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The Parish Magazine of St Bartholomew with St Chad
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 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Chester



February 2026



**Love is patient;
love is kind;
love is not
envious
or boastful
or arrogant.**

1 Corinthians 13: 4

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Baptisms

31st January
Archer James Thwaites

Weddings

Funerals

It hurts

A little girl told her mother one day before lunch that her stomach was hurting. Her mother replied: "That's because it's empty, you have to put something into it!"

That evening the minister and his wife came for dinner. The minister looked a bit rough and explained that his head was hurting him. The little girl gave him a sweet smile and said encouragingly: "That's because it's empty, you have to put something into it!"



From Your Rector

I write this as I return to the parish following a five day silent retreat. It is part of my ministerial discipline that each year I take some time out to simply be with God. It is a time that I value greatly. This Retreat was unusual, in that I have never taken a retreat at the beginning of the year before. It **was also unusual in that I didn't arrive on retreat with an agenda - "God I need to spend time talking to you about", but rather with open hands and a heart and soul ready to listen for what God wanted me to hear.**

It became an invitation to "Play More". As I listened to God, so I realized that my life has become busy - busy with the good things of ministry - but leaving little time for me to enjoy rest and re-creation.

As I return, I do so, with the invitation from God to spend more time in prayer, more time taking exercise, and more time doing things which will nourish and strengthen me.

It strikes me that Lent gives us all the opportunity to take stock and to "reset". Where does God fit into the busyness of your life? Is God inviting you to draw closer to him and to be strengthened in your inner being?

My Retreat involved lots of walking in beautiful scenery - such a blessing to be able to picnic in January! The forecast before I left home was for rain every day! I also enjoyed doing a small cross stitch. One afternoon, I sat with a hot drink and just watched the birds on the feeders – all kinds of Tits and Finches, a greater spotted Woodpecker (what Joy!) and pheasants gathering up the crumbs on the ground.



I wonder what one thing you could do everyday during Lent that will allow you time to be consciously in the presence of God who loves you?

My Retreat ended with me walking along a river bank with lots of streams running off the hills and into the river. God invited me to stand in each stream (thankfully I had my wellies on!) and allow him to wash away the dirt and mess of life that clings negatively and drags us down.

I wonder, this Lent, if you could be open to God washing you?

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

(Hebrews 12:1-3)

With prayers for Blessed Lent

Revd Jane





A message from Ailsa



New Year Reflections: Beginnings, Blessings, and the Journey Ahead

As we step into a new year together, I'm always struck by how January holds a rare mix of stillness and anticipation. After the Christmas season—with all its light, joy, and holy busyness—January invites us to pause, breathe, and look both backward with thanksgiving and forward with hope. For many of us, the new year stirs a range of feelings. Some welcome the clean slate; others feel daunted by the months ahead. And yet, as Christians, we hold onto the assurance that God walks with us into every new beginning.

"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases... they are new every morning."
Lamentations 3:22–23

Those words remind us that God's "newness" doesn't depend on fireworks, resolutions, or calendars—His mercies are renewed each day. The turning of the year simply gives us a moment to notice what is always true: God is faithful.

Life at the Army Foundation College

I continue to serve as Chaplain at the Army Foundation College in Harrogate. As I write, the junior **soldiers are in the full flow of preparing for their Graduation Parade. It's a deeply significant time for them—full of excitement, nerves, pride, and a sense that life is about to open in many new directions.** Being among them at this stage of their journey is an annual reminder of what commitment and hope look like in practice. These young people, many leaving home for the first time, have embraced **discipline, teamwork, and the challenge of discovering who they are becoming.** Their graduation isn't simply a parade; it marks the end of one chapter and the start of another.

And of course, here in our parish, we have our own new beginnings to celebrate and nurture. Some are small and quietly personal; others are visible in our shared life as a church community. January is a wonderful time to ask:

- What is God inviting us to pay attention to this year?
- Where is He nudging us to grow?

And how might we support one another on the journey?

Whether it's deepening our worship, strengthening our hospitality, reaching out into our community, or simply being present for our neighbours, every step matters. As many of you know, my Army chaplaincy means I am away a lot of the time from the Parish, but whenever I am home it is a joy and privilege to pray with you, serve alongside you, and share in the life of this parish whenever that is possible.

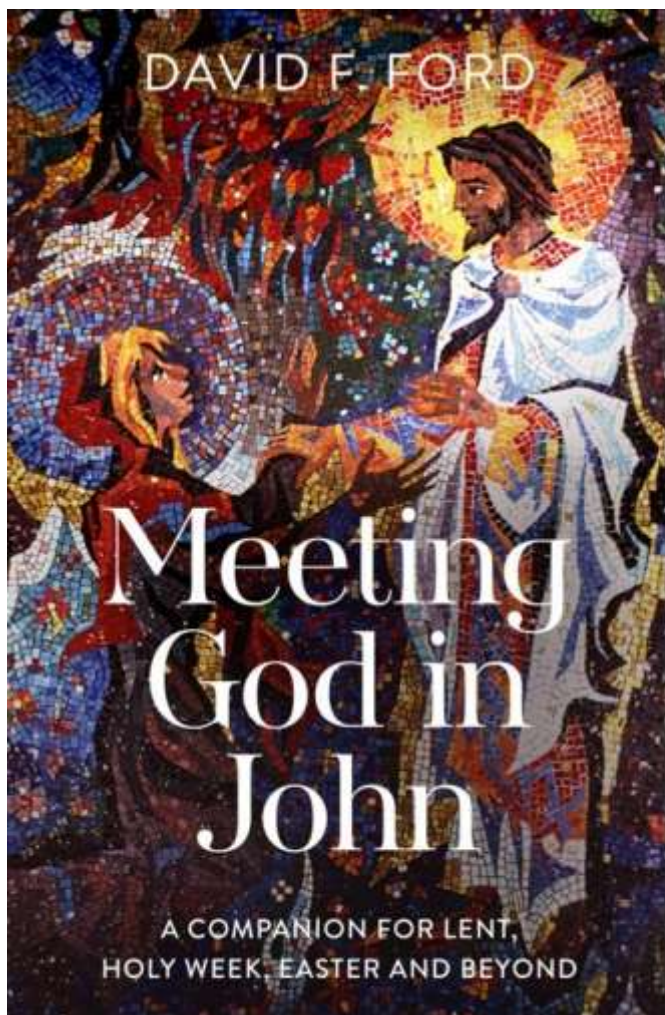
Whatever this new year holds for you—joys, challenges, changes—may you know the companionship of Christ with every step.

With love and prayers,

Ailsa

Chpln (Maj),

Chaplain, Army Foundation College Harrogate



Lent Group - Everyone Welcome

You will need to purchase this book
ISBN: 978-0-28108-963-5

Wednesdays at St Chad's 7.30-9.00pm

25th Feb Chapter 1
The Big Picture: Meaning, love, Jesus

4th March Chapter 2
Identity: "Who are you?"

11th March Chapter 3
Desire: "What are you looking for?"

18th March Chapter 4
Home: "Where are you staying?"

25th March Chapter 5
Glory: Meeting God in John

Meeting God in John - a Companion for Lent, Holy Week, Easter & Beyond

By David F. Ford, SPCK, £10.99

Whether you are completely new to John's Gospel or have read it many times before, this book offers an accessible and absorbing introduction to the main message of John's Gospel, packed with compelling observations into the personality and impact of Jesus, both in the first century and today.

It will leave you with a renewed appreciation of and enthusiasm for John's writing. Each chapter includes questions for reflection or discussion.

Scargill House,
Kettlewell, Skipton,
North Yorkshire,
BD23 5HU



Scargill Movement

**Revd Jane has booked on this weekend
in the beautiful setting of Scargill House.**

**You are invited to make your own booking (for
either of the options - both on the same week-
end) giving those who book the opportunity to
spend a weekend together.**

**Revd Jane would have space in her car for two
other people. If more than that book in, others
will need to be able and willing to drive.**

**Scargill tends to book up quite quickly,
so Revd Jane suggests that you
book sooner rather than later.**

If you do book, please let Revd Jane know.

Renew, refresh, restore

**22-24 May 2026 (Fri-Sun)
with Scargill Community**

£174.50

House full board

**Phew! Just when you thought you couldn't go on, along comes a weekend at
Scargill designed just for you! Drop everything and book in for a rest and a
treat. The community would love to look after you and make your time with us
enjoyable and fruitful.
Worship and teaching will be optional: do as much or as little as suits you. We
will also celebrate Pentecost this weekend – a chance to touch base with joy
and receive a blessing.**

To book, go to:-

<https://scargillmovement.org/visitevent/renew-refresh-restore-pentecost/>

Living Waters

**22-24 May 2026 (Fri-Sun)
with Naomi Heywood**

£174.50

House full board

**An outdoor retreat – gentle water-themed walks in
the Wharfe Valley will provide you space and time to reflect with God. Connect
with the Creator through His creation and develop your ability to hear God to
speak into your life through your everyday experiences. Walks will be fairly
easy but footpaths may be uneven in places.**

**Naomi Heywood is a freelance Mountain Leader who loves the way God
reveals Himself through His world. You can get a taste for her retreats by
exploring @walkthewalk_retreats on Instagram.**

Further information from Naomi:

**An outdoor retreat – gentle water-themed walks in the Wharfe Valley will
provide you space and time to reflect with God.**

**Connect with the Creator through His creation. The exact programme will
depend on our group and the weather, but riverside, waterfalls, reservoirs and
possibly even stepping stones are all options as we explore together what
Jesus meant when he declared that if we believe in Him then streams of living
water will well up within us (John 7:38). Walks are likely to be 4-5 miles long,
and won't include much ascent. All walks offered are optional, and are
designed to be accessible to people of an average level of fitness.**

**Hear God's voice: come away and develop your ability to hear God to speak
into your life through your everyday experiences. We will take time out on our
walks to reflect on our environment and our experiences. A retreat room with
prayer stations, reflections and other ways to spend time with God will also be
available throughout the retreat.**

**Naomi Heywood is a fulltime freelance Mountain Leader who loves the way
God reveals Himself through His world. You can get a taste for her retreats by
exploring @walkthewalk_retreats on Instagram.**

**"My prayer for you as you set time aside for retreat in the beautiful surrounds
of Scargill is that not only will you receive the refreshment and inspiration from
God that will reenergise your return to everyday life, but that you will also look
forward to hearing Him in and amongst the more mundane moments and
environments of your 'normal'!"**

To book go to:-

<https://scargillmovement.org/visitevent/living-waters/>

Introducing Dame Sarah Mullally - the 106th Archbishop of Canterbury

The Rt Revd and Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE officially became Archbishop of Canterbury on 28th **January 2026, when she was legally confirmed at St Paul's Cathedral.**

Most people know that she had been Bishop of London for several years, and that she is the first woman to ever become Archbishop of Canterbury. But what else do you know about her?

1. She was born in Woking in 1962, and is one of four children, with two sisters and one brother.
2. She attended Winston Churchill Comprehensive School and Woking Sixth Form College. She went on to South Bank Polytechnic and Heythrop College, University of London
3. She worked as a nurse in the National Health Service, which she has described as "an opportunity to reflect the love of God". She specialised as a cancer nurse and became a ward sister at Westminster Hospital, before being made Director of Nursing at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital.
4. In 1999, at the age of 37, she was appointed the Government's Chief Nursing Officer for England in the Department of Health. She was the youngest person ever to be appointed to the post. Bishop Sarah was made a Dame Commander of the British Empire in 2005 in recognition of her outstanding contribution to nursing.
5. She had become a Christian at the age of 16. While working as the Chief Nursing Officer for England, she discerned a call to ordination and entered training ministry at the South East Institute for Theological Education.
6. **She was ordained in 2001 and served her curacy in St Saviour's Battersea Fields, initially as a self-supporting minister, before leaving her government post in 2004, which she has described at the time as "the biggest decision I have ever made".**
7. In 2012 she was installed as Canon Treasurer at Salisbury Cathedral and three years later took the role as Suffragan Bishop of Crediton in the Diocese of Exeter, the fourth woman to become a Bishop in the Church of England.
8. On 12th May 2018, Bishop Sarah was installed as the 133rd Bishop of London at **St Paul's Cathedral, the first woman to hold the role.**
9. Bishop Sarah sits in the House of Lords as one of the Lords Spirituals, having been introduced on 24th May 2018. Her maiden speech paid tribute to the NHS on its 70th anniversary, telling the Lords: "I am the Bishop I am today because of that first

vocation to nursing, and compassion and healing are constants at the heart of who I am."

10. She was sworn in as a member of the Privy Council in March 2018 and became **Dean of Her Majesty's Chapels Royal in July 2019.**
11. **As Bishop of London, she led the Church of England's Living in Love and Faith** process from 2020 to 2023. This included the formative stages of discernment and decision making which saw the introduction of the Prayers of Love and Faith for same-sex couples.
12. **She has served on the Church's National Safeguarding Steering Group and is also** Lead Bishop for Health and Social Care issues.
13. As a Lord Spiritual, she has drawn from both her pastoral experience and her background in nursing and healthcare and has played a key role in the ongoing debates on assisted dying.
14. This year, she chaired the Triennium Funding Working Group that developed the Church of England's three-year spending plan that led to significant investments in local churches and parish clergy.
15. Archbishop Sarah is married to Eamonn, an Irish-born IT and Enterprise Architect who enjoys beekeeping and volunteering as a London tourist guide.
16. The couple have two grown-up children, Liam and Grace.
17. Archbishop Sarah has continued her interest in the health service having been a non-executive director at the Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust then at Salisbury NHS Foundation Hospital.
18. She is Chair of Christian Aid.
19. She has spoken openly about her dyslexia, describing her difficulties with writing and reading.
20. In her spare time, she loves cooking, walking and pottery.



God in the Sciences January : Science and Miracles

We live in a world where we can expect the sun to rise tomorrow and the milk to pour out of the bottle when we tilt it over our cereal. But for God, the properties of matter and the biological processes that we know and read about in text-books are simply the usual ways He works. If He chooses to do something unexpected to demonstrate something about His character, His relationship with us, and His purposes, then He will.

A group of 14 UK-based science Professors wrote to the Times in 1984, saying that “We gladly accept the Virgin Birth, the gospel miracles, and the Resurrection of Christ as historical events. We know that we are representative of many other scientists who are also Christians standing in the historical tradition of the churches.” For the non-believer, I would suggest a thought experiment: if God exists, why should He be bound by the same laws of physics as us?

Professor Christine Done is an Astrophysicist at the University of Durham. In the book *True Scientists, True Faith* (Monarch, 2014) she writes: “Even when I was an atheist I used to get cross at discussions...on how all Jesus’s miracles could be physically explained. To me, once you have believed in a God, a supernatural being, then it’s obvious that supernatural stuff could happen, since any God who can make the physical universe and its laws can presumably suspend those laws in any time and way He chooses.”

There are also miracles which appear to be a case of wonderful timing. The wind blew all night and the Israelites crossed the Red Sea on dry land, for example. The biblical writers don’t seem especially interested in distinguishing between wonders that seem to break the usual rules of how things happen and those that don’t.

Many in Jesus’ audiences were not won over by His wonders. Most of the people in the crowds who ate the food He produced out of nowhere were quite happy to turn on Him when the religious authorities decided He was dangerous. We can only make sense of something unexpected, such as an answer to prayer for healing, in the context of a growing relationship with God. The exciting task for a Christian is to explain what this interaction looks like, and to demonstrate what ‘your kingdom come’ looks like in our communities. God works through us in words, works *and* wonders.



God in the Sciences February: Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

Every person who ever lived was once a sperm and an egg. Those two cells fused together, and in nine months they turned into a living, breathing, human being. Each of us emerged from this same embryonic development process, which is highly complex and organised, but variable enough to turn out a unique individual every time.

If you like order – such as neat piles of stationery, or tidy colour-coded files – you will enjoy this story. One of the most important stages of an embryo's development is when each section of the body, from head to rump, takes on its identity. Each part is told what shape to take, and which limbs or internal organs to grow: legs or arms, lungs or kidneys, and so on.

The most beautiful part of this body-patterning process is that it brings the dimensions of time and space together in such a neat way. The DNA instructions for the procedure, known as genes, are organised in the order in which they are needed during development *which is also* the order in which they appear on the body. No other sets of genes are known to be arranged in such a tidy pattern.

So, as the embryo develops, the tissues near the head end activate the first sets of genes. Those active genes then make all the proteins needed for that part of the body to grow and develop in the right way. The tissues just below the head then switch on the second set of genes, and so on. A wave of activation passes down the embryo, specifying each section of the trunk in turn.

The Wisconsin-based developmental biologist Jeff Hardin often quotes Psalm 139 to express the wonder of embryonic development. The Psalmist did not understand how this process happened, but he knew that it was a marvellous thing. *"For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb...your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth."*

The story of the tidy genes brings out the hidden beauty in the very early stages of embryonic development. The more biologists get to find out about how we came to be born, the more we can say, *"I am fearfully and wonderfully made"*!



God in the Arts January : The Church Door - **St John's Adel**

George Herbert is a much-loved Anglican poet, who died just 40 years old in 1633. His volume of poems **'The Temple' was published later that year. In it the poet leads the reader through the church door into the building to meditate on all that is seen inside.** That procession through the church is the theme of our monthly articles this year. We shall visit a variety of English churches as we make our **way from the font to the altar. We begin this month outside the glorious Norman building of St John's Church, Adel, near Leeds in West Yorkshire.**

The church has a very fine south doorway with ornate carving. The oak door is a Victorian copy of the original door; the Sanctuary Ring is a replica of the Norman ring/knocker. It shows a monster about to swallow a man, but open the door and there is safety and protection away from the **harms of the world. It is the theme in St John's Gospel of Jesus as the door to the sheepfold.** Enter through Jesus, we are told, to find the safety of the flock, and also to find nourishment and renewal. We can stand at the door of this beautiful church or at the door of our own churches. It opens and welcomes us to enjoy the friendship and refreshment within.



The door could stay closed, protecting us from the storms of life without that threaten us like the dark creature in the Norman sanctuary ring of Adel church. But we know that in the church building we have no abiding city. Our worship ends and the door will open once again to lead us out into that world. Within we have found nourishment in the sacrament of the altar, in the word of scripture, and in the fellowship of the flock. We go out to share those gifts with the world that others may come to know Jesus as the door that leads to life eternal.

God in the Arts February : The Church Font

Previously in the series we stood at the doorway of a church in West Yorkshire. Open the door of that church or any church and the first thing to greet our eyes is the font. It marks the beginning of Christian life in the church. Many fonts have fine carvings of the seven sacraments that nourish the Christian. Others are octagonal in shape: a reminder of Noah and his seven family members saved in the ark from the Flood.



This month's font is a symbol of the ship sailing the seas of life. It is in St George's Church, Anstey, in Hertfordshire. Around the font are carved mermen - mythical, pagan creatures that belong to a pre-Christian age which the newly baptised is called on to renounce. When it was carved in the 11th-12th centuries, baptism occurred within eight days of birth. Babies would be immersed three times into the waters of the font: dying to the old life symbolised by the mermen, and rising to new life, to be clothed in a white robe and given a lighted candle as a guide through life. They would then grow up in the church, moving from that west end through the upturned boat of the nave to the altar at the east end.

That movement is a sign of the pilgrimage we are all called to make. Like a journey on the seas of this world, we may sail through tranquil waters and peaceful days. There may be times when the skies are cloudy and the waters stormy. Martin Luther, when he was faced by struggles like that in his life, would **say the words 'I am baptised' to strengthen and reassure himself. 'I am baptised' we can say as we travel in faith, knowing that there is always a light to guide and a goal that is sure and eternal.**

Winnie the Pooh and Lent 2026

Remember the Winnie the Pooh stories? And Kanga's insistence on Baby Roo's taking his Strengthening Medicine? It's 'really quite a nice taste when you get used to it', she explained, although I'm not convinced Baby Roo always agreed.

It can be helpful to think of Lent as a sort of medicine; an opportunity to strengthen us in the things that are good, rein in other facets of our personality, and reset the compass to the true North of following Jesus. A Spring-clean of the soul, if you like.

Baby Roo (and Piglet on the one occasion he was subject to it) found Strengthening Medicine not to their liking, and we may groan inwardly at the thought of 'giving up something for Lent'. Think of what lies behind this 'giving up'. It's so that we may be strengthened, our character refined, our prejudices examined, our junk thrown overboard, and we may come to Passiontide and Easter more fit to walk the way of the Cross, and rise in new life with Jesus at His Resurrection.

Nor is Lent just a case of giving up chocolate. One year I gave up Facebook for Lent, having spent far too much time scrolling through it each day. It freed me to do other, more constructive things. And instead of giving up, why not take up something you've been meaning to do but never got round to; something life-affirming, something good for God.

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, which this year falls on 18th February. Many Christians go public with their intention to keep a good Lent by being 'ashed'- the sign of the Cross made on the forehead in a mixture of ash and holy oil at a special service that day. The ash is usually the burnt remains of the palm crosses from last year. Having been ashed, the intention of the 40 days of Lent is to maintain a steady course closer to God, symbolised by the giving up of something - like chocolate - which has a hold on us. We walk with Jesus on the way to the Cross, mindful of the 'riches of God's kindness, forbearance and patience' as St Paul has it, and mindful too of Jesus' choice of the Cross as a way for us to enter those riches more fully.



The Seven Deadly Sins: Pride

Our new series looks at the 7 Deadly Sins, a list compiled by Pope Gregory 1 in AD 590 to describe the nature of sin. This month we consider pride, *'the beginning of all sin'* (Augustine).

Pride is preoccupied with self and denies the need for others or God. We see it present in the first sin, when Adam and Eve wanted to become like God (Genesis 3:5).

What does pride look like? Jesus told the story of two men, a Pharisee and a tax collector, who went to pray in the Temple (Luke 18: 9-14). The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: *'God, I thank you that I am not like other people, robbers, evildoers, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'* (11,12). He illustrates how pride is essentially putting ourselves in God's place and believing we can run our own lives. It's subtle and self-deceptive and eats away our lives: *'Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.'* (Proverbs 16:18).

So how do we deal with pride? The answer is humility. The tax collector stood at a distance *'he would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'* (13). This man was right with God, because he acknowledged his sin and his need for forgiveness. Humility is being realistic about ourselves, and acknowledging our total dependence on God. We develop it by giving ourselves wholeheartedly to God and repenting of our desire to do things our way: *'Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that He may lift you up.'* (1 Peter 5:6).

'Humility is not in thinking less of yourself, but in thinking of yourself less' (Rick Warren).



The Seven Deadly Sins: Greed

'How much money is enough? Just a little bit more.' (John D Rockefeller).

In the second of our series on the Seven Deadly Sins, we are looking at greed. It is the overwhelming desire for *more and more* in our lives. In our consumer culture it can be hard to tell the difference between needs and wants - e.g. buying a new laptop or shoes for different occasions? We need to ask the question: *How much is enough?*

Jesus was approached by a man who wanted Him to settle a dispute about family inheritance. He said, *'Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.'* (Luke 12:15). Jesus goes on to tell the story of a rich farmer who builds bigger and bigger barns, but whose life is unexpectedly cut short by death. He concludes: *'This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich towards God.'* (21).



How do we overcome greed and become *'rich towards God'*? Paul writes: *'I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.'* (Philippians 4:13). Overcoming greed involves learning to be content in whatever situation we find ourselves, in need or plenty. Paul is not saying that there is anything wrong with having food, money or possessions, but these cannot be the primary source of our contentment. The secret of contentment is found in a transforming relationship with Jesus: *'I can do all this through Him who gives me strength.'* (13). He is the one who enables us to overcome greed and know riches.

'Contentment makes poor men rich; discontent makes rich men poor.' (Benjamin Franklin).



**Ian
Pickavance
Irby
Pottery**



**7.30pm St Chad's Hall
Friday 20 February**

St Chad's, Roslin Road CH61 3UH

Tel: 0151 648 1816 email: office@thurstaston.org.uk

Future Events

Saturday 7th March 2-4pm, St Chads Hall

Coffee afternoon in aid of Celendine Wood and Leprosy Mission

Friday 20th March 7.30pm, St Chads Hall

The Samaritans listening with out Judgement

***Thursday 16th April Bodnant Gardens and Betws-y-coed**

timewells.co.uk/itineraries/8428-bodnant-gardens-and-betws-y-coed

***Saturday 25th April Harrogate Spring Flower Show**

timewells.co.uk/itineraries/8358-harrogate-flower-show

** These are both day trips with "Timewells" to book your place call 0151 526 3209 or www.timewells.co.uk, pick up is from Hamilton Square*

Ruths Reflections

Hello again and a belated New Year to you all. I can't believe that it is 2026, where have all the years gone?

I hope you all had a good Christmas, I know that if you are on our own it can be a very lonely time and there was very little worth watching on television!

Before Christmas life was quite busy with various Christmas meals out. I really enjoyed them, it is so nice not to do the cooking! It culminated with two meals out on the same day, a Christmas Buffet lunch at the Shippons, which was delicious and in the evening a Hotpot supper, again delicious. Unfortunately I picked up a very nasty virus which put me out of action for a week before Christmas. Luckily I had recovered enough to cook dinner on Christmas Day for the family. I had to treat it like a military exercise to get every thing done so I could get to church on Christmas morning, which as I have said before, is very important to me. It was also really nice that we could ring the bells for the service. The meal went well and I have to admit ,delicious, although , as I write this, the pigs in blankets are still in the freezer!

The week between Christmas and New Year I was mostly on my own and I did feel lonely at times, and I am glad that most of my activities have started again.

I have taken very few photographs the weather has not been to going out with the camera, neither have I done any gardening, again due to the weather and my health.

My friends, that I have been away with for the last 3 years , and I have booked our holiday for this year. we are going to Puglia in southern Italy, which is something to look forward to.

The W.I. has no outings in January, again due to potentially bad weather, but we have a programme of interesting outings for the rest of 2026, as well as a full varied programme for our monthly meetings in the Village Hall.

So on that happy note I will say good bye.

Take care and stay safe everyone

Ruth

What's the Big Idea? January

An Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament : Song of Songs

The title of this book, '*Solomon's Song of Song*' (1:1), claims to be written by Solomon, and while his name is mentioned seven times and several verses speak of the '*king*', the book may be more about Solomon rather than written by him. However, it is reasonable to assume that Song of Songs was written in the tenth century BC, during Solomon's reign (971-931 BC).

The focus of the Song is God's choicest gifts of love and the voice of this love belongs to a woman, the beloved. It is her experience of love, both as the one who loves and as the one who is loved, that is most clearly expressed. The Song begins with her wish for her lover's kiss and ends with an invitation for intimate love. It describes the intimacies of married love as God intends it to be. She speaks profoundly of love; of its beauty and delight; its exclusiveness (2:16); its spontaneity (2:7) and its overwhelming power: '*Place me like a seal over your heart, like a seal on your arm; for love is as strong as death, its jealousy unyielding as the grave. It burns like blazing fire, like a mighty flame. Many waters cannot quench love; rivers cannot wash it away.*' (8:6,7)

God created man and woman, and established marriage as His purpose for society (Genesis 1:27; 2:20-24). This Song is part of the wisdom literature and shows us how to receive and live the gift of God's love with thanksgiving and celebration. However, the Song also speaks symbolically of the experience of intimacy to be found in our relationship with Christ: '*My lover is mine and I am his...and his banner over me is love.*' (2:16,4).



What's the Big Idea? February

An Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament : Isaiah

Isaiah is often regarded as the greatest of the prophets. His name means '*The Lord saves*' and he began his 50-year ministry in 740 BC when King Uzziah died (6:1). Many scholars challenge the claim that Isaiah wrote the entire book, however there are striking verbal parallels between chapters 1–39 and 40–66.

Isaiah spoke during the stormy period marking the expansion of the Assyrian empire and the decline of Israel. The Assyrians destroyed the northern kingdom in 721. Judah was left to decide whether they would make alliances with other kingdoms or rely on God to protect them. Isaiah warns Judah that her sin would bring captivity in Babylon, which eventually took place in 586.

Isaiah sees the Messiah coming from the line of David. He speaks of a new temple being established (ch2); a child born with a new kingdom (ch9) and judging differently to other kings (ch11) as well as the nature of His suffering (ch53). The '*suffering servant*' (chapters 42–53) also applies to Israel as a nation, who are called to be a '*light for the Gentiles*' (42:6). Not surprisingly Jesus applies Isaiah's words to His own life and ministry. eg Is 61:1 quoted in Luke 4:18. Throughout his book Isaiah presents the full dimensions of God's judgment and salvation as '*the Holy One of Israel*' (6:1), as well as the '*Sovereign Lord*' far above all nations (40:15–24).

Isaiah looks forward to the promise of a new city of Zion (chs 60–66), in which the people offer praise to the Holy One of Israel. '*Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind.*' (65:17).

Rev'd Jane's sister Lynne and her Brownies are raising funds for The North West Air Ambulance. The Quiz is printed below. If you would like to support this, you can follow the instructions at the bottom of the quiz. Or you are welcome to give your completed quiz with your £1 entry fee to Revd Jane, or pop it in an envelope and push it through the Rectory door (77 Thingwall Rd)



**9th Birkenhead North Brownies
North West Air Ambulance Quiz.**

**The Brownies are completing their
Helicopter Heros badge and are raising
funds for the North West Air Ambulance
charity (NWAA).**



£1 entrance fee (all proceeds to NWAA)

Small prize for the winner.

If more than one person gets all answers correct,
they will be placed in a draw to choose the prize winner.

Below are some anagrams linked to helicopters and NWAA (some have clues!)

E.G chlieoeprt – helicopter

1. Most visited hospital, fldasor yarol -----
2. tokcpci -----
3. In addition to helicopter, rcticila race rca -----
4. Busiest, dstarayu-----
5. atil troor-----
6. rsnainsismot-----
7. adngiln kdiss-----
8. cmgeneyer-----
9. buaclnmae-----

10. capimrade-----
11. vlfsiageni-----
12. nami troor aldbe -----
13. liat mobo -----
14. lufe-----
15. igeenn-----
16. geineren-----
17. dheapil-----
18. paidr qeeunecs ditincoun-----
19. dalmcie pmqeuitne-----
20. toror sicd-----
21. on vremngeotn dnuifgn -----
22. lipot-----
23. 3245 this year, sismonis-----
24. Turhst nda flti -----

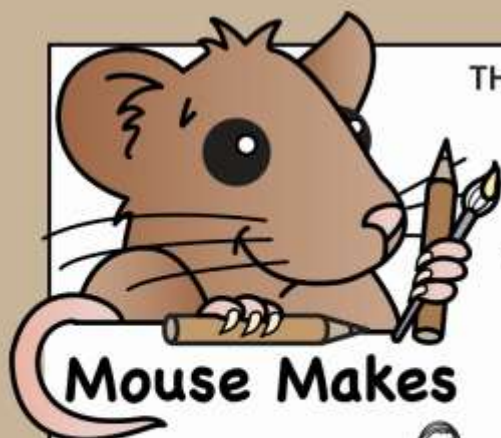
Please return to 9th Birkenhead North Brownies by 28th February c/o Lynne Turner, 5 Old School Way, Claughton, Birkenhead, Merseyside CH41 0HB. Enclose a stamped addressed envelope if answers are required.

Name:

Address:

Contact Number:

PS. Don't forget to include your entry fee £1.00



Read the story in
Luke 4:1-13

THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

After Jesus was baptised in the River Jordan where did the Holy Spirit lead him to? v1

How many days was Jesus being tempted by the devil? v2

What did Jesus eat? v2

What did the devil tempt Jesus to turn a stone into? What did Jesus say? v3-4

What did the devil offer Jesus if He worshipped him? What did Jesus say? v7-8

What did the devil ask Jesus to do? What did Jesus say? v9

FIRST TEMPTATION

THE
DEVIL SAID:

"If you are God's Son order this stone to turn into bread."

JESUS REPLIED:

"Man shall not live on bread alone."

Read Deuteronomy 8:3

WE LEARN:

Read the Bible
Learn God's word.



SECOND TEMPTATION

THE
DEVIL SAID:

"I will give you power and wealth if you worship me."

JESUS REPLIED:

"Worship the Lord your God and serve only Him."

Read Deuteronomy 6:13

WE LEARN:

Put God first
Worship only Him.

1



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



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

JESUS • BAPTISED • RIVER • JORDAN • HOLY SPIRIT • LED
WILDERNESS • DESERT • FORTY DAYS • HUNGRY • DEVIL
TEMPTATION • STONE • BREAD • WRITTEN • SON • WORLD
KINGDOMS • GLORY • WORSHIP • SERVE • GOD • HIGH
JERUSALEM • TEMPLE • SON • JUMP • DOWN • LIFT • FOOT • LORD • TEST • LENT

THIRD TEMPTATION

THE
DEVIL SAID:

"If you are God's Son throw yourself down, the scriptures say God will take care of you."

JESUS REPLIED:

"Do not put the Lord your God to the test."

Read Deuteronomy 6:16

WE LEARN:

God cares, trust
Him do not test Him.



The Presentation of Christ in the Temple/ Candlemas

Candlemas, 2nd February, comes exactly 40 days after Christmas. In New Testament times 40 days old was an important age for a baby boy: it was when they made their first 'public appearance'. Mary, like all good Jewish mothers, went to the Temple with Jesus, her first male child - to 'present Him to the Lord'. Thus, we have the Festival of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Luke 2: 22-40). So where does the Candlemas bit come in? Jesus is described in the New Testament as the Light of the World, and early Christians developed the tradition of lighting many candles in celebration of this day.

Candlemas

Forty

Days

After

Christmas

New

Testament

Important

Age

Baby

Boy

First

Public

Appearance

Mary

Jewish

Temple

festival

presentation

described

light

world

candles

lighting

early

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

Donations of Flowers for Church

You can make a donation
“in memory of”, “in celebration of”
or just because you like seeing flowers in church!



Please sign up at the back of church.

You do not have to arrange the flowers - the flower team can do that for you.

Money for your donation (with your contact details and the date for your flowers) should be given to the parish office in a clearly marked envelope, or by BACS indicating that it is Flower Fund, followed by email to the office.

St. Chad's Tots and Tinies

St Chad's Church (Roslin Road, Irby)

Every Thursday 9.30-11.30am
(Term Time Only)



£1.50 for one Adult and one child - All Welcome

Additional children £1.00
Additional Adults £0.50



Parents/Carers will be
responsible for their child(ren)
during the sessions

For further information
please contact **Allison**
via the Parish Office 648 8169

A warm welcome at the **Warm Hub**

Every Tuesday 9.30am - 12.30pm

Open to everyone, so please drop in!

**St. Chad's Church, Roslin Road, Irby CH61 3UH
0151 648 8169**

***There are a range of activities
including quizzes, Games,
jigsaws, Crosswords etc***

***Guest Speaker
24th February***

Oboe Quartet



**The Warm Hub
belongs to a
growing national
network of
Places of Welcome**



Jigsaw Library

Over the time that Warm Hub has been operating, we have been gifted many jigsaws. While we always have a jigsaw in progress at Warm Hub, there are many waiting for us to use in the future. Rather than these jigsaws just piling up, with the winter nights ahead we would like to make these jigsaws available for individuals to borrow and then return to us. We can't vouch that all the jigsaws are complete as they are donated to us but if you would like to borrow one then we can make them available on a Tuesday morning when the Warm Hub is open - 9.30 to 12.30 at St Chad's

Susan Smale



You can make donations to Foodbank by placing items (non perishable food and toiletries) in the box by the office door at St Chad's.

Need a Meeting Room?

At St Chad's we have a large hall
and some smaller rooms.

Booking Enquiries should be made by emailing
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For more information and prices please go to the website
<https://www.thurstaston.org.uk/hall-and-room-hire/>



St Bartholomew's and St Chad's
on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/stchadsstbarts/>

If you are already on Facebook it is easy to find and "like" the page. Just search for "stchadsstbarts" or "St. Bartholomew's Thurstaston, with St. Chad's, Irby" and you will find us.

If you "like" the page you will receive notifications when we add events and other informative posts.

From our page you can also share individual posts and events with others you may think would like to hear about us and our events.

Please do share this page with your friends.

You do not have to be on Facebook to view our posts.

We also have a Twitter Feed:-

@StBartsStChads



Did you know.....

.....back in the year 1976, a committee based at St Chad's Church was trying to raise funds for the RNLI.

They decided to hold an exhibition of paintings by local Irby residents. The exhibition was so successful that the artists decided to join together to form an "Irby Artists Association".

....and the rest, as they say, is history!

The Irby Artists are proud to have had such a long association with St Chad's.

We welcome new members and actively provide support to those wishing to try their hand at painting & drawing, with weekly Monday afternoon sessions, indoors during the winter, and outdoors in the summer months, and two exhibitions of members works per year.

For more information, contact the Chair:

Alan McMahon, Text:07889 404917

Or Email: almac48@virginmedia.com

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When you shop online, visit easyfundraising first, click through to the retailer and shop as normal. Everything costs exactly the same

3. Earn donations

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**A Big Thankyou for all the stamps
 that have been collected this year,
 there has been a huge response**

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St Chad's Church Office on 0151 648 8169 or
E-mail: office@thurstaston.org.uk

Advertising space is sold in good faith.
 The Parochial Church Council and/or Editor can take no responsibility for the quality
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Contacts

RECTOR: Revd Jane Turner		PLEASE NOTE: Rector's Rest Day - Tuesday
The Rectory, 77 Thingwall Road, Irby, Wirral, CH61 3UB		
Telephone: 0151 648 1816 (<i>Day off Tuesday</i>)		E-mail: rector@thurstaston.org.uk
CHURCH OFFICE: Mrs K Butler St Chad's Church, Roslin Road, Irby, CH61 3UH		
Telephone: 0151 648 8169. E-mail: office@thurstaston.org.uk		
OPEN TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY 9.30am - 12.30pm (term time)		
PARISH WEBSITE:		www.thurstaston.org.uk

Churchwardens Vacant churchwarden@thurstaston.org.uk	Verger Mr Jon Oliver 648 1754
Curate Revd Gaynor Kydd revdgaynor@thurstaston.org.uk	Organist Mr Craig Vickers 648 7405
Associate Minister Revd Ailsa Whorton CF (Chaplain to the Forces, Army). revdailsa@thurstaston.org.uk Ailsa works full time and will reply to emails when she is able around her work commitments 678 4733 (Evenings only and messages will be passed on to Ailsa via her husband Derek)	Bellringing - Tower Captain Dr Peter Robson 648 6691
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PCC Treasurer Vacant pcc-treasurer@thurstaston.org.uk	Junior Church (3-10) and Seniors (11-16) Mrs Julie Deboorder 07599286893
Parish Safeguarding Team Peter & Karen Robson and Janet Trigg safeguarding@thurstaston.org.uk 648 6691	Rainbows/Brownies/Guides www.girlguiding.org.uk or Freephone 0800 1 69 59 01
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St Chad's Hall Booking hallbookings@thurstaston.org.uk	Christian Aid Representative Vacant
	Children's Society Representative Mrs Jean Heath 648 6015
	Leprosy Mission Representative Julie DeBoorder 648 6331
	Adoption Society Representative Mrs Chris Rostock 648 1112

Baptisms and Weddings

To arrange a baptism or wedding, please telephone the Rector,
Revd Jane Turner on 0151 648 1816
or the Church office on 0151 648 8169.

February 2026 Services

EVERY Wednesday 10.30am HC at St Chads

- Sun 1st February 9.00am BCP Communion at St Bartholomew's
10.30am Communion at St Bartholomew's
- Sun 8th February 9.00am BCP Communion at St Bartholomew's
10.30am All Age at St Chad's
- Sun 15th February 9.00am BCP Communion at St Bartholomew's
10.30am Morning Worship at St Bartholomew's
- ASH WEDNESDAY – The Start of Lent
18th February 10.30am HC at St Chads
- Sun 22nd February 9.00am BCP Communion at St Bartholomew's
10.30am Holy Communion at St Chad's
with Junior Church
- Sun 1st March 9.00am BCP Communion at St Bartholomew's
10.30am Communion at St Bartholomew's

