- Mothers' Union is spearheading the global literacy campaign - 480 million women around the world are illiterate – meaning they cannot register the birth of a baby, read a medicine bottle, open a bank account or gain independence
- Their Rise Up Against Domestic Abuse campaign so far has achieved:
130 registrations or awards
111 branches have achieved their Bronze award
8 branches have received their Silver award
4 branches have received their Gold award
- The Mothers' Union provide grants for AFIA – Away from it all holidays and short breaks for families and the elderly who desperately need them
- We as a branch have helped to fund a parenting education program in a local prison by giving funds to buy workbooks in order that the chaplain can provide the course.
- As a branch we have helped to fund essential equipment for students in college locally who cannot obtain money to support them as they are estranged from parents so unable to provide earning information. This may be due to leaving care for example.

- The committee members organize a program of speakers and events most of which are free to attend. We organize special events such as The Summer Evening, a trip out, an annual meal at the Masonic Hall as well as a brunch in February

As we reflect on all the work that has been achieved and the impact around the world, may we remember the lives touched daily at all hours of the day when we pray for one another.

Please join with us again for another year of events and meetings. Envelopes will be distributed soon for you to register for another year and annual subs of £30 are due.

Indoor Members

Our indoor members were delighted to receive a visit from Michelle and I. We took a Christmas card and tin of biscuits from the Mothers' Union. We aim to visit again at Easter. Please keep our indoor members in your prayers.

O God, our heavenly Father, our strength and peace and joy, bless all who are Indoor Members. Give us your grace according to our need; help us to know and love and trust you more, to pray better and always to do your will, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

February Prayer

We give thanks to you, Lord for our membership in the global Mothers' Union. May we be blessed with a sense of connection and belonging. May we accept the call in the power of the Holy Spirit to grow in faith. May we be empowered in all that we do and say to help others. May we bloom where you plant us, O Lord. Amen

Respond
Inform Unite
Support Pray
Empower



RISE UP Against Domestic Abuse

**With love and best wishes
for the New Year
Patricia Hamilton-Whittaker
Secretary St Thomas' and
St Luke's Mothers' Union
07895774720**

‘My First Sermon’

by John Everett Millais

There is a story of two men talking about their new vicar. One says to the other, “This new one’s not a patch on the old vicar. With the old one preaching I was asleep in five minutes. With the new one it takes all of ten.” Some churches in times past employed ‘sluggard-walkers’ who had long rods and walked down the aisles, ready to wake up the faithful if they had nodded off during the sermon.

Sluggard-walkers are not needed for this month’s painting, My First Sermon by John Everett Millais. It hangs in the Guildhall Art Gallery in London, which houses the art collection of our capital city. The Gallery is built on the site of an amphitheatre and was only completed in 1999, having replaced a building that was destroyed in the blitz of 1941. It has over 4000 works, many of them from the Victorian and Pre-Raphaelite period. Among them is this painting by Millais which depicts Effie, his 5-year-old daughter sitting in Kingston Church. She is dressed properly and sensibly for the occasion with feathered hat, muff and a cloak of vivid red. Her mother’s prayer book and gloves are by her side. Effie is listening with great concentration.



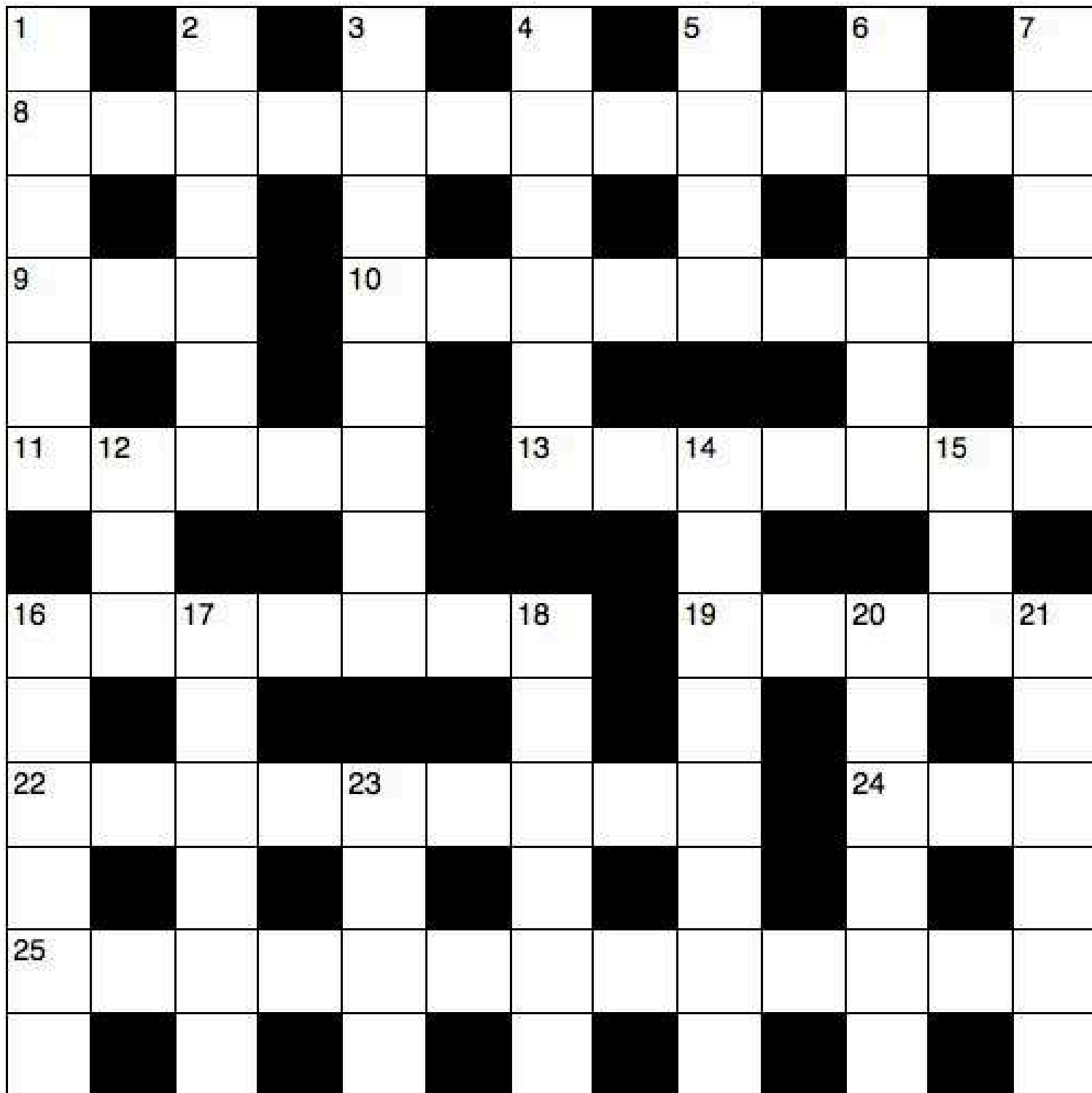
When the painting was exhibited in 1863, it was a great success. In the following year Millais produced *My Second Sermon* – a very different occasion, for Effie has now fallen asleep with her hat by her side. Millais was often criticised for his sentimental portraits of children as in *Cherry Ripe* and *Bubbles*. But in 1864 the Archbishop of Canterbury, Charles Longley, praised this second painting for reminding us of ‘the evil of lengthy sermons and drowsy discourses.’

As we look at Effie alert one Sunday, asleep the next, we can smile. But we might also ask how we respond to the Word that comes to us through the medium of words in the weekly sermon. The preacher has the daunting task of using this everyday coinage of words to draw us into that mysterious, life-giving realm of the Word, Jesus. The words spoken must make a straight path for the Lord to reach each human heart.



The two paintings of Millais depict the reality and fragility of this endeavour. Sometimes our attention is engaged; at others, drowsiness closes our eyes and even our hearts to the good news of salvation. On occasions the sermon sows seeds, which can bear fruit. At other times, all kinds of factors mitigate against the sermon's success. Let us pray that as listener or as preacher, we may be aware of the dynamic power of the Word, which, as Karl Rahner wrote, calls us ‘out of the little house of our homely, close-hugged truths into the strangeness of the mystery of God that is our real home.’

Crossword



Answers on page 19

Across

8 Interrogated (Acts 12:19) (5-8)

9 'Burn it in a wood fire on the – heap' (Leviticus 4:12) (3)

10 Tobit, Judith, Baruch, the books of Esdras and the Maccabees are part of it (9)

11 Science fiction (abbrev.) (3-2)

13 Clay pit (anag.) (7)

16 Went to (John 4:46) (7)

19 'Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to – your bodies as living sacrifices' (Romans 12:1) (5)

22 David's plea to God concerning those referred to in 14 Down: 'On – – let them escape' (Psalm 56:7) (2,7)

24 Royal Automobile Club (1,1,1) 25 How the book of Ezekiel refers to God more than 200 times (Ezekiel 2:4) (9,4)

Down

1 Seas (Proverbs 8:24) (6)

2 One of the sons of Eli the priest, killed in battle (1 Samuel 4:11) (6)

3 Specialist in the study of the Muslim religion (8)

4 'Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but – him as if he were your father' (1 Timothy 5:1) (6)

5 One of Esau's grandsons (Genesis 36:11) (4)

6 Taking a chance (colloq.) (2,4)

7 God's instructions to the Israelites concerning grain offerings: ' – salt to – your offerings' (Leviticus 2:13) (3,3)

12 Confederation of British Industry (1,1,1)

14 'All day long they twist my words; they are always – to harm me' (Psalm 56:5) (8)

15 The crowd's reaction to Jesus reviving a widow's son in Nain (Luke 7:16) (3)

16 Disappear (Psalm 104:35) (6)

17 How Jeremiah was likely to die if he wasn't rescued from the cistern where he was imprisoned (Jeremiah 38:9) (6)

18 What the prophets do to a wall, with whitewash (Ezekiel 13:10, RSV) (4,2)

20 Made by a plough (Job 39:10) (6)

21 Noah was relieved when the flood waters continued to – (Genesis 8:5) (6)

23 Jesus gave the Twelve the power to do this to diseases (Luke 9:1) (4)

Eric Liddell – from Olympic star to Japanese internment prisoner

Eighty years ago, on 21st February 1945, Scottish athlete Eric Liddell died. An Olympic gold medallist in 1924 at Paris, he had withdrawn from the 100m heat because it was held on a Sunday, and had entered the 400m instead. The story is featured in the film Chariots of Fire.



Liddell died in a Japanese internment camp in China, aged 43. He wrote to his wife on the day he died saying he was suffering from a nervous breakdown brought on by overwork, but he was also malnourished and had an undiagnosed brain tumour. Five months after his death, the camp was liberated.

Liddell was born in China to Scottish missionary parents and attended boarding school at Eltham College in South London, where he is remembered as an outstanding all-round athlete “entirely without vanity”. He later went to the University of Edinburgh, which awarded him a posthumous degree last year in recognition of his contribution to sport and humanity.

Originally intending to run in the 200m at Paris, Liddell discovered en route that the heats for the event would take place on a Sunday. So, he switched to the 400m – and won in an Olympic record time of 47.6 seconds.

“God made me fast. And when I run, I feel His pleasure,” he said.

He returned to China the following year and stayed there until his death, apart from two furloughs to Scotland, during one of which in 1932 he was ordained a minister of the Congregational Union of Scotland. He then continued his selfless missionary work, largely as a teacher, in China, where he married Florence Mackenzie, a China-born Canadian. Their daughter Heather died in 2023.

When Scotsman Allan Wells won the 100m gold medal in Moscow in 1980, he dedicated his victory to Eric Liddell.

Christmas and Easter congregations swell as C of E sees third year of growth

Attendance at Christmas services leapt by 20 per cent in 2023, and the number of worshippers at Easter was up 8.6 per cent, as Church of England congregations experienced a third year of growth, the latest statistics show.

The number of regular worshippers edged above a million in 2023 for the first time since the Covid-19 pandemic, according to the Statistics for Mission 2023 report.

Overall attendance remains below 2019 levels, but the report shows numbers recovering towards the pre-pandemic trend.

Overall weekly attendance at Church of England churches rose to 693,000 in 2023, from 663,000 in 2022, an increase of 4.5 per cent. Meanwhile the number of children attending weekly increased from 90,000 in 2022 to 95,000 (up 4.9 per cent in a year).

The Church of England's overall 'worshipping community' rose to 1,007,000 in 2023, from 982,000 the previous year. Just under two million people (1,961,000) attended services on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day in 2023, up from 1,636,000 in 2022.

Crossword Answers

ACROSS: 8, Cross-examined. 9, Ash. 10, Apocrypha. 11, Sci-fi. 13, Typical. 16, Visited. 19, Offer. 22, No account. 24, RAC. 25, Sovereign Lord.

DOWN: 1, Oceans. 2, Hophni. 3, Islamist. 4, Exhort. 5, Omar. 6, On spec. 7, Add all. 12, CBI. 14, Plotting. 15, Awe. 16, Vanish. 17, Starve. 18, Daub it. 20, Furrow. 21, Recede. 23, Cure.

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Danesbrook House,
21 Ladies Lane,
Hindley, Wigan WN2 2QA
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News from our churches

February Services

	St Thomas'	St Luke's
Sunday 2nd	9am: Morning Worship 10.45am: Worship Together	11am: Morning Worship
Thursday 6th	9.45am: BCP Holy Communion	
Sunday 9th	9am: Holy Communion 10.45am: Worship Together	11am: Holy Communion
Thursday 13th	9.45am: Holy Communion	
Sunday 16th	9am: Morning Worship 10.45am: Holy Communion 6.30pm: Evensong	11am: Family Worship
Thursday 20th	9.45am: BCP Holy Communion	
Sunday 23rd	9am: Holy Communion 10.45am: Worship Together	11am: Morning Worship
Thursday 27th	9.45am: BCP Holy Communion	

Please note that Alan Chadwick's funeral will take place at St Thomas' Church at 12pm on Monday 17th February 2025.

Here we go again, the first new year editions of our magazine with a break in January!

Looking back at the end of 2024 we had a very busy busy advent:

Our school had their usual Nativity service which was much enjoyed by both the children and parents. As always, a big thanks goes to all who took part and the teachers and assistants who put in a lot of work to make it a real and enjoyable success.

Some hardened members of our church family braved the cold weather of early December to man a stall at the Ashton Lights Switch On, with crafts and activities for children and a prayer tree for all.





And even later into the cold of December did some join in with carol singing and distributing Christmas cards at the Gerard Centre on a Saturday morning.

We had the traditional candle lit carol service and the Mothers' Union carol service as well as the Christmas Praise event held in our church and organised by Beacon and other local churches. This was once again a very popular event and was well attended.



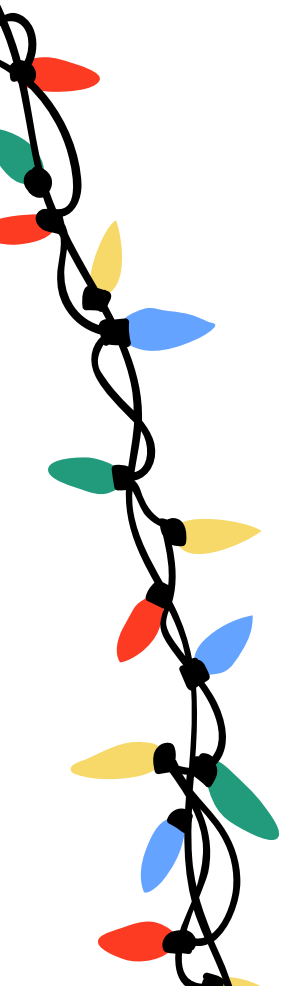
We were also able to extend our advent activities into homes far and wide with our bedtime stories series which were uploaded to Youtube throughout advent. Many people recorded readings of their favourite stories and a wonderful collection was formed.

This was all in addition to many social events, Christmas parties, weekly craft nights, toy services, Blue Christmas service, wreath making and much more. How wonderful it was also that home communion was taken to those unable to join us in person. It's safe to say that, as a church, we had a vibrant and busy advent filled with anticipation and celebration of this special time of year. A huge thank you to everyone who put in a lot of work - a vast amount of which goes on behind the scenes - to make these wonderful times of worship happen.





The cold spell early January caused some disruption in the post-Christmas celebrations and services. The snow and frost brought very difficult ground conditions but at St Thomas we were able to hold our usual services and extend a warm welcome to the other churches that had to close on the first Sunday of the year. Albeit the weather did mean we had much reduced congregations; some seven hardy souls managed to attend the 9am service. As the only church open in our parish, a service of Holy Communion was quickly arranged. It was a very moving service with those attending sitting around the table on the dais. At 10.45am we had 46 adults and 5 children at the service who braved the weather.



Sadly, the weather did cause the delay of the Seniors Citizen's afternoon tea which was put back by one week to Saturday 18 January. Almost 90 individuals were welcomed with a glass of sherry and enjoyed a wonderful afternoon tea comprising sandwiches, sausage rolls, scones, fruit and other sweet treats.

I do feel that on behalf of all those who attended the event or received a delivery to their own homes, that they would all like me to record our thanks to Jan and the dedicated team of helpers for putting together this very enjoyable event. The work involved needed to be seen to be believed not only the preparation of the food and cakes, but the setting up of the tables, decorations, waitressing, deliveries by car and the subsequent return of church the state required for the following day's service - no mean feat.



Entertainment was provided by 11 year old Sofia who played the piano and by Spectrum choir who serenaded us. What a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon.

An event which determined the future direction of our hub took place on the 4th February last year when our then new hub leader, Sandra, was licenced by the Bishop. Hard to believe that this was 12 months ago! Sandra has quickly settled into the role and has made a great impact with her vision of leadership and the direction that the parish should take. I am sure that with our full support and the strength of her own faith we can look forward with full confidence to the future of our church communities in South Hub.



I want to make my annual appeal for volunteers to work in our church ministry. I say again that there are always openings for those wishing to join our many volunteers and help us make our church a growing, lively, vital and energetic church in the service to our Saviour Jesus. Don't be shy, just make yourself known to our leaders and let us know what you would like to be involved in. We are always happy to welcome new readers and those who would like to prepare and read prayers in all our services along with our already dedicated volunteers.

Mary Owen who bravely leads our music group, which is an essential part of our weekly worship, is really struggling to find musicians both to enhance our worship experience but also to relieve the workload of the small number of current members. There must be guitarists, drummers and other instrumentalists out there able to answer our call. Please contact Mary with your interest.

This year is the time for the preparation of a new Electoral Roll. Paula has the forms available, but you need to complete them. It is an important part of our church life showing our membership and also empowering you to vote in the annual parish meetings.

Malcolm

Extending & Refurbishing St Thomas' Church Hall



You may well have heard about the plans to extend the church hall to allow us to move the pantry, build a new commercially fitted kitchen and to provide a Pay-As-You-Feel Café in the space where the pantry is currently.

The cost of the building work is just under £200,000 and we are delighted that we are on the final leg of the journey to raise funds, with just **£34,000** now needed. In February we are going to launch an on-line crowdfunder and Aviva are going to match the donations made. This means if you give £50, then Aviva will also give £50.

Our target through the Crowdfunder is £20,000, which means that if we raise £10,000, then we will receive another £10,000 through the match funding (but see the restrictions below). The target can be extended if we reach £20,000 before the end of the month and we are waiting to hear about some small grants we have applied for. We hope to start building in April if our Crowdfunder reaches its target.



There are some restrictions

- Donations must be £250 or less
- Only your first donation is matched
- Donations can only be made in the 28 days of February

We are also planning a 24-hour sponsored cycle within the safety of the church hall on two exercise bikes from 21st-22nd February, and so if you are thinking of sponsoring the team, please add that to your Crowdfunder donation and let Dan Munro know!

You will be able to find the link to the Crowdfunder on the home page of our website (stthomasstluke.org.uk) from 1st February. Please ring Sue Thomas (07877704645) if you would like to give but need some help.

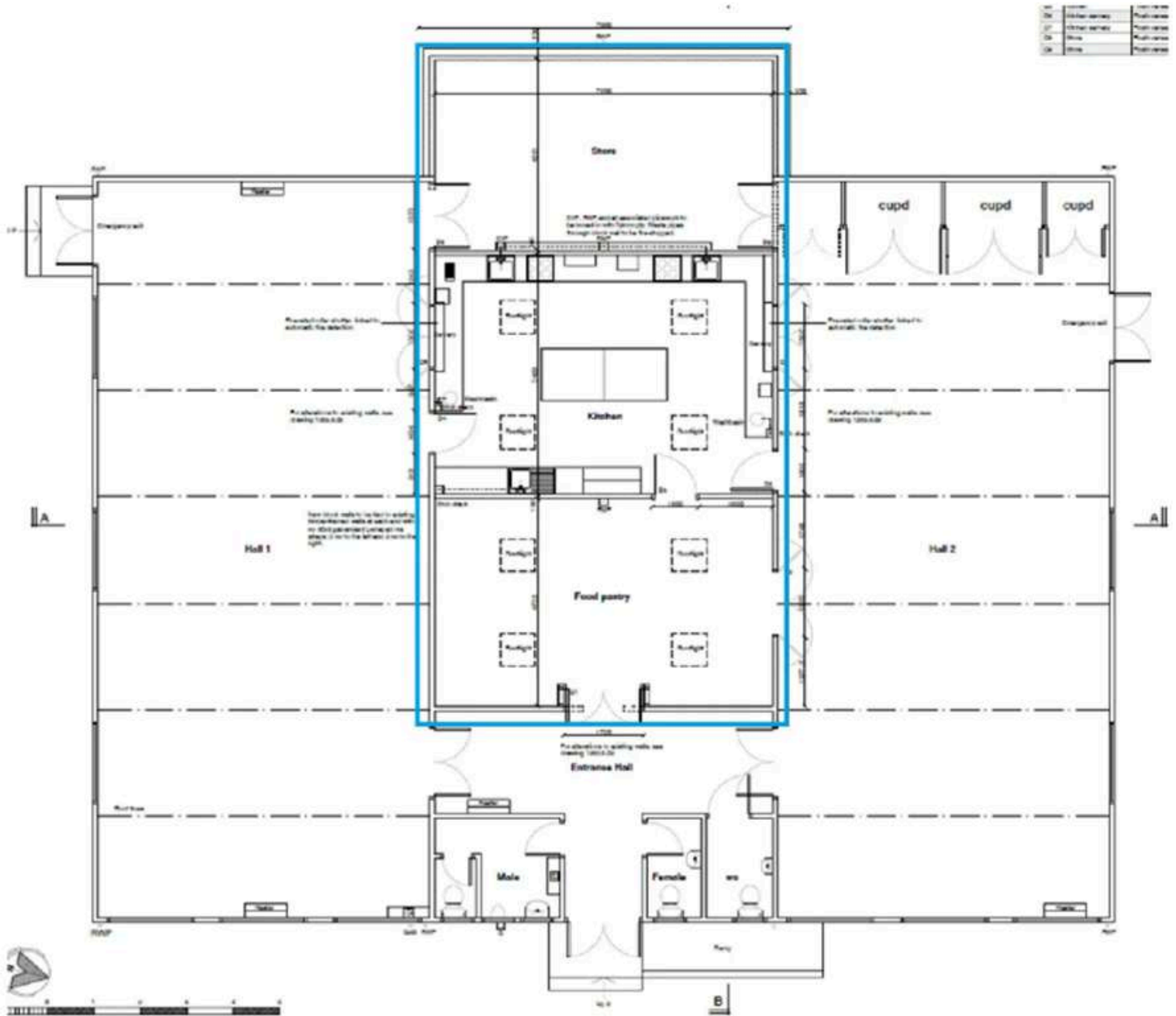
More details about the building project

The plans for the building are on the noticeboard in the pantry side of the hall and also on the pantry page on the website. The existing kitchen and store are going to be knocked down and will become the new pantry, with the large kitchen behind that, filling in the gap between the two halls. A large storeroom will be added behind the kitchen.

The right hand hall will be used some of the time as a Pay-as-you-go Cafe where everyone will be able to afford to eat. Cooking sessions will be offered to encourage making healthy, low cost meals from scratch. The cafe will also double as a welcome warm space for people waiting to access the pantry and money management courses. There will be capacity during the week for the hall to be booked by church and rented by community as the left hall is currently. The kitchen will be available for the use of church and pantry and timetabled accordingly

The hall will need to be closed for one week while the doors and hatches into the kitchen and store are removed, but otherwise the hall will continue to be used as now, albeit with a temporary station to make hot drinks, toast etc.

What an exciting project to be a part of, and thanks to all the hard work bidding successfully for funding, now well within our grasp with just one final push!



Please offer your support by donating whatever you can during February so that we can get our project underway in April!

St Thomas' School



Year Four explored the vibrant world of Georgia O'Keeffe, recreating her iconic flower studies from six perspectives.



Using the wet-on-wet technique and overpainting, Year Four beautifully captured the essence of Georgia O'Keeffe's style. This work was produced by Tilly Mae Torkington.

Towards the end of last year a team of hard working volunteers stepped up to a big sort out particularly in the chancel and vestry.

We discovered, during the sort out, a very old bible which had been left undisturbed for many years. It turned out to be a special bible and one to have investigated by our resident historian David Fearnley.

These are David findings:

1741 BIBLE, ST. THOMAS' , ASHTON IN MAKERFIELD

In St. Thomas' church, Ashton in Makerfield is a very large bible that is bound in leather and was gifted to the church in 1741 during the reign of George II. Inside the front cover is the dedication: "The Gift of Reverend Streynsham Master to the Chapel of Ashton 1741". This particular bible is one of limited editions and now known as a vinegar bible because of its reference to vinegar in the text.

Who was Streynsham Master and what was his connection to Ashton? The Christian name "Streynsham" descends through every generation of the Master family whose origins were in Kent in the middle 16th century. Streynsham Master (1697 - 1759) was the Vicar at Aston, Birmingham in 1732; the curate at Croston, near Chorley, in 1740 and in 1755 succeeded his father in law, William Pilkington, as Rector of St. Michael & All Angels, Croston. He was a son of Sir Streynsham Master (1640 - 1724) and Elizabeth Legh, of Newton in Makerfield and Lyme Hall, Cheshire. Reverend Streynsham had a sister Anne, born 1691, who became the Countess of Coventry, and a brother Legh (his mother's maiden name) Master born 1694. In 1716 Legh Master married Margaret Launder, daughter and heiress of Thomas & Elizabeth Launder (Downes), of the New Hall, Ashton in Makerfield. The New Hall was a large mansion house that was situated on the present day Ashton golf course. Legh Master made the New Hall his main residence. The New Hall later became the residence of the Gerard family and was renamed Garswood New Hall.

Reverend Streynsham's father, Sir Streynsham Master was born in Kent in 1640. In 1659 he joined the English trading company the East India Company and 1676 - 1677 was the Governor of Fort St. George, Madras, India, and was for many years the Agent of the Company in Madras. 1681 he was the Director of the East India Company and was knighted in 1698. In 1690, in London, Sir Streynsham Master married Elizabeth Legh. They had a house in London, where all the children were born, and in 1692 Sir Streynsham purchased the estate of Codnor Castle, a ruined castle, in Derbyshire, residing at the nearby Stanley Grange. In 1712 he was High Sheriff of Derbyshire; in 1707 a Trustee of the ancient St. Thomas' Hospital/Almshouse, Sandwich, Kent, and in 1719 of St. Bartholomew's Hospital/Almshouse, Sandwich. Lady Elizabeth Master(Legh) died 1714 and was buried in the Legh Chapel, St. Michael's, Macclesfield.

In 1716, following the marriage of his son, Legh Master, to Margaret Launder, of New Hall, Ashton in Makerfield, Sir Streynsham came to reside at the New Hall, the seat of his eldest son Legh, where he died in 1724 and was buried in Macclesfield.

Reverend Streynsham performed services in the Ashton Chapel including the baptism of Anne, daughter of Legh & Margaret Master (Launder) of New Hall in 1730. 1734 at St. Michael & All Angels, Croston, Reverend Streynsham Master married Margaret Pilkington, daughter of Reverend William Pilkington, Rector of Croston, & Alice Pilkington (Launder) married 1706 St. Thomas', Ashton in Makerfield. Alice Launder, born at New Hall, Ashton in Makerfield, was a sister of the above Thomas Launder, father of Margaret Launder who was a cousin of Margaret Pilkington. Margaret Master (Pilkington) died 1757 and was buried at Croston. In 1758 at Croston, Reverend Streynsham married Ann Hargreaves, of Rossendale. Reverend Streynsham Master died 1759, Ann Master (Hargreaves) died 1773 both were buried at Croston.

Inside the church of St. Michael & All Angels, Croston, is a memorial to Reverend Streynsham Master:

"Sacred to the Memory of Rev. Streynsham Master AM late Rector of this Parish, the 2nd son of Sir Streynsham Master of Codnor Castle, Derbyshire, Knight. He was born 11/9/1697 and died 19/3/1759. He married first Margaret daughter of William Pilkington LL.D. who died 1/9/1755 in his 84th year having been Rector of this Parish for upwards of 52 years. Margaret his daughter died 15/7/1757 aged 49. Ann the 2nd wife of the Reverend Streynsham Master died 5/1/1773 aged 48. Ann Master widow of the above Streynsham Master caused this monument to be erected as a token of her sincere affection and grateful regard to the memory of the best of husbands. 1760."

Donations & Remembrance



25th anniversary remembrance on 9th February of Roy Hardman;
a loving husband, dad and granddad
from Mary and family

In memory of Ronald Boon
from Jean and family

Thanks for Christmas Communion
from Elsie Deluce

Thanks for Home Communion
from Isabel Bowen

In memory of dear Mum and Dad
from David Hurst

To the Africa Fund
from Aaron Khan

In memory of loved ones
from Margaret Cook



Donations Information

Regular Giving: We have traditionally taken envelope donations in our plate offerings and these monies help towards the payment that has to go to the diocese each month. If you are unable to get to a service and wish to still use your envelopes, please deliver them, to Malcolm and Barbara's (32 Townfields). In the alternative, please consider switching to the Parish Giving Scheme by phoning 0333 002 1271 as we can get the tax back much quicker this way.

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 pay tax in the UK and would like church to be able to claim 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 church to claim Gift Aid 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.

Funds currently in use are:

- Africa Fund
- Asylum Seek
- Audio Visual
- Church Hall
- Buildings and Maintenance
- Food Ministry
- Garden of Rest
- General
- Grave Maintenance
- Heath Road Graveyard
- Heating
- Fit for the Future

Unless otherwise stated, donations will go into the General fund

The Registers



Holy Baptism 'We welcome them into the Lord's family'

15th December	Annabelle Charlotte Jane Rampling Jay Thomas Jack Lois Rampling
29th December	Halle Jane Davies
19th January	Thea Rose Allan - Barton

Funerals or Burials of Ashes 'May they rest in peace'

William Kitchen
Ann Elizabeth Roby
Alan Yarwood
Norma Edna Newcombe
Simon John Plater
Jeanette Bentham
Nicholas John O'Rourke

St Thomas' and St Luke's Organisations

Coffee Mornings

Tues 10am - 12pm
St Thomas' church
Barbara Taylor
01942 205136

Wednesday Weenies

Wed 1pm - 2.30pm
St Thomas' church hall
Jan Cornthwaite
01942 721626

Mothers' Union

3rd Wed 7.30pm
St Thomas' church
Michelle Rawsthorn

Fairtrade Stall

3rd Sun 11.45am
St Thomas' church
Anne Wooff
01942 724207

Litter Pick

3rd Sat 10am - 12pm
Meet at St Thomas' car park
Chris Wooff
01942 724207

Flower Guild

Meta Laites
01942 723679

Asylum Seeker Support

English Class
Sun 3pm - 4pm

Ashton Pantry

Tues 11am - 12pm
Thurs & Sun 3pm - 4pm

Girl Guiding

Brownies
Thurs 6.30pm

Drop in & advice
Sun 1pm - 2.30pm

Guides
Tues 7pm

Anne & Chris Wooff
01942 724207

Sue Thomas
07877704645

Rachel Starkie
01942 718350

Children's Sunday

Clubs

Sun 10.45am
Karen Cunliffe
07721770305

For more information, please visit our website at stthomasstluke.org.uk



St Thomas' and St Luke's Church,
Ashton in Makerfield



St Thomas

St Thomas' and St Luke's Church Officials

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Carole Pye 517318

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Alan Harrison 718618
Carole Pye 517318
Helen Weavers 07796334457

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Paula Gillespie 711270

St Luke's:
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John Boon 204082

St Thomas' Deputy Wardens

Barbara Taylor 205136

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St Luke's:
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Electoral Roll Secretary

Vacant

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Children, Young People & Families

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721626

Flowers

Meta Laites 723679

Church Architect

Bill Schafer 717300

St Thomas' Worship Group

Mary Owen 203277

St Thomas' Organist

Paul Tushingam 711085

Magazine Distribution

Vacant