



Seeking to live out the love of God
– in all we do

ST PETER'S PRESTBURY NEWS

January Newsletter

What a wonderful Christmas we celebrated at St Peter's and St John's! Glorious worship and community activities. Each of us will have had our own favourite moments and services, but behind the scenes there was much hard work done by church musicians, Holy Dusters, church wardens, Ministry Team, the office, the Comms Team and many, many more, so a huge **thank you** to everyone who made Christmas the celebration it was.

Despite the sceptic voices in the media thousands of people came through our church doors over the Christmas period to worship. This number came despite the cancellation of the Christmas Street Party due to the weather.

The challenge for us, in the year ahead, (as for every church) will be how to move people from being occasional worshippers to attending more regularly. Often this challenge is viewed in two contrasting ways:

- 1) *That it's entirely up to God and we should leave it to God to bring people into the life of the Church.*
- 2) *That it's entirely up to us so we need to work harder, do more have strategies and programmes to make it happen.*

At Christmas, we celebrated the birth of Jesus, who is both fully God and fully human - this is the paradox of the Incarnation. Drawing people into faith is like this, a "*both and*" not an "*either or*". The journey to faith includes both encountering the living God *and* being included in the loving community, that is church. Sometimes one comes first, sometimes the other or both at once.

This new year let's keep our eyes open for the stranger or newcomer in our services to welcome them and let's also pray that they might encounter the living God in worship.

Patrick



In this month's newsletter

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Look out for photos of Christmas highlights dotted through the Newsletter.

Church News

Advance notice of Visiting Preachers

In preparation for our next Exploring series **Exploring Church**, we have invited three visiting preachers to our 10.30am services to talk on different challenges for the Church.

On 19 January Keith Davies is preaching on *the Persecuted Church*.

On 26 January Chris Whiteley (the Chair of Hope) is preaching on *Churches working Together in mission and ministry*.

On 2 February Jane Proudfoot, the Archdeacon of Macclesfield, is preaching on being the *local Anglican Church*.

We are very much looking forward to hearing these sermons and it would be good to welcome our guests with a good crowd.

Electoral Roll Renewal

New Electoral Roll 2025

If your name is on the existing Electoral Roll and you wish to be included on the new 2025 Electoral Roll **it is essential that you complete an application form**. These are available at the back of church and completed forms can be posted in the red post box. If not completed by the end of January it will mean that you will need to be contacted. Please help by meeting the **end of January deadline**.

If you are new to our church and wish to be included please ensure you complete a form.

Being on the Electoral Roll is a way of demonstrating your commitment to our church and its mission and also allows you to vote at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting.





Holy Dusters Thursday mornings

Have you ever wondered how St Peter's manages to look so lovely all the time? Our cheerful group of Holy Dusters meets every Thursday morning to sweep, shine and dust as well as

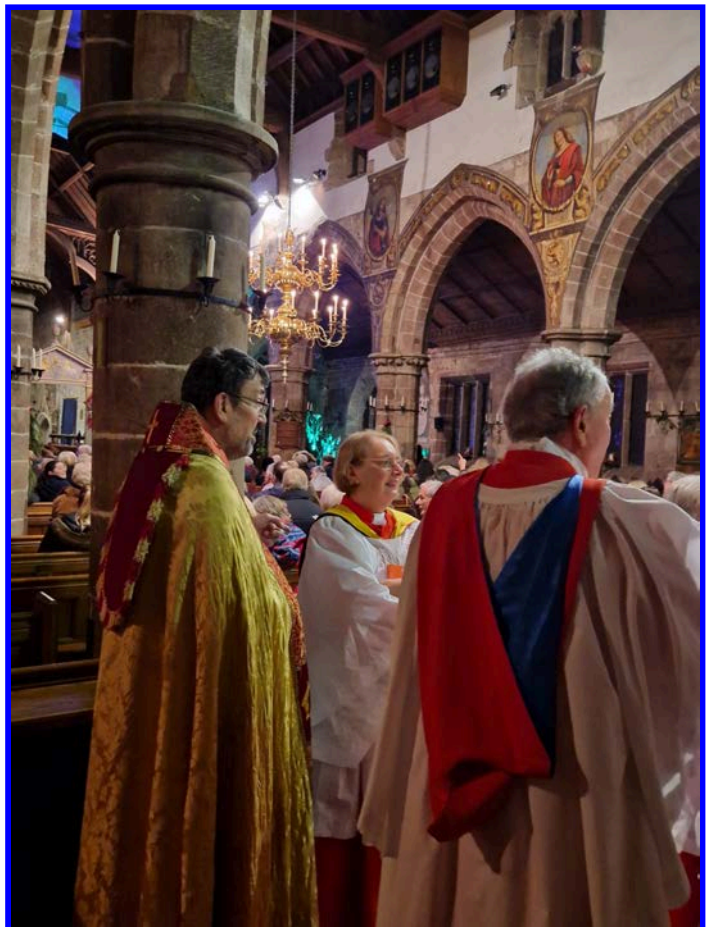
masterminding church decorations for Harvest, Christmas and Easter. We work for just one hour each week, then share our latest news, chat and have a laugh over tea and biscuits. Fancy joining us? No experience is needed and you don't need to come every week either. Contact the Parish Office if interested.

The Communion Table

Just before Christmas the Communion table legs broke off and so a huge **thank you** to the furniture repairers who did a wonderful and speedy repair job getting it back inside a week. As a result the table will be kept in place on dais as much as possible and lifted by two people when it needs to be moved.

The Church Clock

A big thank you to Chris Sealy and the buildings team for overseeing the removal, repair and return of the church clock dial. The new dial looks amazing and the old one is stored safely in the Norman Chapel. The next project will be to finish the new Hearse



House floor and then everything stored in the Norman Chapel can be returned to the Hearse House.

Look out for a work party day in the Spring when the big move and sort will happen!

Exploring Church

Our next Exploring course will begin in February and we will be Exploring Church.

Exploring is an opportunity to learn creatively and prayerfully as a church family. It doesn't matter whether we are new to church or have been part of the church family for a long time - there is always more to explore and it is best to do so together.

If you would like to know more please get in touch with Patrick or Beverley, but please put the dates in your diary.

Exploring Church will be on Monday evenings in St Peter's rooms from 7.30pm - 9pm. (A Zoom link will be available too so you can join online if you prefer.)

3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th February - with a finale on 3rd March.

Beverley Angier



Worship for families

In January *Breakfast Church* is back!

Breakfast Church is an informal space for parents and their children to worship together and this will be back on Sunday 19 January. **PLEASE NOTE:** we will begin serving breakfast at the slightly earlier time of 9.15am. Worship will begin at 9.30am and we will draw to a close at 10.15am.

One of the priorities at last year's APCM was how as Church we developed our ministry and work with families if that is something that interests you please contact me directly or the office as I am looking to gather a group to discuss this.

Patrick.

Signing up for Rota duties

Don't forget to sign up for Rota duties (Welcoming, Reading or Chalice Assistant). If you would like to lead Intercessions on a Sunday morning please speak to Patrick. If you would like to join any of the other rotas or if you need help signing up, please contact Judith in the Parish Office parishoffice@stpetersprestbury.org.uk



Some Christmas 'thank yous'

In last month's newsletter we were asked to pray for our Christmas services *"to be full of people and overflowing with joy and love and the presence of God."* Well, prayer was answered! And answered by all those

of you who put in time, energy, commitment, and the determination that things should happen, and happen well.

Thank you!

Thank you to all those who...

Made: beautiful music, the bells ring, the money add-up, Christingles, or just made it to church against the odds!

Replenished: bread and wine, biscuits, milk, toilet paper, matches and candles.

Created: inspiring sermons, bright posters, engaging worship, amazing church decorations, perfect service sheets, glorious flower arrangements, reliable audio-visual streams.

Cleared & cleaned: communion silver and linen, pews, floors, carpets, brass.

Visited: with gifts of carol singing, prayer, home communion, and love.

Offered: a warm welcome, a listening ear, time, a smile.

Fixed: heating, candles, microphones.



Moved: bins, ladders, tables, chairs, mountains.

*Loving Father,
we thank you for your blessings on the work of our hands.
Hands, Lord, your gift to us,
we stretch them up to you.
Always you hold them.
Amen
Anne Stirling*

The Empty Chair

As we come to the end of the Christmas season we will return our prayer space in church to its customary look. The prayers that have been left on the tree over Christmas will be prayed by the Ministry Team, and the ribbons on the empty chair kept safe until Easter when they will be put into our Easter fire.

You can still use this space to light a candle or leave a prayer throughout the year. If you would like regular Ministry Team prayer for a specific purpose or personal prayer do please let one of the Ministry Team know.

*God of comfort, come gently among us;
hear our prayers, restore our souls.
Piece together our loose ends;
smooth over our rough edges;
restore our souls.
When lights and decorations fail to delight our senses,
and serve only to deepen our pain and grief, restore our souls.
Amen*



Mothers' Union

Our spring meetings will be held on the second Monday of each month at 2.00pm. Everyone is always very welcome to join us - put the dates into your diary.

Monday 13 January
Monday 10 February
Monday 10 March
Monday 14 April

Thank you

A thank you from Eunice Clive: *I would like to thank the Holy Dusters and members of the Church for all their kindness following my recent fall. I have been overwhelmed. 🙏🙏*

Flower Arranging and another thank you!

We say a big thank you to Gill Truswell who has faithfully decorated church with wonderful fresh flowers regularly for many years. Gill is hanging up her secateurs and St Peter's will miss her joyful arrangements.

We always welcome new people onto our flower rota – you could purchase flowers to mark a special occasion and arrange them yourself, or someone else can arrange them for you.

Ask Judith in the Parish Office if you would like to know more.

Church Office Opening Hours

The Church office is now open Monday to Thursday from 9.00am to 12.30pm.

Resolutions

This year I'm going to contact all my old friends, remember to do every poster for church without being reminded, and keep my studio tidy...

As if! I know my limits, and no longer make wide resolutions that I know I'll struggle to keep. What is more fruitful is to add something, to do something new, or something we haven't done for ages. And maybe it will lead to something very important ...

Because everything we do, every relationship we have, can become tired, in need of a bit of extra effort. Even, or maybe especially, our relationship with God.

There are many ways we can do this – in prayer, reflection, regular Bible reading. All these open up insights and revelations when we listen. There's also a simple way to refresh our encounter with God, and that is to add another way to worship... So...

* Step into the quiet peace of early morning Communion...

* Let the glorious voice of traditional music enfold you at Evensong...

* Add a gentle mid-week Communion and taste the warmth of great coffee, chocolate biscuits and lovely company afterwards...

* And if you've never felt the exuberance of the main worship on Sunday morning you are missing something very special...

God is elusive yet close as our very breath, revealing and illuminating, opening our hearts, and beckoning us into mystery... He meets us in more ways than we will ever understand. And whoever we are God holds surprises and fresh possibilities – what will he offer you this new year?

Avril Ravenscroft

This Month's Worship

St Peter's Sunday Worship

	8.30am	9.15am	10.30 am	4.30pm
Jan 5th	Holy Communion		Holy Communion <i>Behold the lamb</i>	Cathedral Evensong
Jan 12th	Holy Communion		Family Service	Cathedral Evensong
Jan 19th	Holy Communion	Breakfast Church <i>for families with children</i>	Holy Communion <i>(With Prestbury Methodist Church)</i> Guest Preacher From Christian Solidarity	Cathedral Evensong
Jan 26th	Holy Communion		Morning Worship with Guest Preacher Chair of Hope in NE Cheshire	Parish Evensong
Feb 2nd	Holy Communion		Holy Communion <i>Behold the lamb</i> with Young Church and Guest Preacher Archdeacon of Macclesfield	Cathedral Evensong

St John's Sunday Worship

	11.00am
Jan 12 th	Holy Communion
Jan 26 th	Morning worship

Church of the Resurrection Worship

	10.00am
Jan 5 th	Holy Communion
Jan 19 th	Holy Communion

Weekday Worship

Day and Time	Activity	Place
Monday 9.00am	Morning Prayer	St Peter's Rooms
Wednesday 10.30am	Holy Communion	St Peter's
Thursday 9.30am	Morning Prayer	St John's
2nd & 4th Thursday 10.15am	Pram Service	St Peter's

Community News



Wedding Fayre

You may have caught the buzz of excitement on Social Media or noticed animated conversations over after-church coffee. **The news is out!** St Peter's very first Wedding Fayre is happening next year on Saturday 26 April from 2pm - 4pm.

There has been excellent support from local businesses and we are looking forward to a wonderful crowd of engaged couples, or those thinking about getting married, coming along to discover that a Church Wedding is the perfect way to celebrate that big day.

For more information contact our Wedding Clerk Jo-Ann Chambers, the Parish Office or catch up via St Peter's

Instagram or Facebook.

Christmas Tree Collection

You may not be aware that 27 years ago, Mike and Lis Thomson picked on a popular youth work idea to raise money for the Church Organ fund by giving each of the choir boys a £10 note as in the "parable of the talents" with the suggestion of using it wisely. Well, that £10 note given out in Prestbury Church has now become nearly £2 Million pounds for East Cheshire Hospice and has grown to become a national enterprise. The initiative has been taken up by around 160 hospices and many other smaller charities - we actively support many of these hospices. Across the hospices it is estimated to raise over £2m each year and uses the support of more than 2,000 volunteers from local communities.

I hope you will agree that this is really something for Prestbury Church and the village to be very proud of - it all started here! Its also a great project to be involved on, volunteers are always welcome.

Best wishes to you all,

Peter Chapman (07779 600100)

Re-Play Later's String Ensemble

We are an adult group of string players of all abilities who played in our youth but now would like to pick-up playing again. We met on a Tuesday evening at 7.00pm in St Peter's Rooms for 1.5 hours until 8.30pm. Emily Doggatt (violin) is our tutor during term time - and she is keen for the group to grow both in confidence and in number. For further details contact Nick Harrison 07884250515 or nicolasharrison@gmail.com.

Nick Harrison



Prayer Resources

Weekly Prayer topics

Please use the weekly prayer topics below for your own prayers, alongside the monthly Prayer Diary, which is available at the back of Church.

Week	Church	Community	World
Jan 5 th	<p>Epiphany As we celebrate the visit of the Magi pray for those seeking Jesus that they would encounter him.</p>	<p>We pray for those who have come to our community from other countries and cultures to be welcomed and included.</p>	<p>We pray for the middle east in particular for Iran, Iraq and Syria. For Christian Communities and for peace.</p>
Jan 12 th	<p>As we mark the Baptism of Christ we pray for all who were baptised last year for their growth in faith.</p>	<p>We pray for those who collect the refuse and empty the village bins.</p>	<p>We pray for the USA as the new President takes office.</p>
Jan 19 th	<p>In this Week of prayer for Christian Unity we pray for Prestbury Methodist Church.</p>	<p>We pray for those in our Community who worship outside the Parish particularly for our Roman Catholic brothers and sisters.</p>	<p>We pray for those Christians who are persecuted for their faith.</p>

<p>Jan 26th</p>	<p>At the end of the week of prayer for Christian Unity we pray for Hope and all its member Churches.</p>	<p>We pray for the Tennis Club for its members, committee and all it provides for the village.</p>	<p>We pray for the BBC.</p>
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Those who are sick

John Syner

Those who have died

Dorothy Ellis
Pauline Edwards
Beatrice Dowd
Christine Green
David Cail
Pamela Lawrence

Those whose ashes are being interred

Pat Sym (29th January)

Closing Thoughts

In this month's Poem, Keith reminds us of the wonderful deep truths of the incarnation, of who the baby of Bethlehem is and what he will do.

COSMIC HUMILITY

The motive force behind all things
The wellspring of all love
An abstract entity that lives
Both here and yet above.

A careworn servant traveling
To a death that is enough
To shame my heart and save my soul
Through unremitting love.

I cannot comprehend a truth
That contradicts my view
Of what it could mean to be God
And yet a human too.

But the Eternal Word of God made flesh
Stands humbly by my side
And as I ponder the paradox
He annihilates my pride.

Newsletter Information

Church or community news to be included in the newsletter needs to be sent to the office or vicarage by the last Tuesday of the month.