

Wigan West

# PARISH MAGAZINE



LET ALL THAT YOU DO BE  
DONE IN LOVE. 1 CORINTHIANS 16:14

February 2026



# Love and Renewal

Dear Friends,

As we turn the page into February, our calendars remind us of several significant moments in the life of faith and community. St Valentine's Day often brings thoughts of love and affection, but it also offers us an opportunity to reflect on the deeper love that underpins our lives—the love of God that calls us to love one another generously and sacrificially. **“Let all that you do be done in love.”** (1 Corinthians 16:14).



Soon after, we come to Shrove Tuesday, a day traditionally marked by pancakes and celebration before the solemnity of Ash Wednesday. On Ash Wednesday, we receive the sign of the cross in ash—a powerful reminder of our mortality and our need for God's grace. It marks the beginning of Lent, a season of prayer, reflection, and renewal. Lent invites us to slow down, to examine our hearts, and to prepare for the joy of Easter.

Amid these spiritual rhythms, nature offers its own gentle encouragement. The first snowdrops and crocuses of spring begin to appear, small yet resilient, pushing through the cold earth to herald new life. They remind us that even in the quiet and the waiting, God is at work bringing forth beauty and hope.

As we journey through this season together, may we embrace both the love that binds us and the grace that sustains us. Let us look for signs of God's presence—in our prayers, in our relationships, and even in the simple wonder of a snowdrop or a crocus.

## A Prayer for the Season

Lord God, as we enter this time of Lent, help us to walk closely with You. Teach us to love as You love, to forgive as You forgive, and to hope as You give hope. May the signs of spring remind us of Your promise of new life. Renew our hearts and guide our steps, that we may follow Christ faithfully through these coming weeks.

Amen.

With love and prayers,

**Fran**

Revd Fran Humphry

Team Vicar, Wigan West Parish

## St Matthews Guides

Before we finished our meetings for the Christmas break, Mrs Chris Webster came and spent an evening with the Guides showing them how to decorate the canvas bags she had brought for each girl. The girls then decorated their own bag with some lovely results, took the bags home to finish them off by sealing the designs with a hot iron mostly done by Mum.



We completed the Healthy Sleep badge, which was a great success, the girls came in PJ's and brought their own blankets to use during the evening. It was a very restful and quite night. See attached photo.

On the lead up to Christmas we concentrated on Christmas crafts and the last night was a film night watching Nativity, accompanied with popcorn and other snacks.

We resumed our meeting on 12 January with an observation task to find as many signs as possible and notices the girls could find some were more observant than others, we ended the night with some games organised by our Young Leaders Lydia, Ava, and Kaitlyn.

The Guiders, Amy, Georgia, and Sheila

## 16th Wigan Town St. Matthew's Rainbows

Happy new year! We welcomed the Rainbows back after the Christmas break, all ready for the new year. The girls were very excited to share what they had been up to over Christmas and what their favourite gifts were.



We started the new term with the girls thinking about what makes them individual and unique and how they could be strong leaders. They designed their own shields that included some of their favourite things, including their hobbies and some of their favourite people.



We are looking forward to seeing what the new year will bring and seeing the fun activities we will be getting up to.

The Rainbow Leaders

## ST JAMES LADIES' FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Happy New Year everyone !

When we decided to not belong to the Mothers' Union, we needed a new title, which I always say is the Ladies Friendship Group. However, some say Fellowship Group. I really can't remember, but we are friends who share fellowship, and we also are happy to invite men to our meetings, so what's in a name?!

We had to find a temporary new home after the October meeting as they were having work done in St Clement's and so couldn't accommodate us for a couple of months.

Fortunately, we were immediately welcomed into the St James Centre and meetings will resume in February.

In November, our own Jean Hogan helped us to make Christmas table decorations with silk Poinsettias and live foliage. We all are enjoying these crafting sessions and they looked smashing.

Later in November, we donated a kneeler to church, worked by Marjorie Latham, to the memory of our dear friend, Jean Currey. We kept it secret from her husband, David, as a surprise. It has pride of place now in "his pew"

December was our Christmas buffet, prepared by the amazing Alison and Jo.

They certainly did us proud and we thank them for their hard work.

Alison has agreed to come and speak to us in February to update us on her work, she has become





our 'go to' speaker for the new year as we never tire of listening to her good-natured speaking.

See you all 19 February 19, St Clement's Court lounge, 7pm.

As usual, everyone is invited to attend any of our meetings, male or female. We would really like to see some new faces so that we can continue to keep going.

There's no obligation to come every time and it's usually light-hearted, no fixed charge just a voluntary donation, and tea and biscuits provided.

Margaret - 07906 615501

Joyce - 07733 108040

*May the New Year bless you with unwavering faith  
That guides your steps,  
Illuminates your path,  
And fills your heart with hope and strength  
Throughout the year ahead.  
May God shower you and your family with love and happiness  
Amen.*



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## Advance notice - Palm Sunday 29 March 2026

On Palm Sunday, March 29, St. Matthew's choir and friends will be performing "The Crucifixion" by John Stainer. The work was first sung at a series of special Lenten Thursday services on 24 February 1887 at Marybone Parish Church. It was first performed in the United States at St. Luke's Church, Baltimore on 3 April, 1887. Due to good press coverage it became a firm favourite with parish churches in Britain, the Empire, and the United States. The work consists of recitatives, solo numbers, choruses, and congregational hymns.

We are very lucky to have two professional singers: John Cunningham (Bass) and Stephen Newlove (Tenor) and Michael Kelsall, from St. Luke's, Orrell, as our organist.

Please come and join us on March 29<sup>th</sup> in St. Matthew's Church at 6:30 pm. It is FREE, though there will be a retiring collection!

Sue Gordon

## In Loving Memory of Fred Smith

We record with sadness the death of Fred Smith, who passed away peacefully at Dr Gray's Hospital, Elgin, on 5 January aged 81.

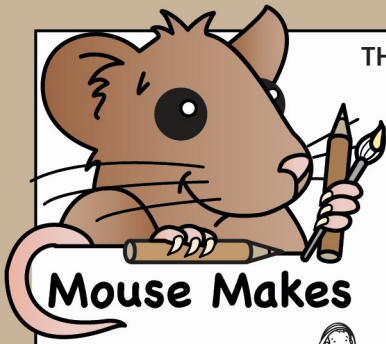
Fred moved to Lossiemouth in Scotland in 2021 to be close to his family. A funeral service was held in Lossiemouth on 23 January and after burial of his ashes, a memorial service will take place at St Matthew's on 6 February, giving local family and friends the opportunity to give thanks for Fred's life and to commend him into God's care.

Fred's ashes will be laid to rest with those of his beloved wife Kathleen, who died in February 2017. Fred and Kathleen lived in Pine View and were valued and much-loved members of St Matthew's church community.

Fred's family, Alison and Ian, wish to express their sincere thanks to all who have offered condolences, prayers, and messages of sympathy during this difficult time. They are deeply grateful for the support and compassion shown by friends and members of the congregation and wish to extend their love to all at St Matthew's.

Please continue to remember Fred and his family in your prayers.





## Mouse Makes

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:

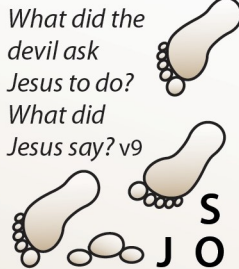
"Worship the Lord your God and serve only Him."

Read Deuteronomy 6:13

WE LEARN:

Put God **first**  
Worship **only** Him.

1



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  
O R D N H



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



# February 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



## Wellspring

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

### St Matthew's February

- 1 Sunday**  
10.30 Holy Communion
- 5 Thursday**  
10.30 Holy Communion
- 8 Sunday**  
9.00 BCP Holy Communion  
10.30 Family Parade Service
- 15 Sunday**  
9.00 BCP Holy Communion  
10.30 Holy Communion
- 18 Ash Wednesday**  
19.30 Holy Communion & Ash
- 22 Sunday**  
9.00 BCP Holy Communion  
10.30 Morning Praise with Baptisms

### St James with St Thomas February

- 1 Sunday**  
10.30 Service of the Word
- 8 Sunday**  
10.30 Service of the Word or Baptisms
- 15 Sunday**  
10.30 All Age Holy Communion
- 22 Sunday**  
10.30 Traditional Holy Communion

### St Paul's February

- 1 Sunday**  
9.00 BCP Holy Communion  
10.30 Service of the Word
- 8 Sunday**  
10.45 Family Communion
- 11 Wednesday**  
10.00 Holy Communion
- 15 Sunday**  
10.30 Service of the Word
- 18 Ash Wednesday**  
10.15 Holy Communion
- 22 Sunday**  
10.30 Service of the Word
- 25 Wednesday**  
10.00 Holy Communion

### Lighthouse February

- 1 Sunday**  
14.00 Family Worship
- 8 Sunday**  
14.00 Family Worship
- 15 Sunday**  
14.00 Family Communion
- 22 Sunday**  
14.00 Family Worship

**ALL SERVICE IN ST JAMES' SCHOOL**

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

WganWestHub





# 14th Wigan Boys' Brigade St. Matthew's. Highfield

WE ARE RECRUITING BOYS FOR 2026  
FROM FIVE YEARS AND OVER.



SPECIAL RECRUITMENT OFFER  
FROM JANUARY TO EASTER.  
WEEKLY SUBSCRIPTIONS WILL BE  
£1. (NORMALLY £2.50p)

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED,  
PLEASE PHONE: 07759564128  
AND TALK TO JIM HARRISON



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"

## Highfield Cricket Club

As we begin a brand-new year, I would like to extend warm New Year greetings to all our players, members, volunteers, and sponsors. Your continued support is the heartbeat of our cricket club, and we are deeply grateful for the time, energy, and encouragement you give throughout the year.

Although the pitches are resting for the winter, the club is very much active behind the scenes. From January, our winter net training programme will be up and running at The **Deanery High School**, welcoming both juniors and seniors. These sessions are a vital part of developing skills, building confidence and, just as importantly, enjoying the camaraderie that cricket brings during the off-season. We are delighted to see such strong enthusiasm already and encourage anyone interested to get involved.

We are also very pleased to welcome **Gill Higgins** as our new **Director of Women's Cricket**. Gill has been a player, a coach and she has successfully run our **All-Stars Cricket programme** for the past couple of years and brings a wealth of experience and enthusiasm to this new role. Gill is also a teacher at our local school, **Highfield St Matthews** and is passionate about encouraging young people to enjoy sport. We wish Gill every success as she helps to develop and grow girls' cricket at the club.

Looking ahead to the summer, we are especially excited to announce a brand-new venture for the club: **our first ever Cricket Club Music Festival**, taking place on **Saturday 27th June**. This promises to be a fantastic community event, featuring tribute acts to **Take That, Robbie Williams, George Michael, Blondie, ABBA, and Oasis**, alongside a couple of very talented local performers. It will be a wonderful opportunity to bring friends, families, and neighbours together, celebrate great music, and support the club in a new and enjoyable way.

As always, the cricket club is about more than just sport-it's about community, fellowship, and shared experiences. We look forward to another positive year ahead and hope to see many familiar and new faces, whether at winter training, on the boundary in the summer, or enjoying the music in June.

With best wishes for a happy, healthy, and successful New Year to you all.

**Mike Gregory**

## Service of the Word with Brunch @ St James' Centre

This is proving to be popular, and we will have brunch again on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> February following our Service of the Word. We will be serving bacon and or sausage barmes and ask for a small donation towards cost.

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## Lifelines Café @ St James' Centre

Lifelines Café will meet at church on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2026 at 1.30pm. Everyone is welcome, whether living with dementia or not. We especially welcome carers. We will be eating together and looking at what we will be doing over 2026, All free and all welcome.

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## Faith Café @ St James' Centre

Our Faith Café will be open each Saturday during February. We serve hot food between 11 & 2pm and it's on a pay as you feel basis. Tom's Pantry will be open alongside the café.

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## Bereavement Support @ St James' Centre

The Bereavement Support Group will meet in St James with St Thomas Church on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> February and Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February. Meetings start at 1pm. You are most welcome to attend our bereavement support group if you have been recently bereaved or it was some time ago. The group offers group support and if needed can offer one to one support. Refreshments are always served, and our leader Mr David Berry will make you most welcome. He can be contacted on 07404 605015.

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## Shrove Tuesday Hot Pot Supper @ St James

On Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> February at St James', we will be having our traditional Hot Pot Supper. We will also serve a dessert. It will start at 7pm and all are welcome. It will be on a pay as you feel basis. All proceeds raised will to Wigan West Hub. Please Alison or Jo know if you want to come so we have an idea of how many we are catering for.



## Lent Lunches @ St James' Centre

Starting Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February, we will be having Lent Lunches with a bible study at St James'. We will be serving lunch from 12 noon and the bible study we will be looking at the people around Jesus just before his arrest. As well as bible study we will look at Nick Fawcett's reflections in his book "No Ordinary Man." Everyone is welcome and please don't feel you need to come to all of them, they can be something you can choose to come to a few or all of them. We will finish the course on the Tuesday of Holy Week.

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## Open Table @ St James' Centre

Open Table Holy Communion will be at St James with St Thomas Church on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> February. We meet at 6pm for a brew and chat and a 6.30pm start, and yes there are Christian Communities which genuinely welcome and affirm LGBTQIA+ people. You are welcome to come as you are.

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## Tom's Pantry & Warm Spaces @ St James' Centre

Tuesdays 9.30-11.45am with café open until 11.30am providing warm spaces.

Wednesday 9.30-11.45 with café open till 11.30am providing warm spaces.

Saturday 11-2pm alongside the Faith Café.

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## Thursday Coffee Group @ St Matthew's

There are a number of people who meet on a Thursday morning at 10:30am for coffee. It is run by Maureen Hart and Julie & Dave Guest. Any donations that are made pay to support a girl, Fatoumata, who lives in Mali through Plan UK. We pay £21 a month for her. Any money that is left over after buying coffee, tea, biscuits etc goes to buying Bibles for babies who are Baptised in St. Matthew's Church. We have just donated £100 this month for the Bibles. Thank you to everyone who supports this group. Barbara Jenks

# 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/](http://www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/parish-of-wigan-west-wigan/)

**Tel:** 0333 002 1260

## 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](mailto:jeffmccann11@hotmail.com)

# Little Stars<sup>Toddler Group</sup>

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

Cost is only £1.50 for  
ONE adult & child

(Additional child is 50p)

From Birth to  
School Age Children!



## All Welcome!

# **Join the Pemberton Community Association:**

## **A Call for Volunteers!**

Are you looking for a way to give back to your community? Do you have a passion for helping others and making a difference? The Pemberton Community Association is calling on individuals of all backgrounds and ages, starting from 14 years old, to join us as volunteers. With countless opportunities available, your willingness to lend a helping hand can greatly impact our community.

The Pemberton Community Association has been a cornerstone of our community for years, organizing events and facilitating programs that bring people together. However, we can't do it alone! This is where you come in. Whether you have a few hours a week or can spare a weekend, your time makes all the difference. We welcome anyone who is enthusiastic and ready to contribute to various community projects.

**\*\*What We Need Help With: \*\***

**\*\*Fundraising**

We are constantly seeking ways to support our initiatives, and fundraising is crucial for our success. Volunteers can assist in planning and executing fundraising campaigns, reaching out to local businesses for donations, and organizing events to gather support. If you enjoy strategizing and engaging with the community to gather resources, this will be a rewarding opportunity for you.

**\*\*Event Planning and Coordination** From seasonal festivals to community clean-ups, our events play a vital role in connecting residents and fostering a spirit of togetherness. Volunteers help with everything from planning logistics, setting up events, promoting activities, and ensuring smooth operations on the day of the event. If you enjoy being hands-on and thrive in a team environment, we encourage you to get involved!

**\*\*General Community Involvement** Aside from specific roles, we are looking for enthusiastic individuals who simply want to be part of our initiatives. This can involve engaging with community members, assisting with communications, or even providing support wherever it is needed. If you value community spirit and want to work alongside driven individuals who share your passion, this is the perfect chance to join.

**\*\*Why Volunteer with Us? \*\***

Volunteering with the Pemberton Community Association is not just about giving back; it's about personal growth and connection. You will develop valuable skills such as teamwork, communication, and leadership. You'll also have the chance to meet like-minded individuals who share your values and interests in making Pemberton a better place to live. Whether you're a student seeking practical experience or a longtime resident looking to stay active in the community, we welcome you to join our family.

**\*\*Get Involved Today! \*\***

If you're ready to take the first step, we encourage you to simply contact us at [pembassoc@mail.com](mailto:pembassoc@mail.com) or 07305 978989

Together, we can make a substantial difference in our community. Volunteer today and be part of the positive change in Pemberton! Your support is invaluable, and we can't wait to welcome you on board.

**Dave Arrowsmith**



## Christmas Hamper Winners

After the Christingle Service in December we held our annual raffle, and the winners are listed below. Huge thank you to everyone who got involved and am pleased to say over £800 was raised in the process.

Andrew Bond

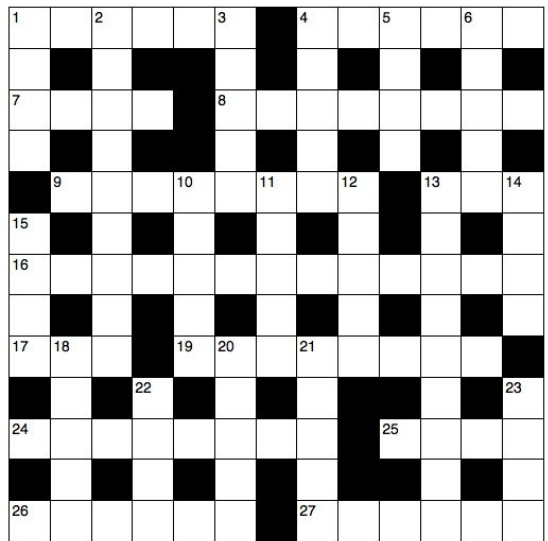
Hamper Number	Hamper Name	Ticket Colour	Ticket Number	Winner
1	£50 ASDA Voucher and Chocolate Drinks	Pink	372	John Dawson
2	Chocolate Hamper 1	Yellow	180	D&B Causey
3	Ringtons Hamper	Pink	282	Leah Chambers
4	Signed Wigan Rugby Ball	Pink	290	Jenna Calderbank
5	Champaign and Chocolates	Pink	117	Zoe Kershaw
6	Whiskey and Chocolates	Green	207	David V
7	Chocolate Hamper 2	Purple	276	George
8	Tea, Coffee, and Biscuit Hamper	Green	121	Margaret Jennings
9	Drinks Hamper	Yellow	324	Val
10	Choir Christmas Goodies 1	Green	197	Gregory
11	Choir Christmas Goodies 2	Green	138	Aaron Critchley
12	Choir Christmas Goodies 3	Yellow	201	Alf

## Across

- 1 'If you love those who love you, what — is that to you?' (Luke 6:32) (6)
- 4 'They threw the ship's — overboard' (Acts 27:19) (6)
- 7 The first murderer (Genesis 4:8) (4)
- 8 He was the head Levite in charge of the singing when the ark of God was brought back to Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 15:22) (8)
- 9 Samson was noted for this (Judges 16:6) (8)
- 13 Solicit money or food from passers by (Acts 3:2) (3)
- 16 What William Booth's Christian Mission became in 1878 (9,4)
- 17 Alliance of Religions and Conservation (1,1,1)
- 19 'I will praise your name for ever and ever. — — I will praise you' (Psalm 145:1–2) (5,3)
- 24 Simon had (anag.) (8)
- 25 Desperate (Deuteronomy 28:48) (4)
- 26 Elisha witnessed the boy he was seeking to resuscitate do this seven times before opening his eyes (2 Kings 4:35) (6)
- 27 The belly and thighs of the statue in Nebuchadnezzar's dream were made of this (Daniel 2:32) (6)

## Down

- 1 'Before the — crows, you will disown me three times' (Matthew 26:75) (4)
- 2 Relating to the books of the Bible between Acts and Revelation (9)
- 3 'They have — the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!' (John 20:2) (5)
- 4 Belief (5)
- 5 'Take the following fine spices: ... 250 shekels of fragrant — ' (Exodus 30:23) (4)
- 6 'Do not — Jerusalem, but wait for the gift' (Acts 1:4) (5)
- 10 A seer (anag.) (5)
- 11 'Even there your hand will — me' (Psalm 139:10) (5)
- 12 The wild variety was part of John the



- Baptist's diet (Mark 1:6) (5)
- 13 A non-Greek speaker who was looked down on by civilized people (Colossians 3:11) (9)
- 14 Famous 1950s musical whose characters included members of
- 16 Across, — and Dolls (4)
- 15 The province from which Paul wrote to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 16:19) (4)
- 18 'He was standing in the gateway with a linen cord and a measuring — — his hand' (Ezekiel 40:3) (3,2)
- 20 'Today, if you hear his — , do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion' (Hebrews 3:15) (5)
- 21 The Jericho prostitute who hid two Israelite spies on the roof of her house (Hebrews 11:31) (5)
- 22 'And now these three remain: faith, — and love. But the greatest of these is love' (1 Corinthians 13:13) (4)
- 23 'God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end' (Daniel 5:26) (4)

# Word Search

Candlemas, 2<sup>nd</sup> 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




# 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**

### PASTORAL CARE

If anyone requires Pastoral Care the contact number is 07845947573 Barbara Poyntz. (If answer machine please leave message) If it is an emergency, please ring any phone number in the Parish Magazine, Thank you.

**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*

**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



## Donations

A donation in lieu of Christmas cards with best wishes to all our friends from Anne & Terry Heaton

To graveyard expenses from Doreen & Barbara

Towards buying Bibles for children baptised at our church from Thursday morning coffee club through Barbara Jenks - £100

From the Sunday morning catering ladies' team through Anne Fanning - £285

Donations through church to The Still Parents Baby Loss group who have formed a Bereavement Group at the Parish Hall meeting on Monday afternoons in the Cricket Tea Rooms, helped by Pat and Alan with refreshments, offering support to parents of stillborn children and any others grieving the loss of children - £200

From the Thursday morning coffee club - £50

Donations from all those present in the Cricket Lounge on a Friday evening in January - £160 From the Tuesday Ladies - a magnificent pram for transportation of stillborn babies inside the hospital and a donation from Steward Peet, a DJ on New Year's Eve made through the Community Interest Club and a promise from the CIC to hold an event in the near future to raise further funds towards the group - £600

## Baptisms

Arianna Lily Ashcroft *St James'*  
Lacey Rose Allsopp *St James'*  
Hannah Louise Allsopp *St James'*  
Zoe Anne Morris-Jones *St James'*  
Amara Christina Pimblett

*St Matthew' s*

Dolcie Olivia Dawber

*St Matthew' s*

## Burials and Funerals

### St James with St Thomas

4/12/25

Tracy Marie Ashurst 57

8/12/25 Iris Rose Wright 84

21/12/25

Wayne Robert Gough 56

12/12/25

Philip Masters 71

22/11/25

Jessie Mary Cooper 101

### St Matthew' s

Nicholas Rimmer 66

Sidney Thomas Roberts 77

Christine Elaine Simpson 79

Steven Mark Sharrock 51

Harry Gladson 88

Fred Smith *memorial service only*  
81

Margaret Connor 80

Neil Charles Ferguson 68

### St Paul' s

12/12/25

Irene Bond 89

15/12/25 Carl

Anthony Daniels 47

### Altar Flowers

#### St. Matthew' s

1 Feb - Mrs P Glover

8 Feb - vacant

15 Feb - Friendship  
group

22 Feb - Mr D Whitter

**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](mailto: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:

*Barbara Poyntz* 07845 947 573

Magazine Editors

*June Gibson* 01942 703096

[jngibson@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jngibson@hotmail.co.uk)

*Paul Nolan* 01942 804810

[pnolan1972@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:pnolan1972@yahoo.co.uk)

Printing:

*Sam Rusling* [sam@jesandsam.com](mailto:sam@jesandsam.com)

Distribution:

*John Dawson &*

*Lyn Starkie* 01942 494715

### **St James’ with St Thomas’**

*Revd. Alison Brown* 01942 740777

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* 01942 740777

### **Wellspring** *St Paul’s Hall*

Local Missional Leader

*Lucy Haigh* 07900 252 361

### **Shine** *St Matthew’s School*

*Rev Sam Swan*

[sam.swan@churchwigan.org](mailto:sam.swan@churchwigan.org)

### **Little Stars** *St Paul’s Hall*

*Lucy Haigh* 07900 252 361

### **Lighthouse**

Local Missional Leaders:

*Jes Rusling* 07827 326 290

[jes@jesandsam.com](mailto:jes@jesandsam.com)

*Sam Rusling* 077 22 99 4923

[sam@jesandsam.com](mailto:sam@jesandsam.com)

*All information correct as of January 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*

Guides:

Rainbows

*Jennifer Halliwell 01257 433894*

*Or 07808811490*

*Gill Marsh 01942 207723*

Brownies

*Joanne Tabener/Elizabeth Gaskell*

*14thwiganbrownies@gmail.com*

Guides

*Helen Albers 07960 920587*

Primary School Headteacher

*Mrs A Barron 01942 747818*

### **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 Executive Headteacher

*Mrs S. Aspinwall*

*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 01942 740777*

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

## Light in the Darkness

Just before Christmas I was fortunate enough to enjoy a family holiday to Lapland. It was a truly memorable trip, filled with skiing, dog-sleigh rides, and of course the obligatory visit to Santa in his cosy woodland cottage.



During our visit, Santa held a question-and-answer session with around ten children. One of my grandsons, Louie, plucked up the courage to ask Santa whether he was on the naughty list. Much to his relief, Santa assured him that he was not. Another young girl then asked a very perceptive question: *what happens if you are on the naughty list?* Santa replied wisely that it was only the 18<sup>th</sup> of December and there was still plenty of time to do kind things for parents, siblings and friends before Christmas.

Listening to this exchange, I was struck by the clear parallels with the true Christmas story and the teachings of Jesus. The message of grace, forgiveness, and the opportunity to turn again towards goodness is central to our faith. As we read in Scripture, “Bear fruits worthy of repentance” (Luke 3:8), and yet we are always reminded that it is never too late to change, to act with love, and to put things right.

Another lasting impression from the trip came from our proximity to the Arctic Circle. At that time of year, there were only about two hours of daylight each day. Initially, this novelty did not trouble me, but by the end of the week the lack of light began to affect my mood. It is sobering to learn that suicide rates in such regions are statistically higher than in places closer to the equator, where daylight is more plentiful.

Once again, the Christian parallels were unmistakable. Jesus tells us, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life” (John 8:12). Experiencing prolonged darkness made me reflect deeply on how vital light is—not just physically, but spiritually and emotionally. The coming of Christ at Christmas is the coming of light into a dark world, a light that overcomes despair, fear and hopelessness.

As we move through the winter months, may we remember that we are called to reflect that light ourselves—through kindness, forgiveness and love—so that others may glimpse something of Christ’s hope

### ***MAGAZINE DEADLINE***

Please have any content to the editors by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month.

If you would like a copy of the magazine in **LARGE PRINT** please email Barbara at [hubadmin.west@churchwigan.org](mailto:hubadmin.west@churchwigan.org)