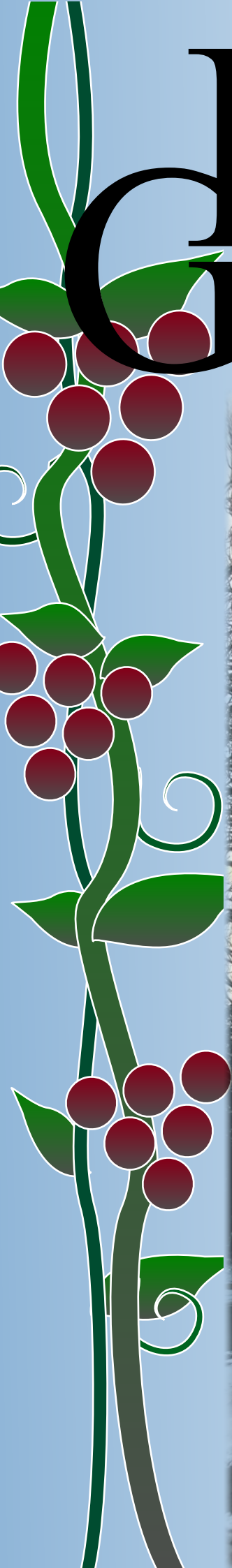


A monthly round-up of
news, views, events
and services at
St George's, Heaviley,
SK2 6NU,
and St Gabriel's, Adswold
in the
Parish of St George, Stockport.
www.stgeorgestockport.org.uk



Mothers' Union: Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

THE MOTHERS' UNION have had two interesting meetings recently.

In December our Director of Music, James, came to share his Christmas Desert Island discs. We were treated to an afternoon of wonderful music; we were taken around the country to listen to great choirs of cathedrals and churches and this was a great treat for us all. We also heard how they were important to him and that he has the chance to sing in so many different churches. Thank you, James.



In January, we were very lucky to have the chance, with kind permission of the vicar and church wardens, to view and handle the communion vessels, chalices, patens, flagon and ciborium as well as a home communion set used to take communion to the sick and housebound.

We also saw the linen such as the altar cloth made to fit the altar; they were previously made from linen but now they are often in polycotton, much cheaper and easier to launder. Tril made many of our cloths and there is one for

the Lady Chapel altar made in the 1960s. Other items are purificator, lavabo towel, pall, corporal used during the services, and we learned how they are used and folded. The corporal is stored in the burse and the veil covers the set,



the purificator cleans the chalice when the wine is distributed, the wafers are stored in the ciborium. We were also able to look at pictures and photographs of altar frontals and copes from various cathedrals.

Clothing worn by the clergy has changed greatly since the 1960s and even more so with the ordination of women, vicar Elaine spoke of how this came about.

During the meeting Sarah Clayton, daughter of Brenda Swindells, was enrolled as a member and so we now have a mother and daughter as members.

Our next meeting on Monday February 10th at 2.15pm will be an afternoon tea to raise funds for MU. Everyone welcome, please contact Pat R (0161 487 1999) to select your sandwich choice. Charge £5.



photos by Hazel Jenkins



Elaine writes:

Best before...

So, it started with just the one cupboard when I found that the can of pilchards that I'd won in a Wednesday morning church raffle was now so out of date as to be potentially explosive!

And it went on, checking the best before... with more out of date cans, separating sauces, caked baking powder, fossilised hot chocolate, dusty breakfast cereals that had a handful of their contents left, flour that I'd been given in lockdown, and I was sure that someone had told me that old almonds contained cyanide (I've checked and it's wild almonds) but they went out anyway.

By the time I was done, it was well after midnight and the pile of stuff was scarily impressive.

The birds were the beneficiaries of some of it, but the rest went into recycling.

Best before...

There are, no doubt, loads of posts on social media about how you can use or eat various food items after the best before date but, even if they are usable, are they still effective?

The yeast, coming to an end of its usefulness at the end of January, left me with flat bread – that wasn't the intention. One slice or two of hot chocolate may well have mixed into the hot milk but you'd be picking the lumps out of your teeth for some time and the breakfast cereals were at the level of dust that even the birds turned their beaks up at. The baking powder which I couldn't find, so bought another, and another to add to the already cluttered cupboard.

Best before...

We fill our cupboards with foodstuffs that go out of date or out of fashion before they get used.

We can't access what's important and we forget what we have.

Perhaps there is some parallel here about living our lives?

The benefit of having a spring clean, if you will, allows the discovery of hidden treasures, things that we had forgotten about or even things we actually had no use for.

That clearout, helps us to see things clearly, just as they are, and helps us to make a bit more of an informed choice about what to do next.

The space generated by their removal allows us to take a breath, to see if that space needs filling, or is allowed to rest as it is.

We then avoid duplication, unnecessary double booking or squeezing in things that we really don't want to do but feel we should.

Best before... is when things are at their optimum, before they start being ineffective or mundane.

Matthew 5 verse 13 says: 'You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled underfoot.'

If we don't know what we have, then we don't know what we can use. If we don't know what we can use then we seek alternative or extra things, things to clog up our spiritual arteries and limit our abilities to be effective ambassadors for Jesus.

Being able to identify what we have, our gifts and abilities, and having them ready and to hand, allows us to be fleet of foot so that the Gospel message (Ephesians 6) can be spread without delay.

We don't have to search fruitlessly, we don't let those skills go out of date, we have what we need to hand in an instant.

Let's check our spiritual store cupboards and be ready.

Every blessing

Elaine

What's Where...

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| P 2 Mothers' Union: Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year | P 10 Not the normal 10.15 service! | P 20 Lent Prayer Breakfasts, The PCC in 2025, and an extra cartoon |
| P 3 Clergy letter | P 11 Holy Days: George Herbert | P 21 Music Scheme |
| P 4 Who's who | P 12 Nine Lessons and Carols – Jenny Minding Bishop Sam's Crozier | P 22 Puzzle solutions, Regular Service Times, and The Gift of the Nativity |
| P 5 New Year's Eve Wedding and Recipe: Rhubarb Cake Pudding | PP 14-15 St George's Save the Bells Appeal | P 23 Christmas Tree Festival 2024 |
| P 6 Parish News Roundup | PP 16-17 A Service to celebrate the life of Gareth Lindsey Jones (Gaz) | |
| P 7 Reflections on Meditation and Electoral Roll Renewal | P 17 Our Safeguarding Officers | |
| PP 8-9 A Service to celebrate the life of Patricia (Pat) Wyck | P 18 Children's Page | |
| | P 19 Puzzles and cartoon | |

Who's Who in the Parish of St George, Stockport

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|---|---|--|---|
| Vicar | Rev. Canon Elaine Chegwin Hall vicar@stgeorgestockport.org.uk 456 9382 | Sunday Clubs | Ask for Louise, Eliza or Andy at the 10:15 Sunday service. Eliza 07967 798453 Louise 483 3703 sundayclubs@stgeorgestockport.org.uk | Ring on Sundays 9.45-10.15am. Meet in the tower. | |
| Associate minister | Rev. Dr Jenny McKay 01606 891564 jenny@stgeorgestockport.org.uk | Bible Reading Fellowship Notes | | Janet Neilson 483 9025 Notes are ordered on request. | |
| Curate in training | Rev. Jane Crook revjanecrook@gmail.com 07533 107548 | Bible Study Groups | | <i>contact the clergy</i> Study groups and courses are arranged from time to time. | |
| Readers | Peter Hall 456 9382 Rita Waters 487 3620 | Choir | | James Hibbert 07365 519207 actingdirectorofmusic@gmail.com Practise: Thursday 7.30pm–9pm in the vestry during term time. Sing for Sunday services at 10.15am and 4pm. | |
| Churchwardens | Andrew Regan 440 0408 Hazel Jenkins 483 4679 | Praise and Play | contact the Parish Office: 480 2453 For 0–4s and their carers. Meet every Tuesday in term time, 10–11 in the Parish Rooms. | Church Flowers | Jean Hayden (<i>donations</i>) 483 2367 |
| PCC Secretary | Lois Kelly 439 9458 | St Gabriel's | | Church Gardeners | |
| PCC Treasurer | Andrew Regan 440 0408 treasurer@stgeorgestockport.org.uk | Festival services | Rev. Canon Elaine Chegwin Hall 456 9382 | | Walter Stead 430 2449 Meet on Tuesdays 9.30-12.30. |
| Parish Office | Cathryn Otley 480 2453 | Uniformed Groups with connections to St George's | | Coffee Mornings | In church, after the 10am service on Wednesdays. |
| Magazine Editor | Andy Clark 07582 850454 magazine@stgeorgestockport.org.uk | Rainbows | Trisha Brown 07403 353 175 Sue Kirkland 07854 101 918 For girls aged 4-7. Meet Fridays 6.15-7.30pm in the Parish Room. | Cursillo | Usually meet on last Wednesday of the month. 7.30pm at different venues. |
| Safeguarding co-ordinator | Sue Cordingley 07383 690888 stgeorgestockportsafeguarding@outlook.com | Brownies | Rachel Lockett 07712 302342 Lianne Warburton 07815 482603 For girls aged 7-10. Meet Thursdays 6.30-8pm in the Parish Room. To sign up to Brownies or Rainbows please visit www.girlguiding.org.uk and click on "Join us" | Handbells | Andy Clark 483 3703 Play for All-Age and Taizé services, plus other special events. Ringers of all ages (with or without experience) always welcome. Rehearsals in church arranged around the ringers' availability. |
| Website | www.stgeorgestockport.org.uk | | | Linen Guild | Pat Rigley 487 1999 Maintain the church's linen. |
| Webmaster | Peter Hall 456 9382 | | | Magazine Editorial Group | Meet monthly to plan future issues. magazine@stgeorgestockport.org.uk |
| St George's Primary School | | 4th Stockport Scout Group | | Mothers' Union | Pat Durnall 483 4837 Meet on 2nd Monday of the month in the Parish Room at 2.15pm. |
| Headteacher | Deborah Grindrod 480 8657 | | | | |
| St George's | | | | | |
| Deputy Wardens | John Hardy 01663 764 462 Sue Burt 483 9589 | | | | |
| Director of Music | James Hibbert 07365 519207 actingdirectorofmusic@gmail.com | | | | |
| Associate Director of Music | Roger Briscoe brogerdom16@gmail.com | | | | |
| Vergers | Lee Howarth Mary Cope | | | | |
| Bookings for Parish Rooms | Parish Office 480 2453 | | | | |
| St Gabriel's | | | | | |
| Contact: | Parish Office 480 2453 | | | | |
| Bookings | Parish Office 480 2453 | | | | |
| Children's Activities | | | | | |
| St George's | | | | | |
| Children's Corner | Available for children (and parents) during services. Equipped with books, crayons and soft toys. | Other Groups and Activities | | | |
| | | St George's | | | |
| | | Bell ringers | Anne Mayes 485 6477 Practise Mondays 7.45-9pm. | | |

Front cover photo:

Snowy Sunrise
by Andy Clark

Services and Events in February

see pages 6 and 22

Front cover photo:

**Snowy Sunrise
by Andy Clark**

**Services and Events in
February**

see pages 6 and 22

New Year's Eve Wedding

This is a photo from the wedding of Christopher Rushworth and Jemma Batt on New Year's Eve 2024!



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Recipe: Rhubarb Cake Pudding

This is a favourite with my family, especially at this time of year.

450g/1 lb early rhubarb

100g/4oz soft brown sugar

Grated rind 1 orange

2 tbsps water

50g/2oz butter

50g/2oz caster sugar

1 egg

75g/3oz self raising flour

Icing sugar

Wash and trim rhubarb and cut into 1in pieces. Put in a buttered ovenproof dish (1 litre/1½ to 2 pint size). Add sugar, orange rind and water.

For the topping: cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy, then beat in the lightly mixed egg and fold in the sieved flour. The mixture should be medium-soft in consistency. Spoon in dollops over the rhubarb and spread evenly. Bake in centre of a moderately hot oven (190C/375F/Gas Mark 5) for 35-40 minutes. The topping should be well risen and golden brown. Sprinkle with a little icing sugar and serve hot or warm with cream or custard.

Pamela Ferguson

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| Parish News Roundup | | Parish News Roundup | Parish News Roundup |
|--|--|--|---|
| Holy Baptism | | 7th Jan | from Mike and family, in memory of Barbara Westwood. |
| 12th Jan | Florence Joyce Donley | | |
| Holy Matrimony | | 12th Jan | from Pat Durnall, in loving memory of John Durnall and all the Durnall family |
| 31st Dec | Christopher Rushworth and Gemma Batt | 19th Jan | from the Alcraft and Hayden families, in loving memory of Walter Fallows. |
| Funerals | | Floodlighting was sponsored by: | |
| 2nd Dec | Pat Wych, at the Cypress Chapel | 22nd Jan: | Morag Ranson, for Malcolm and Morag's wedding anniversary. |
| 6th Jan | Jacqueline Eadie, in church | Mothers' Union | |
| 10th Jan | Gareth Jones, at the Cypress Chapel | The next MU meeting will be on Monday 10th February at 2.15pm in the Parish room. It will be Afternoon Tea in aid of MU funds, everyone is welcome. Please contact Pat R (0161 487 1999) or fill in the list on the sidespersons' table to select your sandwich choice. Look forward to seeing you. | |
| 23rd Jan | Dorothy Peters, at Mill Lane Cemetery | Magazine Subscriptions | |
| 24th Jan | Douglas Manley, at the Rowan Chapel | A reminder to people who pay for the Grapevine magazine annually, subscriptions are now due. | |
| Communion Flowers were sponsored as follows | | The cost is still £12 for 10 issues. Payment may be made by cheque, cash or direct bank transfer. | |
| 1st Dec | from the Durnall family, in loving memory of John Durnall. | Cash and cheques can be put in the Grapevine box in front of the church wardens' seat. | |
| 8th Dec | from the Stephenson family, in memory of Elsie Brown. | Cheques should be made payable to: St George's Stockport PCC. | |
| 15th Dec | from Pat Durnall, in loving memory of Asa and Ida Brooks and Mary, Derek and Ann and all the Brooks family. | | |
| 22nd Dec | from Phoebe Macleod, in memory of our best loved Husband, Dad and Grandad, Rod Macleod, who made life special. We love and miss him. | | |
| | | Alternatively you may pay by direct bank transfer to: St Georges Stockport PCC, sort code: 80-02-14, account no: 00802467, quoting reference 'Grapevine'. | |
| | | For those of you who subscribe to the current digital edition of the magazine, please would you also send £12 by bank transfer as above, or by cheque to: Andrew Regan, Treasurer, 153 Acre Lane, Cheadle Hulme SK8 7PB. | |
| | | Thank you. | |
| | | Services and Events in February | |
| | | There are two significant services at St George's on Sunday 2nd February . | |
| | | The first is at 10.15am when we welcome Bishop Mark, the Bishop of Chester, to our church to lead the baptism and confirmation service. Please do come along and support the candidates. | |
| | | In the afternoon at 2pm, we have the RAF cadets gathering from several squadrons in the area for ATC Sunday. | |
| | | <div> Baptisms, Banns and Marriage bookings: Please contact the vicar: Telephone: 0161 456 9382 or email: vicar@stgeorgestockport.org.uk </div> | |
| | | <div> February 2025 Grapevine magazine dates: Deadline copy date: Fri 14th Feb Committee meeting: Tue 18th Feb </div> | |

St George's floodlighting – sponsorship request form
(Please return to Andrew Regan, 153 Acre Lane, Cheadle Hulme, Cheadle, SK8 7PB).

Name Phone no

Date of evening requested £20 or £..... donation enclosed (Please make cheques payable to St George's Stockport PCC)

Reason for request (if appropriate)

If you are a taxpayer and would like the church to reclaim the tax on your donation please also complete the following Gift Aid declaration:

I want to Gift Aid my donation of £..... to St George's Church, Stockport. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Title..... First name or initial(s).....Surname.....

Home address:.....

Post Code Signature..... Date

Reflections on Meditation

WHAT, IF ANY, are your New Year resolutions? I make the same list each year, which may sound a bit odd. I do this because they are ongoing actions rather than end goals. I review them each year and adjust them a little in the light of experience. I'd like to share three of them.

The first is to be 'present now', to be here in this place, physically, mentally and emotionally. It's a challenge and yet it sounds so simple. It's hard enough when we are formally meditating, let alone when we are out there in the world. Thoughts and recollections and emotions and all sorts of distractions can take us away from this moment and the place we are in.

St Columba recognised this. As he travelled from place to place, his prayer was: "May I arrive at every place I enter."

My second resolution is to do Tai Chi as my first activity of the day. Though originally a martial art, its rhythmic, controlled movements encourage me to be present. We think of meditation as a static practice, but mindful movement of any kind is a form of meditation. We can make walking, even just a short distance, a mindful, meditative practice.

My third resolution is the one I find hardest to keep – to sit at least once a day and do a twenty-minute formal meditation practice. I have chosen to sit after lunch. Perhaps a big mistake. Having eaten, I am tempted to fall asleep! This is probably one to adjust. The World Council

for Christian Meditation suggests two twenty-minute sessions daily, morning and evening.

However we do it, giving ourselves some quiet time is a powerful and refreshing practice, or, expressed another way:

"As Jesus of Nazareth said on one of his own periodic disappearing days,

'Come apart to a deserted place by yourself and rest'; which, being translated, means: 'Log off.' "

(Malcolm Doney & Martin Wroe, from *Hold On, Let Go*).

Our next once-a-month Sunday sessions are on 9th February and 2nd March. We gather for half an hour at 12 noon in the Lady Chapel, after the morning service. Everyone is welcome.

Chris Dawson

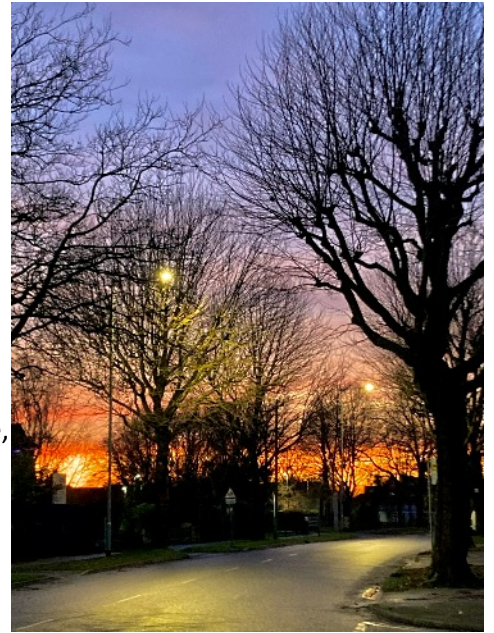


photo: Andy Clark

Electoral Roll Renewal

EVERY FIVE YEARS the Electoral Roll has to be renewed before the **Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM)** which for St George's is 23rd April. This means that everybody, whether or not they are currently on the Electoral Roll, has to fill in an Electoral Roll form to be given to the Electoral Roll Officer, Penny Bisby.

Who can be on the Electoral Roll?

To be on the Electoral Roll, a person must have habitually attended worship at St George's in the previous 6 months, and:

- be baptised
- be aged over 16
- have filled in an electoral roll form

Furthermore they have to make **ONE** of the following three declarations:

1. They are a member of the Church of England or a Church in communion with it and are resident in St George's Parish

Or

2. They are a member of the Church of England or a Church in communion with it; are not resident in St George's Parish but have habitually attended worship at St George's during the previous six months

Or

3. They are a member in good standing of a church which is not in communion with the Church of England or a Church but subscribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity; is also a member of the Church of England and have habitually attended worship at St George's during the previous six months.

Why be on the Electoral Roll?

If you are on the Electoral Roll you can vote or stand in elections for the Churchwardens, Members of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and Deanery Synod Representatives, to have your say in how the parish is run.

What is the process for the Renewal?

The process is quite lengthy but simple. All you have to do is complete an electoral roll form, which will become available on 23rd February. The final date for returning the forms is Sunday 6th April.

The names but not addresses of those on the Electoral Roll will be published on 13th April so that it can be checked and any mistakes corrected.

Lois Kelly

Service to Celebrate the Life of Patricia (Pat) Wych

Monday 2nd December 2024 at the Cypress Chapel

ELAINE OPENED with prayers and welcomed everyone present to the service.

Pat was born in the quiet village of Donnington to Les and Flo Powers. When she was young, she developed a passionate interest in the medical profession, having damaged her knee, resulting in several months spent in hospital. It was a passion she never lost, becoming firm friends with her doctors and specialists over the years and, though she would never admit it, she thoroughly enjoyed her own and her children's appointments so she could talk medical!

She would have liked to join the medical profession but, in fact, became a wages clerk for a butcher, travelling to work with the owner in his Rolls Royce! She had no idea of the prestige this carried, only that it saved her having to cycle the ten miles to work! This was typical of Pat – she just took what was offered to her and was grateful for all she had.

Pat met Ted when she was nineteen when he was on a fishing trip from Manchester. Love blossomed, helped along with weekly phone calls from the phone box at the end of the lane and Ted's visits to Donnington. They married just one week after her twenty-first birthday, moving into a house in Manchester, later settling into the family home on Turncroft Lane where they lived for forty years. The downsize to Puzzle Tree Court meant there was less dusting to do but it still kept them in the hub of family and friends.

Pat and Ted had three children – Andrea, Nicholas and Kelly, and seven grandchildren – Tom, Ben, Katie, Joe, Ellie, Eddie and Robbie. The family was completed with the arrival of six great-grandchildren – Rory, Ilah, Aubrey, Zack, Nathan and Cain. With eight nieces and nephews and many friends, it was always someone's birthday.

When Pat made phone calls during the day everyone knew it was when Ted was out – he thought it was too expensive to ring during daytime – but Pat always liked to keep in touch with everyone.

Pat loved nothing more than socialising with family and friends, whenever and wherever possible. Favourites were trips to Etherow Country Park and meals out in local restaurants, where she would fight to keep her peas on her fork, or just a chat over coffee during breaks from housework.

Pat joined St George's after Ted died, enjoying the fellowship she found there. She was a regular at the Monday lunches at the Puss in Boots and always stayed after the morning service to chat with friends over coffee and a biscuit.

Pat looked out for all her family and was able to have a private word with everyone before she passed away. She was happy to see her children as they wished her Godspeed to Ted. Ted's last text to Pat had been that he wished they could lie in the snow holding hands just once more, looking up at the moon. Pat's loved ones are sure they are looking at the moon now.

Pat's grandchildren spoke of their memories of their Nana:



Ellie said that 'she enjoyed eating delicious soup that Nana made, with ham sandwiches while she was off from school.'

Ben said that 'Nana had an alcopop drink, and as she doesn't drink, she got a bit giddy and, randomly pricked his hand with a cocktail stick'.

Katie said that she remembered 'making mince pies and sausage rolls for Christmas at Turncroft Lane'.

Tom said that 'while living with Nana and after many funny episodes she guided me to the right path'.

Robbie remembers her, 'fighting to get her peas to stay on her fork at restaurants'.

The Bible reading from chapter 14 of John's Gospel was one of Pat's favourite readings, and Elaine looked at the three aspects of welcome, hospitality and belonging.

Pat had a great gift of welcome. Nothing was too much trouble for her, and she delighted in getting to know people and making sure that everyone and everything was well. Her whole demeanour was one of kindness, making you feel secure and welcome in her presence.

If we were to look at Psalm 23, we read that a table will be prepared for us. It was at the Puss in Boots, where the monthly parish lunches are held, that Pat first got to know some of the members of the church family. She joined St George's Church from St Mary's after Ted died and steadily got to know others who appreciated her warm and caring personality.

She would invariably be found with her friends, Pat, Brenda and Marion, tucked around the side of the pillar

with their drinks and biscuits after the 10.15 service, welcoming anyone else who wished to join them.

Pat belonged to two wonderful families: her own with her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren and all the permutations that lie therein, and she also belonged to her Church family, God's family, with all the different ways of doing things, different ages and cultures.

Elaine finished her last prayer time with Pat with the blessing she gave at the end of the service, in the hopeful anticipation of God holding Pat in the palm of his hand.

The hymns were favourites of Pat's:

Amazing Grace

Shine, Jesus, Shine.

The blessing after the committal:

May the road rise up to meet you
The wind be always at your back
The sun shine warm upon your face
The rain fall soft upon your fields
and, until we meet again,
may God hold you in the palm of his hand.

Edited version of the address

Kate Stephenson

The Beautiful Interior of St George's

These lovely photos were taken by Kirstin Christmann, a teacher at Stockport Grammar School, during a recent school visit.



Not the normal 10.15 service!

SOMETHING GOT ME idly thinking the other day about places where I have celebrated a communion service or been to church, that was not my normal pattern. Since about the age of six St George's has been 'my' church and I was married here as were my parents and grandparents. I went to college in Coventry and alternated my worship (evensong only, I was a student so no morning services!) between the small local parish church and the cathedral.



Cardboard Cathedral in Christchurch New Zealand

However, I love travelling and so have had the opportunity to worship in many places around the globe. The earliest was an open-air service of mass in the French Alps as a teenager on 'Mountain Sunday'. What a privilege to be in God's wonderful scenery and celebrate. Some places I have quietly slipped into a communion service to be asked 'Would you like to read a lesson?' The two memorable ones were St Paul's within the Walls which is the C of E church in Rome and The Cardboard Cathedral in Christchurch New Zealand, and obviously I said yes both times.

Other times have been a place of quiet refuge after news of a family bereavement, one in south Germany somewhere and the Protestant church in Pontresina in Switzerland. I popped in there on the Saturday afternoon to ask about services the next day and was told that it was a service in Romansch, Switzerland's fourth language, but it would be mainly music. I went and it was perfect, giving me time and space to quietly reflect.

Not always understanding the language isn't always a barrier. My friend and I went to a Greek Orthodox service while on holiday and agreed to meet our husbands at the alleged time that the service ended. Again it gave us time to pray and reflect, but



Protestant church in Pontresina, Switzerland after an hour, as we thought it was coming to a close, the priest stepped up to the lectern and made all the signs of starting a sermon, so at that point we quietly slipped out.

The Protestant church in Hong Kong felt very familiar as was the English service at Trondheim Cathedral. However, the most familiar service was the one in Funchal Madeira, where the service was led by a canon of the Church of Wales and was followed by coffee and cake with the addition of a small glass of Madeira wine! Perhaps one of the most memorable services was at St Mary's Protestant church in Geraldine, South Island New Zealand. I went to the early morning communion and then, chatting to the churchwarden afterwards, it turned out that he had worked in Manchester, lived in Heaton Moor and knew St George's. Of course he did! That was particularly poignant as we came home to an immediate lockdown, and I couldn't take communion for months afterwards.

Hazel Jenkins



St Mary's Protestant church in Geraldine, South Island

Holy Days: 27th February – George Herbert, priest and poet

IF WE WERE to name someone prominent from the 17th century, we might mention Rembrandt or Shakespeare. It is unlikely we would remember George Herbert. However, he was a prolific writer, a gifted speaker and musician. His hymns are still sung today.

Herbert was born into a wealthy family in mid-Wales on 3rd April 1593. His father was a Member of Parliament who died when Herbert was three years old. His mother moved her large family to London where, aged 12, Herbert entered Westminster School. In 1609, his mother remarried, and Herbert left home to be a student at Trinity College, Cambridge.

By the age of 23, Herbert had graduated with two degrees. He was fluent in Latin and Greek and in 1620 was elected as the University's Public Orator. He held this position for seven years, and for a short time was MP in his hometown in Wales.

Although Herbert was securing an illustrious future and his speeches had gained the attention of King James 1, he was restless. He felt God was calling him to the priesthood and much of Herbert's poetry expressed his inner spiritual conflicts.

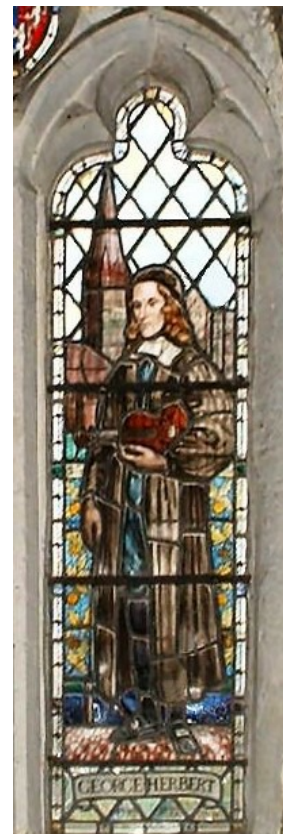
When the King died in 1625, and two influential patrons also died at about the same time, Herbert responded to God's call on his life and gave up his secular ambitions. He

married in 1629 and became a priest in a small Anglican church in Bemerton in Wiltshire.

Here he found inner peace at last, serving God in the local community. His poetic talent continued to flourish along with his musicianship as a skilled lutenist. After only three years as a priest, he died of tuberculosis on 1st March 1633. He was 39.

Some ninety of Herbert's poems have been set to music by such composers as Ralph Vaughan Williams and Benjamin Britten. His most well-known hymns are *Teach me my God and King*, *Let all the world in every corner sing* and *King of glory, king of peace*.

A number of artistic commemorations of Herbert exists in several churches and cathedrals including a stained-glass window in Westminster Abbey and a statue at the front of Salisbury Cathedral.



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St George's Save the Bells Appeal

Do you like to hear the bells on Sunday mornings and/or on Monday evenings when the ringers are practising? If so, we really need your help to save the bells.

When the church was built in the 1890s the bells were hung at the top of the tower near the base of the church spire. Unusually (we think uniquely) the bells are in a wooden frame above the main weather-proof roof of the church and until the 1970s had very limited protection from the weather and from pigeons. This is because the spire has four huge lucarnes (openings) near the base and eight smaller lucarnes higher up the spire through which rain and pigeons can easily pass. This had caused significant damage to the bells' fittings (which attach the bells to the frame) and a certain amount of rot to the bell frame itself.



In the 1970s, after just 80 years of use, the bells had to be rehung with new fittings and the bell frame was repaired because of this deterioration. This was a costly



One of the large lucarnes (openings) through which pigeons and rain easily pass.

There are 8 smaller lucarnes (openings) at the top of the spire.

The bells are hung here.



The roof above the bells from inside the tower.



Looking up through the hole in the roof at the inside of the spire. The openings at the top of the spire can be seen.

exercise. To protect the bells from future deterioration an internal roof was constructed over the bells. This used the same roofing materials that are used on flat roofs. Over the last 50 years this has deteriorated, due to the action of the weather and the pigeons which roost there, and needs replacing. There is a hole in the roof and a number of the roof boards are damp.

To give you an idea of the pigeon problem, before the roof could be inspected the debris which had accumulated from pigeons roosting above the roof had to be cleared. This filled 30 dustbin bags!

We now need to replace the roof boards and coat them with fibreglass resin to provide increased protection against both rain and pigeons. The cost of this work is £16,895.00. We are preparing grant applications but these will not cover the entire cost, so we are inviting local businesses and individuals to make a contribution towards this work, which will help secure the bells in good working order for many years and consequently continue to be an important part of the cultural heritage of our nation.

Donations can be made through Just Giving at:
<https://checkout.justgiving.com/q9x73zu8si>
 (or using the QR code opposite)

Donations can also be made by bank transfer to:
 Account Name: **St Georges Stockport PCC**
 Sort Code: **80-02-14**
 Account number **00802467**
 Reference: **Roof Over Bells**



We would like to thank:

LAR Ltd, Asbestos Abatement Specialists
Jonathan Alcock and Sons, Funeral Directors
Stephensons Catering and Kitchen Equipment
Stockport Grammar School
 for their generous donations to the appeal.

Service to Celebrate the Life of Gareth Lindsey Jones (Gaz)

Friday 10th January in the Cypress Chapel

THERE WAS STANDING ROOM only at this service. The opening music was Bach's Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring, after which Elaine welcomed everyone saying how important Gaz was to them and that he was a much-loved family member and devoted friend. His life made an impact on all who knew him and memories of him were honoured and precious.

Thoughts from the family:

Born on 12th May 1970, Gaz was a loving, caring man, who enjoyed the company of friends. He was incredibly organised about work, but sometimes a bit casual about his dress, flip-flops, shorts and T-shirt being his usual attire! He had initially been refused access to the first-class lounge at airports because it was felt he did not look the part.

He was a good all-rounder at school and enjoyed sport. His style of running was described by his teacher as "not pretty, but effective".

Cycling became one of his great hobbies. Joining a cycling club at 14, his first trip being to Buxton, which he undertook on a standard bike with just a few gears. He took part in road races, sprints and time trials for Cheshire County. Gaz's custom-built Herety bike was recently restored to its former glory in its original colours of blue and white; blue was the only colour he could reliably recognise, as colour blindness runs in the family. The bike was packed up and sent to France during his time there.

Gaz enjoyed fishing and was keen on all forms of angling: fly, coarse and sea fishing. There were fond memories of sea trout straight from the stream and enough to feed the four of them. Life on his boat, Andante, afforded plenty of opportunities for coarse fishing with friends.

He was a keen and good cook, and his time in France got him back into eating vegetables. The family would often wake in the early hours to the smell of green beans being cooked in plenty of garlic! He made his own fresh pasta and particularly liked pizza. He was a keen cook of curries made from scratch and was never short of a kilo or two of the hottest chillies.

Gaz enjoyed music, and the family realised he had a good ear when he was imitating the noise of planes landing at Manchester before he could talk. He played the violin and piano and his music teacher at school recognised he had a good singing voice. The Stockport

Music Advisor played for him, transposing each verse up a semitone and commenting, "is there no limit to his range?"

He joined St George's Choir, becoming Head Chorister. It was a real privilege to have his former choir master, Roger Briscoe, play for the service. Recently Gaz had been considering reigniting his singing skills with lessons from Roger. He sang many solos including Pie Jesu in Fauré's Requiem, and was a member of the Northern Cathedral singers who sang all services for a fortnight at York Minster, and then at Canterbury the following year. Gaz was a finalist in "Chorister of the Year" held at St George's, Hanover Square in London, where Donald Swann, one of the judges, congratulated him on being the only one who looked as though he enjoyed singing!

He was a member of a rock band which performed in the Manchester area. His musical taste was for heavy rock or serious classical choral, with nothing in between. His move to London ended his involvement with the band but his commitment to music didn't end and he installed two keyboards on his boat.

Gaz was accepted to study Economics with French at the University of Sussex. Most of his gap year was spent as an assistant at the French Lycée at Millau. It was normally a post for third year undergraduates, but he replaced the person who had not stuck the course. He was in charge of people about his own age and his pupils learned more about the music

scene in Manchester at the time, which was garage and house music, than about English grammar!

His third year at university was spent on the French tropical department, Réunion Island, and he was mugged at knifepoint in Madagascar. Using his French, Gaz moved to London to work in IT, holding senior positions at IBM and Time Warner, and doing a lot of overseas travel. He was always ready to solve his family's and friends' IT problems.

He went for an interview for Xerox for a job in France, doing the phone interview in English from his bedroom and the French part from the bar. He agreed to take the job if he could work in the UK.

He had two lovely children, Nia (16) and Ieuan (14).

It was following the end of a contract that he took to life afloat in Andante, a 57-foot narrow boat. Andante was a successor to Gertie, a very tatty cruiser moored at



Adlington and which was the source of much fun for the Jones boys and their friends.

Early in 2024, after some time in intensive care, suffering from double pneumonia, he returned to his boat, fit enough to handle locks single-handed, being supported by his family and friends. Two of these friends, Jason and Martin, were school friends with lots of stories to tell. Martin remembered one particular story. Gareth's girlfriend was hairdresser to Paul Weller (of The Jam). She and Paul were at The Ivy along with Noel Gallagher. Both were guitar legends of whom Gaz was in awe. It was arranged that he would go to meet them after work. Unfortunately, despite some name dropping, the doorman refused him entry until his girlfriend came down to the door with her phone as proof that he should be allowed in. Not his most gracious entry into the A-list world of Rock and Roll! There was no record of what he was wearing but Martin suspected it could have been cycling Lycra!

The Bible reading was from 1 Corinthians 13:4-13, which speaks of love. Elaine read the view of one of Gaz's friends: "He didn't know how much he was loved". In her address Elaine focused on the importance of love in all its complex forms being so important in our lives, saying that it was a joy to hear Gareth's story, to celebrate his life, and to gather together in support of each other when love causes us to feel pain because we have loved so much. Elaine concluded by asking everyone to absorb some peace as they listened to Roger play music by Bach.

After prayers, the committal and blessing, family and friends left to 'You've Got the Love (Voyager Mix)' by The Source and Candi Staton.

Hymns:

O God, Our Help in Ages Past

Guide Me O Thou Great Redeemer

Nunc Dimittis

*Edited version of the service
Kate Stephenson*

Sue Cordingley – Parish Safeguarding Officer

Many of you will know me as Pastoral Worker at St George's. Since last October I have also been the Parish Safeguarding Officer, taking over from James Hibbert.

I have a general and mental health nursing background. Before I retired, I worked for Stockport Council in Children's Services within the Children's Safeguarding Team.

Each church is required to have a Designated Safeguarding Officer and I work alongside Louise Clark, our Children's Advocate.

As Safeguarding Officer I am required to keep up to date with the Diocese Safeguarding Policies and Procedures and Safeguarding Training. I am also required to have a current DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Certificate.

My rôle is to ensure everyone within our church is aware of and understands the safeguarding measures we have in place so that we have an inclusive and safe place for everyone (adults and children) to worship.

If you are involved in any groups or become involved with groups within church in the future, I may ask you if you agree to have a DBS check or complete the Diocese Safeguarding Training (which I will explain to you). Please don't let this put you off becoming involved – it's not as scary as it sounds.



You may have heard that Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Please, if you have any concerns about anyone, adult or child, in church do not hesitate to speak to me or contact me on 07383 690888 or by email at stgeorgestockportsafeguarding@outlook.com

Louise Clark – Children's Advocate

I HAVE BEEN acting as the Children's Advocate for our Safeguarding Team for some time now. Each Parish is encouraged to have a Children's Advocate in addition to the Safeguarding Officer. It's suggested that this is someone who is well known and accessible to children attending church, so that they have someone they can talk to about any problems if they wish.

I have an awareness of safeguarding policies from my time working in college and have been involved with Sunday Clubs at St George's since my own children were small. I currently volunteer as a Sunday Clubs Leader and lead the staff group, chairing meetings and organising the rota. I am usually around at the 10:15 Sunday service even when not on the Sunday Clubs rota and therefore most of the children know me.

As for all church rôles, whether staff or volunteer, I am required to undertake safeguarding training including annual refreshers, also to remain alert and vigilant for anything that doesn't feel right that is going on with our young people. The Children's Advocate role provides an opportunity and mechanism for children to raise a concern or question themselves.





Mouse Makes

"Love is

love is _____
It does not, _____
it does not _____
it is not _____
it does not _____

others, it is not self -

it is not easily

it keeps no record of

Love delights in

it always

from 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

The steadfast **love** of the Lord never _____;

His _____
never come to an end;
they are new every

Lamentations 3:20-23

I pray... you will understand...
the greatness of Christ's **love**,
how _____

and how _____

and how _____

that **love** is.

Ephesians 3:18-19

God is **love**.

whoever _____

in **love** _____

in God, and God _____

in them.

1 John 4:16

Give _____
to the Lord, for He is

his steadfast **love**
endures

Psalm 136:1

HOW DOES
GOD **LOVE** ME?

God sent me a saviour:

He sent His one and only
Son into the world so
that we might have
eternal life through Him.

1 John 4:9

God gave me His spirit:

He has given you the
Holy Spirit to fill our hearts
with His **love**.

Romans 5:5

God called me His child:

See what great **love** the
Father has for us that He
would call us His children.

1 John 1:3

DID YOU KNOW?

Jesus told us to:

LOVE the Lord your God with
all your **heart**, all your **soul**
and with all your **mind**.

Matthew 22:37

LOVE your neighbour the
same as you **love** yourself.

Matthew 22:39

P T Y D E B P O P T E L T
E R D L N M A Y R F D G R A
A U G O D J T H O P E F U L
C S K V U U I K T S F L T O
E T P E R S E V E R E S H Y
K I N D E T N B C S N L F A
M N I Y S L T W T S D M U L
I G R A C I O U S E S K L I
H U M B L E S E L F L E S S

GOD • **LOVE**

PATIENT • KIND

GRACIOUS • PEACE

JUST • TRUTHFUL

TRUSTING • LOYAL

HOPEFUL

PERSEVERES

ENDURES

HUMBLE

SELFLESS

PROTECTS • DEFENDS

Sudoku puzzle: easy

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 5 | | 9 | | | 7 | 2 | 3 |
| 2 | | 4 | 3 | 8 | | | 1 | |
| | 3 | | 5 | | | | 6 | |
| | | 6 | | | 9 | | | |
| 5 | | 3 | 2 | | 4 | 6 | | 1 |
| | | | 6 | | | 5 | | |
| | 4 | | | | 8 | | 3 | |
| | 2 | | | 6 | 3 | 8 | | 9 |
| 3 | 8 | 9 | | | 5 | | 4 | |

Sudoku puzzle: intermediate

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | | 6 | | | 8 | |
| 8 | | | 5 | | | | 7 | 2 |
| | | 9 | 2 | 4 | | 3 | | |
| | 5 | | | | | | | |
| | | 3 | 7 | 1 | 5 | 2 | | |
| | | | | | | | 5 | |
| | | 8 | | 7 | 9 | 5 | | |
| 2 | 9 | | | | 6 | | | 8 |
| | 3 | | | 2 | | 7 | | |

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(Answers to all puzzles are on p. 22)



Crossword

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|--|----|--|----|--|----|--|----|----|----|
| 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | 4 | | 5 | | 6 | | 7 |
| 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | 10 | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 11 | 12 | | | | | 13 | | 14 | | | 15 | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 16 | | 17 | | | | 18 | | 19 | | 20 | | 21 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 22 | | | | 23 | | | | | | 24 | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 25 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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 and 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 by the Philistines (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 bringing back to life 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 and authority to do this to diseases (Luke 9:1) (4)

Lent Prayer Breakfasts – Saturdays 15th March to 12th April

ALTHOUGH ASH WEDNESDAY isn't until 5th March, once again it is time to consider our Lent Breakfasts, another set of interesting Saturday mornings – and a companionable start to the day. This year's title is:

Tricky Topics – What do we believe?

I don't know about you, but there are plenty of statements and phrases that I skate over in a Sunday morning service, Christian beliefs and dogma, often drafted long ago, that I never make time to think about or examine, for example, where or what is Heaven – or Hell?

In the course of the five Saturdays, we shall look at four topics and end, as usual, with our group discussion. The final list of topics will be published in the March Grapevine and a flyer distributed shortly.

We will follow the usual timings: breakfast from 9.30am, talk from 10am for half an hour to forty minutes, followed by questions. Finish at 11am.

Chris Dawson

Photo by [João Marcelo Martins](#) on [Unsplash](#)



The PCC in 2025

HOW MUCH DO you know about the rôle of the PCC (Parochial Church Council)? At the end of April we will be holding the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) when we need to elect five new members of the PCC. Being on the PCC gives you the opportunity to have a voice in the life of St George's. However, to be on the PCC you have to have been on the church Electoral Roll for six months and be a communicant.

What does the PCC do?

The first point to note is that St George's PCC is a charity and PCC members are trustees of that charity. As trustees they have responsibilities under charity law:

- to ensure that the PCC is carrying out its purpose for the public benefit
- to act in the best interests of the PCC
- to manage PCC resources responsibly
- to ensure the PCC complies with statutory accounting and reporting requirements

The PCC as a group

1. works with the incumbent (vicar) to promote the mission of St George's Church in the parish as a whole.
2. is responsible for the maintenance and repair of the church, its contents and the churchyard.
3. has overall charge of all the expenditure of the church.
4. is responsible for ensuring that the safeguarding policy is followed.

Following Elaine's retirement, the PCC has a rôle in the process for appointing a new vicar. Starting with a

meeting with the Archdeacon the PCC will need to draw up a Parish Profile, showcasing St George's to potential applicants, and determining the qualities they seek in the next vicar.

Every five years the PCC receives a detailed report on the state of the church building from the church architect. The report is due later this year. This will list any repairs which need to be done to maintain the building for the long term and the PCC need to prioritise the work and find the necessary funding.

Lois Kelly



"That's two t's in Matthew", said Osric



Music Scheme – February 2025

Sunday 2nd February – The Feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple – Candlemas

| | | | |
|-------------------|--|---|--|
| 10:15am | Baptism & Confirmation Service | 2:00pm | Greater Manchester ATC Parade Service |
| Setting: | A Mass for Worth Abbey – Greening | See Order of Service for details | |
| Hymns: | 262 O Lord my God, when I in awesome... 468 I danced in the morning... 301 God is here! As we his people... 513 Lord, the light of your love is shining | | |
| Anthem: | If ye love me – Wilby | | |
| Anthem: | When to the temple Mary went – Eccard | | |
| Voluntary: | Trumpet Voluntary in C Op. 5, No.1 – Stanley | | |

Sunday 9th February – The Fourth Sunday before Lent

| | | | |
|-------------------|---|---------------------------|--|
| 10:15am | Parish Communion | No Evening Service | |
| Setting: | Mass of St. Thomas – Thorne | | |
| Hymns: | 165 Christ is the King! O friends rejoice; 622 Will you come and follow me? To him we come – Jesus Christ our Lord, 548 One more step along world I go | | |
| Anthem: | 'Twas in the year that King Uzziah died – Wood | | |
| Voluntary: | A Prayer Song – Moore | | |

Sunday 16th February – The Third Sunday before Lent

| | | | |
|-------------------|--|---------------------------|--|
| 10:15am | Parish Communion | No Evening Service | |
| Setting: | A Mass for Worth Abbey – Greening | | |
| Hymns: | 558 Praise to the Lord, the Almighty,... 391 Blest are the pure in heart, 416 Father, hear the prayer we offer: 591 The Kingdom of God is justice and joy | | |
| Anthem: | View me, Lord, – Lloyd | | |
| Voluntary: | Chorale, Suite Gothique – Boëllmann | | |

Sunday 23rd February – The Second Sunday before Lent 128th Anniversary

| | | | |
|-------------------|--|-------------------|---|
| 10:15am | Parish Communion | 4:00pm | Choral Evensong |
| Setting: | Mass of St. Thomas – Thorne | Hymns: | 377 Angel-voices ever singing 211 We love the place, O God 530 Now thank we all our God |
| Hymns: | 202 Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God almighty! 413 Eternal Father, strong to save SP176 Let us build a house... 537 O God, our help in ages past, | Responses: | Rose Psalms: 147 |
| Anthem: | Locus iste – Bruckner | Canticles: | Evening Service in A flat – Harwood |
| Voluntary: | Tuba on parade – Marsh | Anthem: | Behold the tabernacle of God – Harris |
| | | Voluntary: | Nun danket alle Gott – Karg Elert |

Puzzle solutions

Easy Sudoku solution:

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 5 | 8 | 9 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 2 | 3 |
| 2 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 8 | 7 | 9 | 1 | 5 |
| 9 | 3 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 8 |
| 4 | 1 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 9 | 3 | 7 | 2 |
| 5 | 9 | 3 | 2 | 7 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 1 |
| 8 | 7 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 9 | 4 |
| 6 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 9 | 8 | 2 | 3 | 7 |
| 7 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 8 | 5 | 9 |
| 3 | 8 | 9 | 7 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 6 |

Intermediate Sudoku solution:

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | 2 | 1 | 9 | 6 | 7 | 4 | 8 | 5 |
| 8 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 9 | 7 | 2 |
| 5 | 7 | 9 | 2 | 4 | 8 | 3 | 1 | 6 |
| 7 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 9 | 2 | 8 | 3 | 1 |
| 6 | 8 | 3 | 7 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 9 | 4 |
| 9 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 8 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 7 |
| 4 | 6 | 8 | 1 | 7 | 9 | 5 | 2 | 3 |
| 2 | 9 | 7 | 3 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 4 | 8 |
| 1 | 3 | 5 | 8 | 2 | 4 | 7 | 6 | 9 |

Crossword solution:

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Regular Services at St George's

Services in church:

Sundays:

8am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.15am Parish Communion (also live streamed)
4pm Choral Evensong (last Sunday of the month, also live streamed)

Wednesdays:

9.30am Morning Prayer (also live streamed)
10am Holy Communion (BCP)
(during the winter, the Wednesday morning services are in the Parish Room)

Services which are live streamed only:

Mondays to Fridays: 9.30am Morning Prayer (also in church on Wednesdays)

The Gift of the Nativity

TODAY WE GOT a lovely surprise – a wonderful lady from church gave us a Nativity set to use in St George's School – it is absolutely beautiful – thank you so much!



Christmas Tree Festival 2024

IT WAS WONDERFUL to welcome around 3,000 people into the church who came to enjoy our Christmas Tree Festival and to watch their delight at the wonderful array of trees. I am endlessly amazed at the imagination and skills of some people in the design and execution of their trees as well as the wonderful ones where children have made their own offering for the tree.

It's gratifying to have tree entries from both our nearby Methodist and Catholic friends providing an ecumenical occasion and representing churches from within the locality. The Mayor of Stockport and the Mayoress popped in to see us as did Father Christmas who was here on both Saturday and Sunday. Amazing, given his heavy schedule at this time of year!

The Festival also provides a way back into church after a long absence or an upsetting experience such as a funeral of a loved family member. There is always someone from the ministry team available to have a chat with if appropriate and I know that many helpful conversations happened during the week.

I want to give my personal thanks to the fantastic team who plan and deliver the festival. When there was an unforeseen hiccup in the plans, they all swung into action to make sure that there were no gaps in the experience we provided. However, we really will need more help next time, so do please note in your diaries that help will be needed in the last week of November 2025!

Hazel Jenkins



Photos by: Hazel Jenkins, Stephen Renwick, Andy Clark and Jenny McKay

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