



PARISH OF ST PETER'S, HALLIWELL

NEWSLETTER



Double Christmas Edition: Sundays 22 and 29 December 2024

HEADLINES

- It's Christmas!
- Our Christmas services
- Legacy Gift News
- End-of-year Prayers by Rev Alan

Read on to find out more...

SERVICES

Sundays 22 and 29 December

ST PETER'S CHURCH

8.30am	Morning service (22 nd) No service today (29th)
*10.30am	Worship for Everyone service (22 nd) Parish-wide service with Communion (29 th)
*6.30pm	Candlelit Carol Service (22 nd) No service today (29th)

SMITHILLS FELLOWSHIP

10am	Family Carol Service (22 nd) No service today (29th) , see parish-wide service in St Peter's
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BARROW BRIDGE MISSION

10.30am	Nativity service (22 nd) No service today (29th) , see parish-wide service in St Peter's
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ST ANDREW'S HOPE CENTRE

10.30am	Café Church (22 nd) Informal service (29 th)
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*Livestreamed: search YouTube for 'stpetershalliwell'
We are an accessibility-friendly parish

Rev Alan writes...

It's Christmas!

Our Barrel of Carols band ended their magnificent performance at Heaton Cricket Club last night with a rocking rendition of Slade's classic 'Merry Christmas Everybody' which of course includes the line 'It's



Christmas', which I shouted very enthusiastically to complement Julia Forrester's delightful singing! It was a joyous

Christmas singalong and a wonderful opportunity to strengthen our community links and share the Christmas message of hope. And one of many celebrations happening across our parish as we approach the big day.



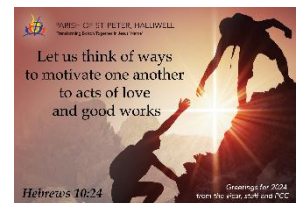
Coming up we have our **Parish-Wide Candlelit Carol Service** this Sunday 6.30pm at St Peter's.

Preparations have been going superbly for what promises to be a magnificent service with a large choir, brass ensemble and instrumentalists enriching our worship as we recall the wonder

of Christmas through our readings. Christmas Eve 4pm at St Peter's is our special **Family Christingle Service**.

Both services are great opportunities to invite your friends. Read on to find out more about our festive feast of Christmas services across all our fellowships.

Looking back over this year we have moved forward in so many ways. Our verse for 2024 was: **"Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works."** (Hebrews 10:24). I think we have been true to this verse. We will be launching our verse for 2025 at all our services on Sun 5 Jan.



I honestly believe we are entering 2025 stronger, better equipped, and more committed to play our part in proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ

Continued...

through our words and actions as we share God's love across our community in many ways. I am absolutely delighted to announce that Manchester Diocese has just agreed to appoint a full-time Associate Minister for our parish! Please pray for God to call the right person as we start advertising this exciting new clergy position nationally in the New Year.

As we approach the end of 2024, I want to offer a huge **THANK YOU** to you all, and to wish you every blessing this Christmas and for 2025.

Christmas Services

Christmas Eve, 4pm at St Peter's is a special family Christingle service. It is a short and fun-packed service where we all get to construct our own Christingles and join together singing lively Christmas songs and getting in the mood for Christmas Day.

Christmas Eve, 11.30pm at St Peter's is our annual Midnight Communion service where we recall the birth of our saviour on this most holy of nights.

On **Christmas Day** we have these wonderful celebrations of Jesus' birth at all our fellowships:

St Peter's at 8.30am (Communion) and 10.30am

Smithills Fellowship at 10am

St Andrew's and Barrow Bridge fellowships celebrate together at a special joint service at 10.30am at Barrow Bridge Mission.

Please note, on **Sun 29 Dec at 10.30am** there will be a parish-wide service in St Peter's and an informal service at St Andrews (Hope Centre). There will not be a 6.30pm service that day.

Lighthouse United Nativity

Children from across the parish took part in our Lighthouse United service in St Peter's last Sunday.

Huge thanks and well done

to everyone who was involved with this, upfront and behind the scenes. If you missed it or want to watch again, click here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VrzE8l-frPQ>

NB: The next Lighthouse session will be on **Sun 5 Jan 2025**.



Christmas Day Collection

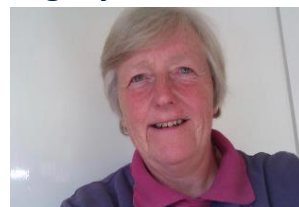


BETHLEHEM
BIBLE COLLEGE
كلية بيت لحم للكتاب المقدس

The 2024 Christmas Day collection at St Peter's will be used to support the work of the Shepherd Society, the charitable arm of Bethlehem Bible College, and specifically their work in Gaza. Established in Bethlehem in June 1996, the

Shepherd Society has been assisting struggling Palestinians in the West Bank with meeting basic needs such as food, employment, and medical care. The work was extended in 2007 to include the people of Gaza. For more info on the work of the Shepherd Society, go to <https://shepherd-society.org/>. Please prayerfully consider how you can support this collection. If you prefer to donate online, please use this link <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/27521>

Legacy Gift News



Many of you will remember Shirley Clark who was part of the church family here for many years and much respected and loved. We are very thankful to learn

recently that she has left two legacy gifts in her will of over £14,000 each to St Peter's and St Andrew's. We praise God for her generosity and ask for his wisdom and discernment as we decide how best to use these gifts in memory of Shirley. Leaflets are available at all our services if you would like to consider leaving a legacy in your will to church.

Smithills Christmas Market



Profits from this year's market are for Urban Outreach to support Christmas Dinner on Jesus and to help purchase the fresh products. The amount raised has reached an amazing **£11,520!**

Carol Singing in Barrow Bridge



We had a lovely evening last Friday carolling around Barrow Bridge and raising funds for Bolton Hospice. Well done and thank you to everyone involved!

A Christmas Celebration

Many thanks to the wonderful staff team and children at St Peter's Primary School who hosted a group of older people from our parish for a Christmas treat on



Wednesday. The Y6 children were waiters and waitresses serving them endless drinks and cakes whilst they were entertained by performances of songs from the school's nativity and carol service. The morning was rounded off by a fantastic performance by the school choir! Thanks to you all for such a joyous morning.

CAP Present Wrapping and Thanks

Sam, our CAP Debt Centre Manager, says 'It's a wrap! 35 bags filled with beautifully wrapped presents all ready to be delivered on Monday (half with Christmas dinners on Jesus too)! Most of our CAP clients have had, and are having, a difficult year. We pray these gifts will bless them, help them and remind them that God knows them, sees them and loves them. Thank you to everyone who donated vouchers and gifts and also to our super wrappers!'



Ignite KS2 Children's Group



Here's a fab Christmas party photo from our KS2 children's group, Ignite. We'd love your children to come along and join us in the New Year! We meet in the Parish Centre on

Tuesday evenings (term-time) from 6pm-7.15pm. Email ignite@stpetersparish.info for more details.

Buildings Update

The eagle-eyed amongst you may have noticed that the very old, ceiling-mounted speakers in St Peter's have been removed; this is part of the process of upgrading the audio system and you will see new (much improved) speakers are now in place, currently on stands, whilst we await approval of a faculty to get them installed.



We are also delighted that the very old and worn carpet and rubber flooring in Noah's Ark has been replaced this week with a bright, heavy duty, commercial laminate. The transformation is huge!



We give thanks to all who are part of the Buildings and Maintenance Committee for their commitment and the significant progress they have made this year at St Peters and in the Parish Centre.



New Year Treasure Hunt

Sat 4 Jan, 9.30am, meet outside St Peter's Church



Come and enjoy the annual Treasure Hunt which will be based at nearby Summerseat

Garden centre. It's a short, dog-friendly wander of less than 3 miles for all the family. You will need boots or stout walking shoes just for one short uphill slippery section; otherwise, it is flat. It's lots of fun and a chance to buy interesting items and have coffee and food afterwards. For further info, contact David Moffoot on 01204 770994. *Pick up the 2025 programme of Out and About Walks from the Parish Centre or church*

Soul Sisters Ladies' Ministry Event

Sat 11 Jan, 10am-12.30pm, Barrow Bridge Mission



Join us for some painting and praise! *Please note that this is a ticketed event because we need to source supplies.* We'll spend time together in contemplation, creating, listening and simply

'being', beginning with prayer and an introduction from Tracy (who is leading us) who will share how art has impacted her life. Easels will be on the tables, ready with paint etc and we will play worship music to get into a place of peace and meditation. We'll paint for around an hour then discuss our pieces, give thanks to God, close in prayer, have a drink and the artist can take their piece home with them. There will be ladies on hand to pray for people at the end of the morning. Tickets £12.50 per person to cover materials, a donation to Tracy who is leading us, and a breakfast pastry on arrival. To book, please speak to Rachel Cowling or Katie Leaver or contact the Parish Office by 4 Jan so we know numbers. Thank you.



Prayer for the Week

See a prayer of thanksgiving and anticipation by Rev Alan on the back page.

Looking Forward

New Alpha Course Starting

Thurs 23 Jan, 8pm-9.30pm, Parish Centre

Stay Curious, Try Alpha.

A great way to find out more about the Christian faith. For more details and to sign up contact

office@stpetersparish.info



PRAYER from our Vicar, Rev Alan Saunders

A Prayer of Thanksgiving and Anticipation



Dear Lord,

Thank you for your love for each member of our church family during 2024. Thank you that you have faithfully guided and supported us through good times and bad. That you have provided for all our needs. And that you have given us hope and a purpose.

As we look forward to 2025, help us to grow stronger and more committed as Jesus' Family on Jesus' Mission. Provide us with new opportunities to share your love and your hope-filled message of good news to a world so desperately in need of that message.

Equip us for your good works with all the resources we need, an enthusiasm driven by a passion to bring you glory, and all the energy to deliver your love with strength and joy.

We love you Lord and pray your blessings on everyone in our community this Christmas.

Amen

Coming up this week

Please note, our regular activities have now paused for the Christmas break and will resume week commencing Mon 6 Jan 2025. Full details will be provided in the next newsletter on Sun 5 Jan 2025.

Keep Connected

Parish Business Manager: Amanda Blease

E: amanda@stpetersparish.info / P: 01204 599900

Finance Officer: Elaine Vincent

E: finance@stpetersparish.info / P: 01204 599901

Vicar: Rev Alan Saunders

E: alan@stpetersparish.info / M: 07767 643444 / P: 01204 848624

Wardens: Phil Weaver and Simon Scott

E: wardens@stpetersparish.info

CAP Debt Centre Manager: Sam Wolstencroft

E: samwolstencroft@capuk.org / M: 07934 716509

Caretaker: David Park

E: david@stpetersparish.info

St Peter's Parish Centre
347 Church Road, Bolton BL1 5RR

www.stpetersparish.info



St Peter's Halliwell



@StPetersHalliwell



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Parish Office Closure

The Parish Office will close for Christmas at 12noon on Christmas Eve and will re-open at 9.30am on Thurs 2 Jan 2025. We look forward to being of service to you in the New Year.



***On behalf of our Vicar, Wardens, PCC and Staff Team,
we wish you all a blessed and peaceful Christmas
time.***