



**All in
this
together
for God**



**The Parish of
The Good Shepherd,
Ashton-under-Lyne**

NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2022

Price 20p

Please do not come to church if you have any COVID symptoms

It is now a legal requirement to wear masks in churches

Hand sanitiser will be available for you to use.

Worship in January

Sunday January 2nd

St James 9.30am - Service of the Word

St Gabriel's 9.30am – Eucharist

St Michael's 11.00am – Eucharist

St Peter's 9.30am Service of the Word

Thursday January 6th

Holy Trinity 3.30pm – Eucharist

Sunday January 9th

United Service with Bishop David at St Peter's 10.30am

St James on Sunday Afternoon 4.00pm Eucharist

Thursday January 13th

Holy Trinity 3.30pm – Evening Prayer

Sunday January 16th

St James 9.30am – Eucharist

St Gabriel's 9.30am – Eucharist

St Michael's 11.0am – Service of the Word

St Peter's 11.00am Eucharist

Thursday January 20th

Holy Trinity 3.30pm Evening Prayer

Sunday January 23rd

St James 9.30am – Service of the Word

St Gabriel's 9.30am – Eucharist

St Michael's 11.00am – Eucharist

St Peter's 11.00am – Service of the Word

St James on Sunday Afternoon 4.00pm

Thursday January 27th

Holy Trinity 3.30pm – Evening Prayer

Sunday January 30th

St James 9.30pm – Eucharist

St Gabriel's 9.30pm – Eucharist

St Michael's 11.00am – Eucharist

St Peter's 11.00am – Eucharist

St James on Sunday Afternoon 4.00pm

“For I know the plans I have for you” (Jeremiah)



Jan 1st 2022 sees a very new beginning for us here in our Parish. It is a time of uncertainty, of anxiety, probably of feeling a bit cut adrift and of wondering what the year ahead holds in store for us. It's a huge change as Roger was with us for 18 years. And within all that uncertainty and anxiety we must focus on two things, it seems to me.

Firstly, we are not alone! We are not cut adrift because we have God's assurance that he will walk every step of our journeys by our sides and, as we get used to things being different, and undoubtedly face some ups and downs over the next few months, we must remember that God knows our anxieties and our fears and he is planning the road ahead for us.

Secondly, we must remember that we are not 5 individual churches. "We are all in this together for God" as Sheila's prayer cards reminded us. We will get through this next little while far better if we work

together, share our talents and skills, have empathy with each other and consideration for each other, if we look for ways to fight through the difficulties so that we build ourselves up rather than let ourselves just sink into despondency.

An Interregnum always causes difficulties and more so because ours is happening at the same time as the Diocese is reshaping itself into hubs of Mission Communities. There is a real lack of clergy in the Diocese and there are many churches who will be looking for retired clergy to take services. Here, in Ashton alone, there are 7 churches and only 1 full time stipendiary vicar.

We will do the best that we can, but you need to be understanding if we cannot find clergy or an ALM for every church every week. We will undoubtedly have to pare back the range of services that we offer in Holy Week for example. And it's not just about services. We have administrative work that has had to be shared out around those

who are prepared to step in and keep things going, some of whom are doing more than one job to keep the Parish functioning. It may mean more united services - and if it does, please do your best to support them. The people who are mainly working to keep The Parish of The Good Shepherd together are volunteers. Many of them are already retired from other lifetimes of work. They have family commitments, health issues to contend with and lives of their own to lead. Fortunately, Jan, Roger's Administrative assistant will remain with the Parish but this is not her only Church commitment - she has a similar role in her own Church and cannot, realistically, take on more than she is already committed to.

You will notice that we have changed the Magazine cover. This has been done quite deliberately. All our Churches together make up the Parish of The Good Shepherd and the front of our Magazine is meant to reflect that. We hope to keep you all up to date with the things that are happening across the Parish and, if there is

anything that you would like to see that is missing from our smaller-than-previously monthly magazine, let us know and we'll see what we can do.

Communication is going to be vital in the months ahead as we don't know if we are to get a new priest, if he or she is to be shared with another Church or how long our interregnum will go on for.

But let's keep cheerful and optimistic, let's celebrate this new year and the opportunities that it might present and let's willingly and lovingly put ourselves in God's hands, for he will not let us down. I'm determined to keep my favourite Biblical verse at the front of my mind and I'll share it with you:

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord.

"Plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:1

Revd Pat Lodge



All in this together for God

Like many churches, The Good Shepherd in Ashton couldn't stay open without our volunteers

There are jobs to suit EVERYBODY, we all have skills to share, we're all needed to let the church run smoothly

Important jobs include telling SOMEBODY about all the things that are going on in The Good Shepherd over the next few weeks.

ANYBODY is welcome to join us, and we'd love to see you soon

If you think you'll know NOBODY at church, you'll find there are lots of friends you just haven't met yet!

This is a story about four people named: **Everybody**, **Somebody**, **Anybody** and **Nobody**. There was an important job to be done and **Everybody** was sure that **Somebody** would do it. **Anybody** could have done it, but **Nobody** did it. **Somebody** got angry about that, because it was **Everybody's** job. **Everybody** thought **Anybody** could do it, but **Nobody** realised that **Everybody** wouldn't do it. It ended up that **Everybody** blamed **Somebody** when **Nobody** did what **Anybody** could have done.

Alan Bacon

It is with great sadness that St Michael's records the death of Alan Bacon on December 8th 2021 aged 81.

Alan and his wife have been members of the congregation of St Michael's for very many years and during that time Alan has taken great pride in researching, and recording, the history of St Michael's as its archivist. Until the lockdown he was to be found taking tours around the building during Heritage Weekend and even trips up the tower till age prevented him. He sang in the choir until fairly recently and it is thanks to Alan, together with Roger Firth, that the Friends of Ashton Parish Church was founded. His knowledge, his humility and his kindness will be very much missed within St Michael's and in other local and national Historical groups with which he was involved. Our sincere condolences go to Alan's wife Eleanor and to Colin, his son.

Manchester Diocese: Mission Communities

Back in October 2020, Bishop David first shared a new vision for Manchester Diocese going forward. Since then, there have been various discussions, meetings and conversations with people across the Churches of the Diocese.

The result of all these discussions is a vision for mission communities throughout the Diocese which offers a way forward to be "a worshipping, growing and transforming Christian presence at the heart of every community." The booklet put out by the Diocese explains that "We want to be a church for a different world. All our energy, effort and prayer is focussed on transforming into the sort of church we believe God is calling us to by 2030."

One of the immediate changes is that the Ashton Deanery is now no more. The number of Deaneries across the Diocese has been reduced in number but increased in size and each has a full time Area Dean – ours is Revd Daniel Ramble. Our Parish is now part of the Oldham and Ashton Deanery. Deaneries are divided into Mission Communities – we are in Mission Community 6 which includes Christ Church Ashton, The Parish of the Good Shepherd, Ashton, Holy Trinity Bardsley, St John's Hurst, Mossley St George, St John's Roughtown, and St George's Stalybridge.

The aim for each mission community is to work together, to encourage each other and to share skills. There will be a leadership team to guide each Mission Community, headed by a Mission Community Leader.

As 2022 begins, more information will become available which we will share with you through the magazine. More info is also available on the Manchester Diocesan website. Bishop David will be leading a United Service at St Peter's on January 9th 2022 and we may find out more then.

Contact Information

Parish Safeguarding Officer : – Moira Wilson – moira.watt@hotmail.com

Wardens and Ministry Team:

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St Gabriel's: Sandra Kiy 07740 766687

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ESOL classes will be restarting at St Peters Church on Thursday 6 th January 2022 12.30 until 2.00pm
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