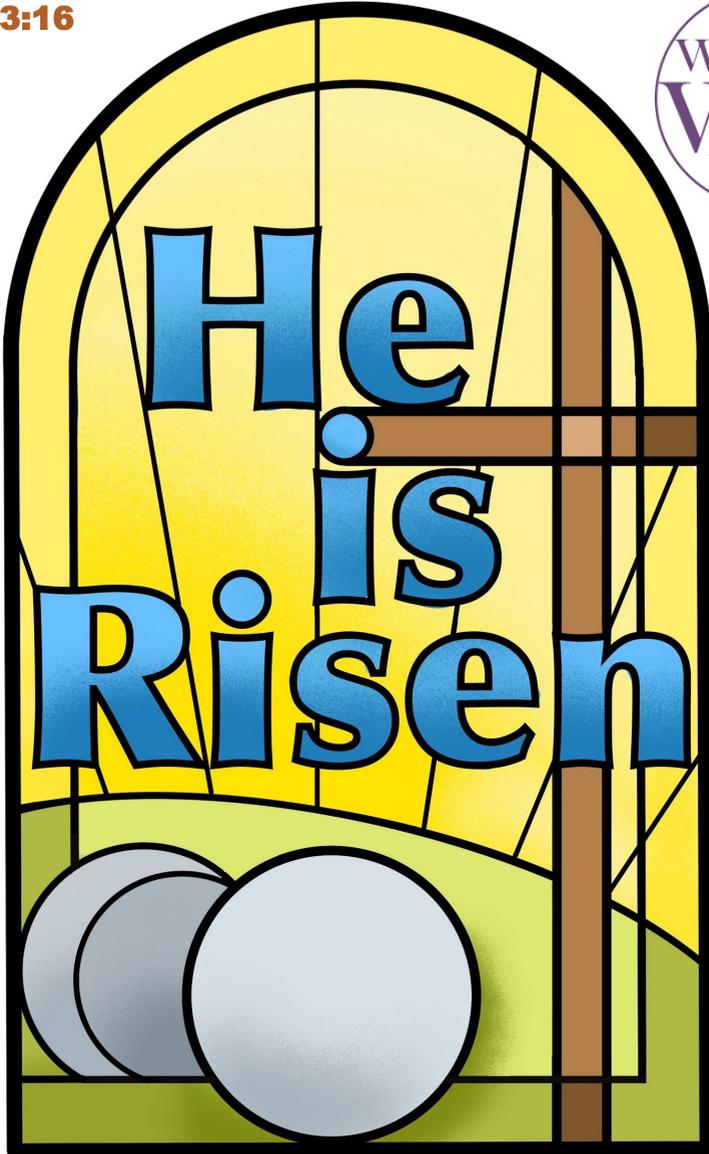


Wigan West

PARISH MAGAZINE

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16



April 2026

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son...”

John 3:16

Dear Friends,

As we approach Easter once again, I find myself marvelling at the extraordinary depth of God’s love for us. John 3:16 may be one of the most familiar verses in Scripture, yet it continues to speak with fresh power every time we hear it. “For God so loved the world...” – these words remind us that the heart of the Christian faith is not a theory, a ritual, or an institution, but a relationship grounded in divine love.



At the centre of this season stands the cross. Jesus’ sacrifice was not an accident of history, nor a moment of defeat, but the very means by which God chose to draw us back into life and hope. Through Christ’s death, our brokenness, sin, and fear are met with forgiveness and mercy. And through his resurrection on Easter morning, we are shown that death does not have the final word. Hope lives. Love wins. Light breaks into every darkness. This is the good news we cling to, and the good news worth sharing.

In a world that often feels uncertain or overwhelming, Easter offers us renewed assurance that God is with us and for us. As Christian families and communities, one of the most powerful ways we can nurture this hope is through prayer. I want to encourage you—whether you live alone, with children, with older relatives, or with friends—to take moments to pray together. It might be a simple thank-you to God at the end of the day, a brief prayer before school or work, or a time once a week to share worries and joys before God. These small habits help us grow in God’s love and grace, and they strengthen the bonds between us.

As we celebrate this season of resurrection, I would also love to invite you to join one of our worshipping communities across Wigan West. Whether you are a regular or haven’t been for a while, you are warmly welcome. Come as you are. Come with questions, with hopes, with doubts. Come and discover again the God who loved the world enough to give everything for us.

May you know the peace and joy of the risen Christ this Easter.

With my love and prayers,

Fran

Revd Fran Humphry
Team Vicar and Hub Leader
Wigan West Parish

ST JAMES LADIES' FRIENDSHIP GROUP

February was our first proper meeting of the year back in St Clements, where we had not a bad turnout considering our dwindling numbers.

Alison came along and updated us on what she's been doing recently. She certainly needs plenty of energy. She was telling us about organising the Christmas dinner in the St James centre for 60 people, having the excellent Jo at her side. As well as preaching at services on some Sundays (always a good sermon), she performs Baptism and funeral services, runs the pantry, Lifelines cafe and choir and is looking forward to being involved in the wedding ceremony of her youngest son, Andrew, in Ireland this year. My apologies if I missed anything.

At the beginning of March, Kathleen Smith invited anyone of the congregation to a buffet lunch after the morning service to celebrate her upcoming 90th birthday. It was lovely, all the tables were full and decorated with balloons. Once again, the work of Alison and Jo. Kathleen kindly asked for donations to church in lieu of gifts. Hope she has a happy birthday when it comes around as she has come through several health issues in the past few years and never complains.



Our March meeting is on Thursday the 19th, 7pm as usual in the lounge at St Clements Court, Worsley Mesnes Drive, WN3 5UX

No speaker but we are crafting something for Easter. Brown Owl is working on something again!

There will be a speaker at the April meeting – Denise Oakley from St Pauls. Many of us will recognise her face but won't be aware of her involvement with Guide Dogs, which is the subject of her talk. Should be informative so anyone interested please come along. The nights will be lighter too as the clocks will have gone forward.

Margaret xx

Sending everyone Easter blessings and the hope of renewal in the season of Spring

“When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself.” Leviticus 19:33-34

I have seen several news stories over the last few months about how the anti-immigration end of politics is trying to look Christian, and how people who become anti-muslim may realise that perhaps they should go to church if they're so keen on defending Christianity, so I thought it appropriate to write this short article to remind us that God is absolutely in favour of the immigrant, and mistreating immigrants sets you in opposition to God.

Each of us is made in the image of God (*Imago Dei*, Gen 1:26-27). That means that each and every one of us is created to reflect God's character, and we possess inherent dignity. This is true for the people in our congregations and it's true for people who have moved to Wigan from another country no matter their religion. Every human has been created in the image of God.

The law laid down in Leviticus quoted at the top of the page ends “for you were foreigners in Egypt.” God reminds his people that they were once foreigners in a foreign land, that sometimes the shoe is on the other foot. Jesus too was a refugee—as a baby an angel warned Joseph to flee to Egypt to keep Jesus safe (Matt 2:13-15). God considers being kind to refugees and immigrants so important that he made his own people immigrants and his own son a refugee so that we might understand how important it is to look after them.

When asked what must we do to inherit eternal life Jesus' answer was that we need to love God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind, and we need to love our neighbour as ourself (Luke 10:25-37). When asked ‘*who is our neighbour?*’ is Jesus told the story of the Good Samaritan—a story where a foreigner provides much needed aid to someone who he would normally consider an enemy, and Jesus finishes with “Go and do likewise.”

There are lots more examples in the Bible I could you to tell you about to demonstrate that **God loves immigrants** without condition and expects us to do the same. We know that God's love is unconditional and that ours should be too—we see Jesus heal ten lepers even though only one came back to thank him (Luke 17:11-19). Our love for our neighbour, which includes immigrants, does not depend on who they are, where they're from, or how they behave. Jesus tells us that sacrificial love—love that costs us—is how we'll be known as His (John 13:24-25).

It is easy to get drawn into arguments about whether or not immigrants (legal or illegal) are harming our country, but that is a distraction from the truth that God commands you to love and care for them. Even if everything the right says about immigrants is true it is still our duty as Christians to love them.

Highfield Cricket Club

As Chairman of our local cricket club, I thought it would be nice to share a short update with the village as we look ahead to the new season.

As April is in full swing, preparations at the ground are well underway. Our fantastic grounds team have been working extremely hard over the winter months preparing the square, outfield, and facilities so everything is ready for the start of the season. There is a huge amount of work that goes on behind the scenes, and I would personally like to say a big thank you to everyone who has given up their time to help get the club ready.

Away from the cricket pitch, we are also very excited to be hosting our **first Music Festival at the club on 27 June**. It promises to be a great evening for the whole community with tribute acts celebrating the music of Take That, Robbie Williams, ABBA, George Michael, Blondie, and Oasis, along with some great support from local artists. Tickets are already selling fast, so if you'd like to join us for what should be a fantastic night, please visit the cricket club website to secure your tickets.

Winter training is also well underway for both our junior and senior players, with everyone working hard on their skills ahead of the season. It's particularly encouraging to see so many young players involved and enjoying their cricket.

We are always delighted to welcome new players to the club, and we would love to hear from any **boys or girls interested in junior cricket**. We are also always grateful for the help of **volunteers** who would like to get involved in supporting the club in any way.

The cricket club has always been a big part of Highfield life and we're looking forward to welcoming everyone back to the ground over the coming months. Whether you're playing, supporting, volunteering or simply enjoying a summer evening at the club, you will always receive a warm welcome.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

Mike Gregory, Chairman



St Matthews Guides

At the end of the half term break we took three Young Leaders and seven Guides to Waddow for a weekend of outdoor activities. These included, on Saturday, Zip Line, climbing a 20-metre tree, Crate stacking up to 10 Crates and standing on them as they were stacked up, Archery which was called off due to the heavy rain!! On Sunday it was Nightline which was undertaking an obstacle course of tyres to be crawled through, nets to be crawled under and other such obstacles. This was done blindfolded by just holding a rope to guide the girls round, this was extremely muddy due to the previous night's rain so needless to say there were a few slips. At the end the girls were reminded of what it could be like with no sight at all. Finally, Bushcraft was the last activity and ended with toasting marshmallows over an open fire.



On our return to Guide meetings we had celebrated a belated Chinese New Year evening by writing our name in Chinese and discovering the animal for the year of our birth.

The following week was dedicated to decorating craft items for Mother's Day.

The Guiders, Amy, Georgia, and Sheila

16th Wigan Town St. Matthew's Rainbows

On 22nd February Girlguiding celebrated Thinking day and this year, the theme was 'Friendship', looking at the connections we have with other people involved in Girlguiding around the world. We spent the evening thinking about what we would like to tell another Rainbow about ourselves or about what we get up to at our Rainbows meetings. Then the girls completed the 'penny for your thoughts' activity, for this they decorated paper plates which were our 'pennies' with things like their hobbies, favourite things or kind words to say to others.



One evening, we welcomed the ladies from Daffodil Dreams who came to tell us how the money we raised a few months back will be used to help families in Wigan! It was lovely to hear how and why they started the charity and all the things they do to help people in need.

Georgia, Gill, Jennifer & Lesley

St. Matthew's 14th Wigan Town Brownies



Some of our Brownies went to Waddow Hall in Clitheroe during half term for an activity weekend. We were joined by some of our Guides and some girls from other local units. We would like to thank our local councillor Marie Morgan who along with our other local councillors paid for the transport to get to and from Waddow Hall through the Brighter Borough fund, making the trip more accessible and affordable. Our girls had a fantastic time and did us proud, taking part in six outdoor activities - Bushcraft, Archery, Night Rope, Crate Challenge, Zipline and Tree Climbing...lots of fears overcome!

We also renewed our Promise together, joining in a world-wide Thinking Day celebration. We celebrated Thinking Day again on our return with the rest of our unit, lighting candles and sending greetings to Brownies in other parts of the world.

The Brownie Guiders

...continued from back page

In many ways, sport reflects some of the themes we journey through during Lent and Easter – discipline, perseverance, teamwork, and hope. Lent reminds us that the journey of faith is not always easy, but Easter assures us that new life and fresh beginnings are always possible.

As we continue through this Lenten season and look forward to Easter morning, may we all find renewed hope, encouragement, and the joy of the resurrection in our lives and in our community.

MAGAZINE DEADLINE

Please have any content to the editors by the 15th of the month.

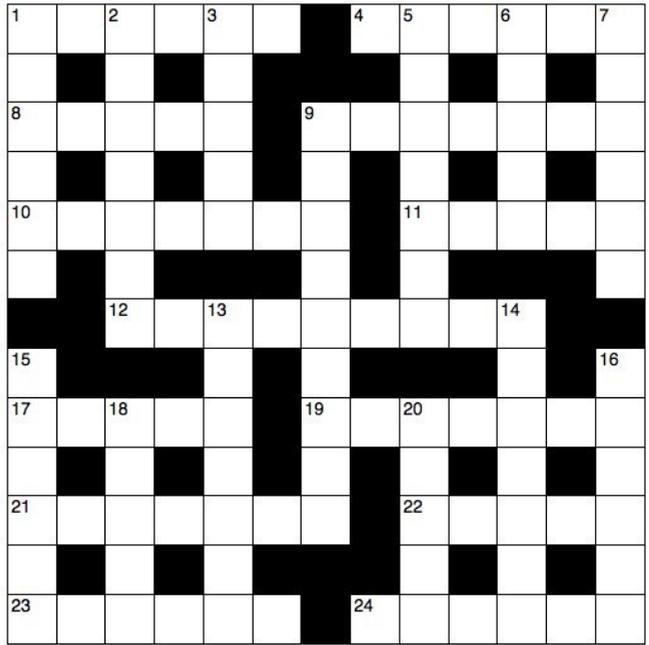
If you would like a copy of the magazine in **LARGE PRINT** please email Barbara at

hubadmin.west@churchwigan.org

Follow us on Facebook for up-to-date news and information

WiganWestHub 

Across



1 Relating to the whole universe (6)

4 The disciple who made the remark in 8 Across (John 20:24) (6)

8 'Unless I see the nail marks — — hands, I will not believe it' (John 20:25) (2,3)

9 He urged King Jehoiakim not to burn the scroll containing Jeremiah's message (Jeremiah 36:25) (7)

10 Baptist minister and controversial founder of America's Moral Majority, Jerry — (7)

11 'Look, here is — . Why shouldn't I be baptized?' (Acts 8:36) (5)

12 Repossessed (Genesis 14:16) (9)

17 Port from which Paul sailed on his last journey to Rome (Acts 27:3-4) (5)

19 'Moses was not aware that his face was — because he had spoken with the Lord' (Exodus 34:29) (7)

21 Roonwit, C.S. Lewis's half-man, half-horse (7)

22 Grill (Luke 24:42) (5)

23 'The lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the — apostles' (Acts 1:26) (6)

24 'I was sick and you looked after me, I was in — and you came to visit me' (Matthew 25:36) (6)

Down

1 Coastal rockfaces (Psalm 141:6) (6)

2 Academic (1 Corinthians 1:20) (7)

3 Publish (Daniel 6:26) (5)

5 For example, the Crusades (4,3)

6 11 Across is certainly this (5)

7 He reps (anag.) (6)

9 Liberator (Psalm 18:2) (9)

13 Man who asked the question in 11 Across was in charge of all her treasury (Acts 8:27) (7)

14 They must be 'worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine' (1 Timothy 3:8) (7)

15 The human mind or soul (6)

16 'O Lord, while precious children starve, the tools of war increase; their bread is — ' (Graham Kendrick) (6)

18 'We played the flute for you, and you did not — ' (Matthew 11:17) (5)

20 Bared (anag.) (5)

Even as Jesus ate that last Passover meal with his disciples, he warned them he was about to be betrayed. He took the bread,

blessed it, broke it and gave it to them; he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them to drink. The Old Covenant, based on Law, was ticking away its final hours; the New Covenant, based on Christ's body and his blood, was about to be ushered in. Jesus prayed in Gethsemane that this fearful cup might be removed from him, but even more, that God's will might be done. And it was. From Easter onwards we can only approach God through his Son, Jesus Christ, not on our own merit.

Word Search



Jesus

Ate

Last

Passover

Meal

Disciples

Warned

Betrayed

Bread

Blessed

Wine

Thanks

Drink

Covenant

Law

Old

New

Body

Blood

Gethsemane

Cup

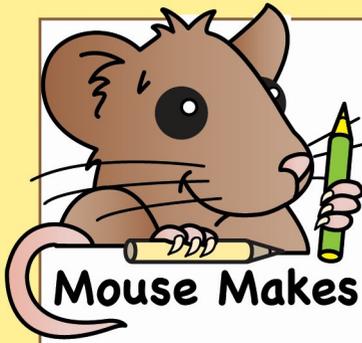
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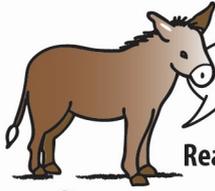
Easter

Approach

God



EASTER WITNESS - I WAS THERE



I carried Jesus into Jerusalem

Read Matthew 21:1-11



I handed Jesus over to be crucified

Read Matthew 27:11-26



We watched Jesus die

Read Mark 15:33-41

I nailed Jesus to the cross

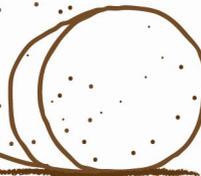
Read Mark 15:16-32



I laid his body in my tomb



Read Mark 15:42-47



I guarded the tomb

Read Matthew 27:62-66



We saw the empty tomb

Read Matthew 28:1-10



and spoke to the angel

Jesus is alive!

He ate a meal with me!



Read Luke 24:13-35

GOOD NEWS
HOSANNA
DEATH
VNCOE
UI
UAHNA
RO
MIREV
SYU
ALIVET
DR
RISENE
OK
YOTHOR
NS
PALMS
QKA
RPILAT
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RHIQUA
KE
OCJESU
SL
STOMB
VDY
SRYEMPT

JESUS • DONKEY • PALMS
HOSANNA • PILATE • THORNS
CRUCIFY • NAIL • CROSS
QUAKE • DEATH • BURY
TOMB • STONE • EMPTY
ANGEL • MARY • HEAVEN
RISEN • ALIVE • GOD
GOOD NEWS • CHRIST
SAVIOUR • EASTER • JOY

April Services



meets every other Tuesday during term time at St Matthew's School Hall from 3.30pm until 5pm

LIGHTHOUSE

meets in St James' school every Tuesday during term time from 3.30pm, every Sunday at 2pm, and during the week in different homes.



Wellspring

meets every Wednesday from 3.30pm until 5pm in St Paul's Hall and School

St Matthew's	St James with St Thomas	St Paul's	Lighthouse
April	April	April	April
2 Thursday 10.30 Holy Communion 18.30 Holy communion	2 Maundy Thursday 18.30 Holy Communion	3 Good Friday 11.00 Good Friday Service	5 Sunday 14.00 Family Communion
3 Good Friday 10.00 Good Friday Service	3 Good Friday 14.00 Last Hour	5 Easter Sunday 9.00 BCP Holy Communion 10.30 Holy Communion	12 Sunday 14.00 Family Worship
5 Easter Sunday 06.15 Sunrise Holy Communion 10.30 Holy Communion	5 Easter Sunday 10.30 Holy Communion 13.30 Baptisms	8 Wednesday 10.00 Holy Communion	19 Sunday 14.00 Family Worship
12 Sunday 9.00 BCP Holy Communion 10.30 Family Parade Service	12 Sunday 10.30 Service of the Word or Baptisms	12 Sunday 10.30 Holy Communion	26 Sunday 14.00 Family Worship
15 Wednesday 18.00 Evening Prayer	19 Sunday 10.30 All Age Holy Communion	15 Wednesday 10.00 Holy Communion	ALL SERVICE IN ST JAMES' SCHOOL
19 Sunday 9.00 BCP Holy Communion 10.30 Holy Communion	26 Sunday 10.30 Traditional Holy Communion 18.30 Open Table	19 Sunday 10.30 Service of the Word	
22 Wednesday 18.00 Evening Prayer		22 Wednesday 10.00 Holy Communion	
26 Sunday 9.00 BCP Holy Communion 10.30 Morning Praise with Baptisms		26 Sunday 10.30 Service of the Word	
29 Wednesday 18.00 Evening Prayer		29 Wednesday 10.00 Holy Communion	

Faith Café @ St James' Centre

Faith Café will be closed on Saturday 4 April 2026, Holy Saturday, to allow our volunteers to have a well-earned rest. We will be open again on Saturday 11 April.

Bereavement Support @ St James' Centre

The bereavement group will meet in church at 1pm on Thursday 9 April and Monday 27 April. The group has been set up to help those who are bereaved either recently or some time ago. They also welcome those who are feeling lonely and isolated. For more information, please contact David on 07404 605015.

Lifelines Dementia Friendly Café @ St James' Centre

The café will meet on Friday 10 April at 1.30pm in church. We will be having something to eat and our "whose baby" competition. Don't forget to let Alison have a picture of you as a baby. Prizes if you get them all right. We welcome everyone, especially those living with dementia.

Lifelines Dementia Friendly Choir @ St James

The choir will meet in St James church at 1pm on Monday 20 April. Everyone is welcome to join us for a sing. It is a music group aimed at those living with dementia and their carers but we welcome everyone. Refreshments will be served.

Open Table @ St James' Centre

Open Table Church Wigan will meet at St James Church at 6.30pm on Sunday 26 April. We especially welcome the LGBTQI+ community to this Holy Communion service. We meet at 6pm for refreshments and start the service at 6.30pm. We invite you to come as you are.

We collect used stamps all the year around - We have a collection box in each church building.

Leave a border of 1cm (half an inch) when trimming around the stamps and if possible be kind enough to sort them into British & Foreign stamps. Stamps will then be forwarded to a charity. Thank you.

Please pass all stamps on to
Marjorie Latham
41 Howden Drive
Wigan
WN3 5JT 01942 234880

Altar Flowers
St. Matthew's

5 April – Easter Lilies Mrs J Foster
12 April – Mrs A Wood
19 April – vacant
26 April - vacant

The logo for Church WIGAN features the word "Church" in a black serif font, followed by a stylized heart icon with a white outline and a black shadow. Below this, the word "WIGAN" is written in a large, bold, black sans-serif font.The logo for Tom's Pantry consists of the words "Tom's Pantry" in a red, slightly irregular, hand-drawn style font, set against a bright yellow rectangular background with rounded corners.

West Hub's Food pantry is located in St James' church and is open to everyone in the local community—you do not need to be referred to shop with us. We are open the following times:

Tuesday 9.30-11.45

Wednesday 9.30-11.45

Saturday 11-2pm alongside our Faith Café

The annual membership fee is £5 and then a suggested donation of £3 for up to 15 items (subject to availability).

As well as helping you budget we are looking after the environment by intercepting perfectly edible food which would otherwise have ended up in landfill.

“The earth is the Lord's and all that dwells therein”

Please see previous page for Easter Closures

UKRAINE STILL NEEDS OUR SUPPORT

Please pray for Ukraine.

Can you help with our Ukraine appeal?

Please donate cash or goods.

Call Vitalii on 07476 778083 to arrange delivery or collection.

*Give to the work of your local worship community
in the Parish of Wigan West*



This Parish is registered with the Parish Giving Scheme which allows you to give to this Parish securely and safely online. Please click 'Regular Giving' to set up a monthly, quarterly, or annual Direct Debit or One-Off Gift or make a single gift using your Debit or Credit Card.

Parish name: Parish of Wigan West **Parish code:** 220220288 **Diocese:** Liverpool Diocese

Address: Parish of Wigan West, Wigan Investment Centre, Waterside Drive, WIGAN, Lancashire WN3 5BA

www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/parish-of-wigan-west-wigan/

Tel: 0333 002 1260

THE SHED



NEEDS YOU!

All Men of Wigan
are welcome at The Shed meetings.

We meet the 1st Saturday
of every month

from 9:30am - 11am at
St Matthew's Cricket Club

Little Stars

Toddler Group

Term time

ONLY

Free Play, Snacks, Story Time & Singing!

Little Stars Toddler Group

St Paul's Hall behind Bumblebee's Nursery, Clapgate Lane Off Warrington Road, WN3 6SB

MONDAYS 9:30am - 11am

Term time only!

Cost is only £1.50 for
ONE adult & child

(Additional child is 50p)

From Birth to
School Age Children!



All Welcome!

Donations

In memory of Gordon Carruthers
Birthday Memories of a dearly loved
husband, dad & grandad
**From Susan, Michelle, Andrew &
Family**

Donation.

From Derek Swift

Donation:

**In support of Palm Sunday
performance of The Crucifixion**

Donation:

In lieu of Altar Flowers

In lieu of church flowers in memory of
Tony

from Barbara Jenks

In loving memory of John Menard
from Barbara

In loving memory of our dear Dad
John Menard
from Carl, Jonathan & Jenny

In loving memory of a dear friend Ann
Harrington (30th March)
from Barbara

One off Gifts to Church

We welcome gifts for different things we
need or a one-off Gift and here are our
BACS details let us know if we can Gift
aid it too.

Wigan West PCC

Lloyds Bank

Sort: 30-90-89

AC: 58811360

If it is for a special gift please put a
reference of What and let Jeff McCann
know our treasurer for the Parish.
jeffmccann11@hotmail.com

Baptisms

Evelyn Aurora Dalton	St Paul's
Caden James Fowler	St James'
Charlie Ceri Elliot.	St James'
Ozzy William McAndrews	St Matthew's
Arthur Alan Banks	St Matthew's

Burials and Funerals

St James with St Thomas

22/2/26	Ann Summers	62yrs
24/2/26	Eileen Armstrong	84yrs

St Matthew's

John Hewitt	81yrs
Joyce Wright	80yrs
Alan Priestley	77yrs

St Paul's

10/02/26	Russell Hewitt	63yrs
20/02/26	Joan Connor	89yrs
24/02/26	Leonard Fawcett	97yrs

N.B. *If you have occasion to make
out a cheque to the parish, please
make it payable to **Wigan West
PCC**. Cheques made out to the old
parishes will soon no longer be valid.*

The Parish of Wigan West is the Church of England in the West of Wigan—covering Worsley Mesnes, Poolstock, Goose Green, Hawkley Hall, Winstanley, and Highfield—the former parishes of St James with St Thomas, St Paul’s, and St Matthew’s.

We are made up of different worship communities with many different styles and settings used for worshipping God, including our own buildings of St James with St Thomas (where *Tom’s Pantry* is), St Paul’s and its hall, and St Matthew’s and its hall.

Have a look at our Facebook page for details of everything from online coffee and chat to traditional services, as well as the latest news.

Church Wigan Team Rector *Revd Neil Cook* neil.cook@churchwigan.org

The Parish of Wigan West

Hub Leader

Rev Fran Humphry 01942 803320

Warden *Ann Birch* 01942 227036

Warden *Martin Gaskell* 01942 741340

Treasurer *Jeff McCann* 07595 882 321

Minute Secretary

None

Clergy Administrator:

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St James’ with St Thomas’

Distinctive Deacon

Revd. Alison Brown 07806 798030

Assistant Wardens

Carol Simm

Jo Baines 07956 030669

Organist

David Goulden 01942 245710

Flowers

Jean Hogan 01942 492888

Bereavement Support

David Berry 01942 386987

Sunday School

Jodie 07549810711

Primary School Executive Headteacher

Miss J Broom 01942 703952

Baptism Team

Margaret Baxendale 07906 615501

Joyce Matthews 07733 108040.

Lifelines *St James’ Centre*

Revd. Alison Brown 07806 798030

Little Stars *St Paul’s Hall*

Lucy Haigh 07900 252 361

Wellspring *St Paul’s Hall*

Local Missional Leader

Lucy Haigh 07900 252 361

Lighthouse

Local Missional Leaders:

Jes Rusling 07827 326 290

jes@jesandsam.com

Sam Rusling 077 22 99 4923

sam@jesandsam.com

Shine *St Matthew’s School*

Rev Sam Swan

sam.swan@churchwigan.org

All information correct as of March 2026

St Matthew's

Assistant Wardens

Andrea Wood 07734 447699

Sheila Albers

Elizabeth Gaskell

Reader *Colin Hesketh* 07712 431105

Organist *Sue Gordon* 01942 214955

Deputy Organist

Colin Hesketh 07712 431105

Bereavement Support

Iain Matthewson 07595 898737

Bowling Club

Keith Harris 01942 211518

Choir *Sue Gordon* 01942 214955

Church Fellowship

Matthew Jones 07930 867209

Cuppa & Chat

Barbara Jenks 01942 213101

Friendship Group

Dave Whitter 07836330324

Boys Brigade

Jim Harrison 01942 218465

Primary School Headteacher

Mrs A Barron 01942 747818

Girl Guiding

Rainbows:

Jennifer Halliwell 01257 433894

Or 07808811490

Gill Marsh 01942 207723

Brownies

Joanne Tabener/Elizabeth Gaskell

14thwigtownbrownies@gmail.com

Guides

Helen Albers 07960 920587

St Paul's

Assistant Wardens

Cliff Unsworth 01942 933772

Maureen Gower 07753 168301

Pam Wilkinson 01942 716668

Geoff Birch 01942 227036

Reader Emeritus

Arthur Hubbard 01942 321977

Reader *Gordon Fath* 01942 621173

Flowers *Pam Wilkinson* 01942 716668

Mother's Union

Anne Hubbard 01942 321977

Sunday School

Lucy Haigh 07900 252 361

Craft Workshop

Gillian Greenwood 01942 825670

Friends Together

Lynn Conroy 01942202249

Linda Berry 01942 492521

House Groups

Anne & Arthur Hubbard 01942 321977

Mike & Gill Greenwood 01942 825670

Primary School Headteacher

Mrs K Mowbray 01942 243068

Need to book a hall?

St Matthew's Church Hall:

Matthew Jones 07930 867209

St James Centre:

Revd. *Alison Brown* 07806 798030

St Paul's Church Hall:

Darren Speakman 07456 840803

BAPTISMS If you wish to enquire about Baptism please attend a 10.30am service at any of our churches and ask to speak to someone from the Baptism Team afterwards.

WEDDINGS *Gordon Fath*: wedding.west@churchwigan.org

FUNERALS Church Wigan Funeral Coordinator: 01942 705641, 07754 569022, funeral.coordinator@churchwigan.org

Wardens Corner

Lent is always a special time in the Church calendar. It is a season when we try to slow down a little, reflect, and spend more time drawing closer to God as we prepare to celebrate the joy of our Lord's resurrection on Easter morning. It invites us to look again at our faith, to pray more deeply, and to renew our trust in the hope that Easter brings.



One of the highlights of Easter morning for me will once again be the sunrise Communion service on the cricket field at 6:15am, led by our Team Rector, Rev. Neil Cook. There is something particularly powerful about gathering at dawn, as the day begins, to celebrate the resurrection together. The quiet of the early morning, the rising sun, and the shared worship make it a truly moving and uplifting occasion. I do hope that as many of you as possible will be able to join us.

Eastertide also coincides with the start of the cricket season, which for me personally is always an exciting time of year, even after many years of involvement in the game. There is something about the arrival of spring, the longer evenings, and the return to the cricket field that feels like a natural reflection of the new life and renewal that Easter celebrates.

Last season was my first serving in the new role of club chaplain at Highfield Cricket Club. It is not always easy to describe exactly what the role involves, and I am still very much growing into it and discerning how best to serve in that capacity. At its heart, however, chaplaincy is about presence – simply being there for people. Whether it is offering a listening ear, quiet encouragement, or spiritual support when needed, the aim is to make faith visible and accessible in everyday life, including on the sports field.

Sport can be a place of great joy, but it can also bring its own pressures and challenges. Players experience the highs of victory and the disappointments of defeat, injuries, frustrations, and sometimes difficult moments off the field as well. A chaplain's role is to walk alongside people through all of that – celebrating the good times and offering support when things are tougher.

I am also part of Church Wigan Sports Chaplaincy, which continues to grow. We now have seven chaplains working with a variety of grassroots clubs and organisations across the area. These range from here at Highfield Cricket Club at Laithwaite Park to the Snakepit Catch Wrestling gym and the William Foster sports site in Ince. It is encouraging to see how churches can be present within local communities in this way, supporting people where they already gather and share their lives. ...continued on page 5