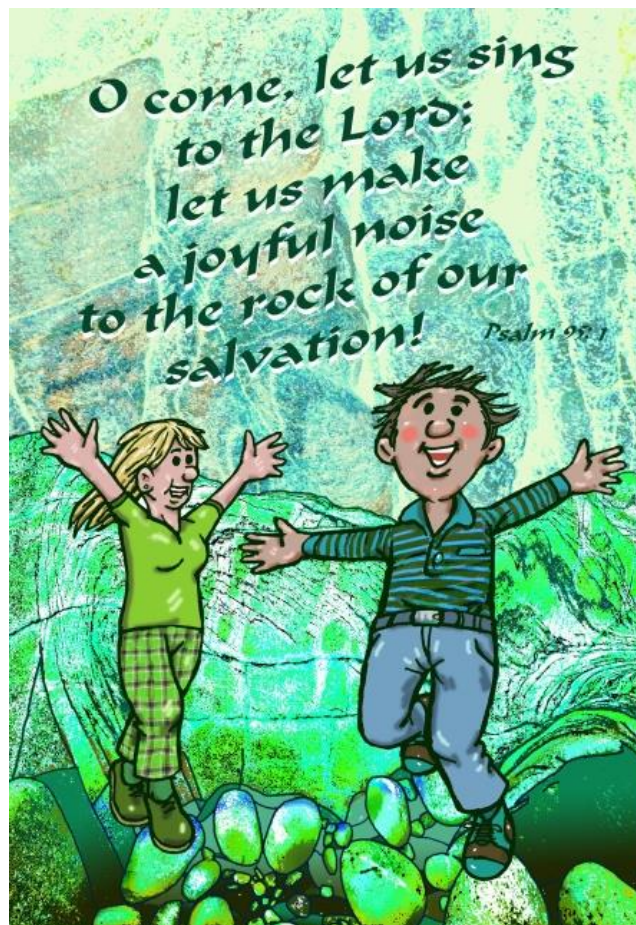


Keep in touch with St Alban's Church

Revd. Marie Flint

Parish Office: 0161 477 0456

(Mon & Fri 9.30-12.30)



May 2024

To Contact the Church.....

Parish Office: 0161 477 0456
Email: stalbanofferton@gmail.com

Priest: Revd. Marie Flint
0161 480 3773
revmarieflint@gmail.com

Churchwardens Eileen Comerford 0161 480 4235
David Griffiths 07505122531
Treasurer David Haslam
Secretary Janet Renshaw
Reader Brenda Baxendale
Safeguarding Jen Sadler
safeguard@stalbans@gmail.com

You can find lots of information about the church and its activities on our Parish Website:

www.stalbanofferton.org.uk

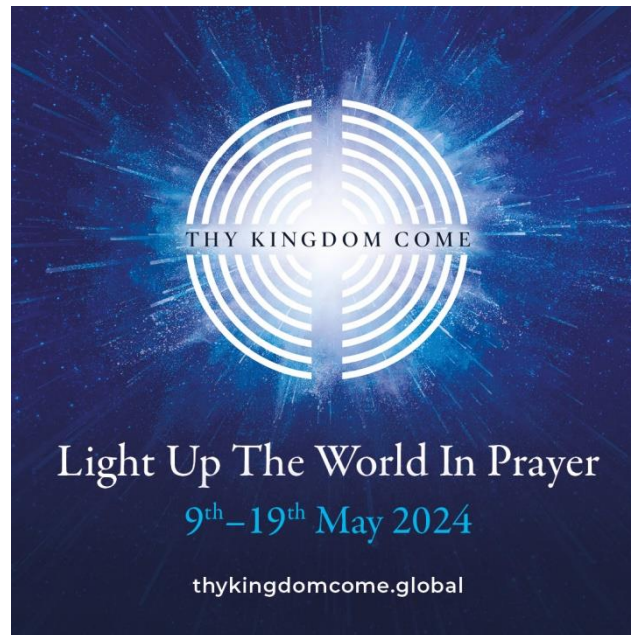
find us on Facebook

Instagram

X

www.achurchnearyou.com

Marie -



With the appointment of Jon Pocock at the Diocese, the strategy for the new Vision for the Diocese of Chester is currently being worked on and we excitedly wait to see how we, at St. Alban's and St. John's might be able to get involved. The Vision is about 'Together in Christ, Sharing Hope' and focusses on the 1.5 million people living in the diocese who do not yet know the love of Christ. To us, that translates to the 17.5 thousand people living in the Parish of Offerton and gives us a real focus for how we conduct ourselves as individuals and in community, as the body of Christ, here in our little part of Stockport. The Vision invites us to ask the question, of everything we do "How does this make a difference to the people around us who don't know about Jesus?"

On 9th May we celebrate Ascension Day with a service at 7.30pm at St. Alban's to which you are warmly invited to attend. We'll remember Jesus' ascension to glory to be with God the Father. But shortly before He ascended to heaven, he gave the disciples the Great Commission, commanding them to make disciples of all people. This, is of course, our commission as well. We are charged, as followers of Jesus, to tell other people about Him. And a really good place to start with that commission is through prayer and with the people we know personally.

And so, I'd like to invite you to join with me in praying Thy Kingdom Come in the days between Ascension and Pentecost. Thy Kingdom Come (TKC) is a global ecumenical prayer movement that invites Christians around the world to pray from Ascension to Pentecost for more people to come to know Jesus. TKC write "Since it began in May 2016, God has grown TKC from a dream of possibility into a movement which unites more than a million Christians in prayer, in nearly 90% of countries worldwide, across

85 different denominations and traditions- so that friends and family, neighbours and colleagues might come to faith in Jesus Christ.

Every person, household and church are encouraged to pray during the 11 days in their own way.

It is our hope & prayer, that those who have not yet heard the Good News of Jesus Christ and His love for the world, will hear it for themselves and respond and follow Him.

Specifically, we again invite each and every Christian across the globe to pray that God's Spirit might work in the lives of 5 people who have not responded with their 'Yes' to God's call.

Whether you have joined in 'Thy Kingdom Come' before or not, we invite you to "take part & join in."

Archbishop Justin Welby says "In praying 'Thy Kingdom Come we all commit to playing our part in the renewal of the nations and the transformation of communities"

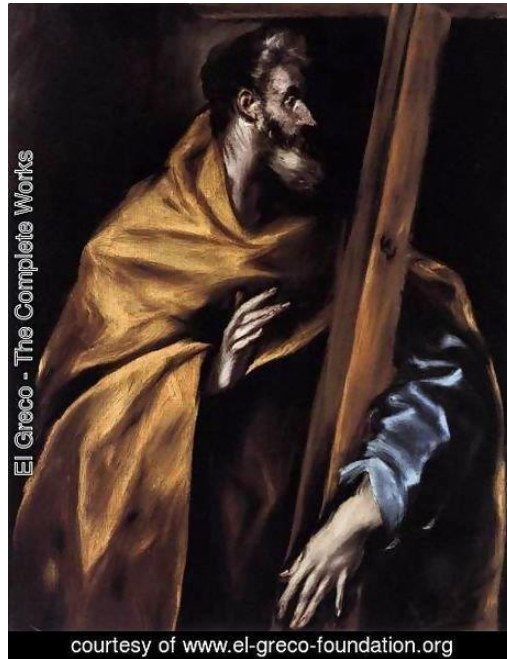
Prayer journals and books to help you pray 'Thy Kingdom Come' are available at the back of church, together with resources for children and young people. Please do help yourself to material and take some for your family or friends and neighbours. You can find out more about TKC at <https://www.thykingdomcome.global/>

Will you take up the challenge?

Rev'd Marie



1st May – Philip, the Apostle with common sense



Is there someone in church whom you respect for their spirituality and common sense combined? Someone you feel easy about approaching to ask questions? That person's patron saint should be Philip.

Philip came from Bethsaida and was a disciple of Jesus from early on. He knew how to lead others to Jesus; he brought Nathanael (or Bartholomew) to Him in a calm, kindly way. He knew how to do some financial forecasting: at the feeding of the 5,000 it was he who pointed out that without divine help, even 200 pennyworths of bread wasn't going to feed that crowd.

He was the one whom the Greeks approached when they wanted to ask Jesus to show them the Father but didn't quite have the nerve to approach Jesus directly. People had confidence in Philip's spirituality, common sense, and kindness. Such a person is a gift to any church! In art, the Apostle Philip has been represented either with a cross, or with loaves of bread.



St Alban's going for Bronze in 2024



Creating your own mini meadow in your garden

You can create a meadow patch in your garden as big or as small as you want. This can be an annual meadow with a wonderful flowering display in the summer or a perennial meadow which will give you colour every year.

Whatever you choose the birds, bees, insects, and butterflies will love you for it. There are 3 main ways to create a meadow lawn in your garden

- Wildflower turf
- Plug plants
- Seeds

Wildflower turf can be used for small areas and is also known as pre grown wildflowers mat; this is easy to lay. Spring or Autumn are the best time to lay the mat, when the flowers growing in the mat are small have no started to grow.



A lawn full of weeds, means that the soil isn't too rich, which will suit having a wildflower meadow made with plugs or seeds.



You can plant **Wildflower plugs** directly into your existing lawn. If your lawn is quite poor, 'weeds' such as clover and self-heal, will become part of your new meadow.

You can plant plugs at any time of the year. However, do not plant if the ground is frozen solid, bone dry or waterlogged.

Your front garden lawn will look lovely as a meadow, and if you plant spring, summer, and autumn bulbs in your grass as well, then wildflower plugs will be ideal.

Usually plugs are sold in multipacks.

Using **wildflower seeds** to create a meadow is very cost effective, you can use annual, and/or perennial seeds to make your meadow.

You do not need to improve or feed the soil with compost. Wildflowers always remain more compact and flower more freely on original soils.



Spread the seeds around the lawn so as to cover it equally all over. Make sure no one walks on the area unless you have made a path in between two wildflower sections.

This is what I will be doing to the patch of grass that is in between the Parish Hall and the Vicarage Wall. Wish me luck I will keep you updated on its progress.

No need to mow this year (2024), whilst the seeds settle themselves in – you may not have any growth to mow. You may have to wait a few seasons to reap the benefits of your labours. After all a natural meadow evolves over many years. The interaction between animals, plants and microorganisms takes time to develop. In 2025 you will cut to about 5cm/2” about 6-8 weeks after the seeds appear and repeat every 2 months through the summer. In 2026 you will cut in mid-April, August and November.

A wildflower lawn may never be a “true” meadow, but if you want to attract bees, increase insect populations, and spend less time mowing the grass, then a wildflower lawn is worth the time and effort you put into it.

Planting a wildflower lawn is a win-win situation! Less work and a better habitat for wildlife. Work with nature instead of against it we all benefit as will your garden.



Join in the **No Mow May** campaign.

No Mow May campaign was started in 2019 by Plantlife to encourage garden owners to put their mower away during May and let wildflowers grow. In the UK we have lost 97 per cent of British wildflower meadows since the 1930s, meaning a vital source of food for pollinators such as bees and butterflies has vanished.

Leaving your grass to grow has huge benefits to the environment and to wildlife. Even grass mown every four weeks will provide plants for pollinators. Less mowing

encourages wildflowers to grow in your lawn and this is beneficial to pollinating insects such as hoverflies, bees, and butterflies and provides food for other creatures such as birds and small mammals.

Register now and save our wildlife at
www.plantlife.org.uk/campaigns/nomowmay

Join us in NO MOW MAY and see how we can benefit wildlife.

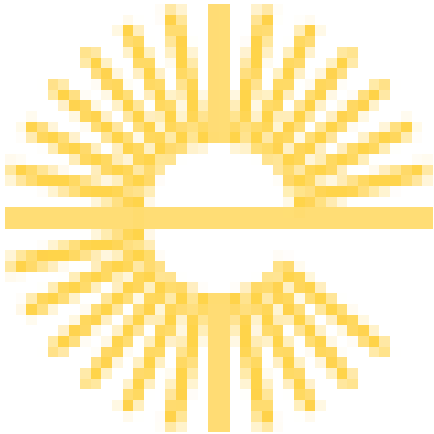


ST ALBAN'S CHURCH, OFFERTON

GARDENING CLUB

COME AND HELP OUR GARDEN BLOOM
1ST SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH
10AM-12PM

**ALL ARE WELCOME - ANY AGE, ANY ABILITY. JUST DROP
IN TO LEND A HAND, HELP BUILD A BUG HOTEL, WEED,
PLANT, MEET NEW PEOPLE AND HAVE SOME FUN.**



Hello

Just letting you know that St Alban's Church, Offerton are now registered with easyfundraising, which means you can raise FREE donations for us every time you shop online. Over 7,000 brands will donate to us when you use easyfundraising to shop with them – at no extra cost to yourself!

These donations really mount up and will make a BIG difference to us, so we'd really appreciate it if you could take a moment to sign up and support us. It's completely FREE and only takes a moment. You can find our easyfundraising page at

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/st-albans-church-offerton>

Please sign up and link your online buying to easyfundraising

Thank you so much!

Janet

Use easyfundraising with companies such as

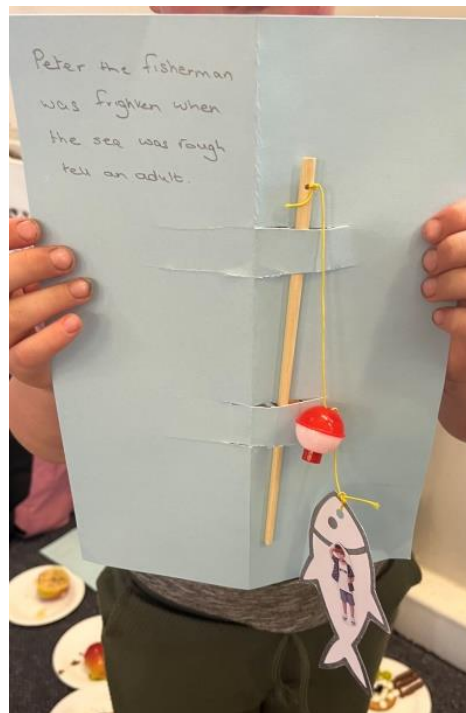
Tesco, Morrisons, Sainsburys, Asda, Waitrose, Ocado, Booking.com, Trainline, Tui, First Choice, P&O Ferries, Amazon, Ebay, Etsy, Argos Price Comparison sites and so many more – just go to the website and sign up now

Messy Church- April



In April our theme was St. Peter. Our activities included challenging lollies, who does what, swirly cross, stormy seas, a sheep biscuit, crunchy apple boats, sheep head band, fishers of men and an origami boat.





Peter the fisherman
was frightened when
the sea was rough
tell an adult.

Easter at St. Albans



We welcome into our church family -
George, Marian, Danny and Lou who were baptised on
Sunday 31st March





ST. ALBAN'S COMMUNITY INDOOR BOWLING CLUB ST ALBAN'S PARISH HALL



This is an invitation for you to try Short Mat Bowling. All equipment is supplied. Just turn up and have a go. Tuition is available. We have refreshments and a chat and have a good social programme.

Make new friends
Gentle exercise
Learn a new sport
Boost physical, mental and social wellbeing.

**A WARM WELCOME AWAITS YOU
OPEN TUESDAY & FRIDAYS, MAY & JUNE 7PM - 9PM.
FIRST SESSION FREE**



MAY 2024

Collect the rubbish left in your street or join in a local clean-up event

www.stockport.gov.uk/news/stockport-council-launch-spring-clean-campaign-for-2024

Joining a local clean-up event is a hands-on way to combat litter and promote community engagement. It's about taking responsibility for our shared spaces and enjoying a cleaner, greener neighbourhood.

Plus, it's a fantastic way to meet like-minded individuals who share your passion for the environment. Together, you can make a tangible difference in your local area.



Practice mindful shopping—buying only what you need.

Mindful shopping is about being aware of your consumption patterns and opting to buy only what you need. This habit not only saves you money but also reduces the amount of waste generated. It's an approach that promotes a simpler, less cluttered lifestyle while also being kinder to our planet.

Fit more active travel into your day and daily routine.



As the weather warms up, it's worth considering what journeys can be made by walking or cycling. Could you get off a stop early to walk the rest of your journey, take a relaxing stroll home, or hop on a bike and enjoy a cycle friendly route? If you prefer exploring outdoors on foot, here's your local rambling group

‘Woodbank Wanderers’ usually meet at Vernon Park Café on a Thursday at 1pm. Contact breegeplynch1964@gmail.com to check place, time and fitness level required.

7 Tips For Eco-Friendly Lifestyle Choices In 2024

- Reducing your meat consumption is one way to lead an eco-friendly lifestyle. Have a couple of meat free meals a week and see how you get on.
- Choosing reusable water bottles, utensils, & shopping bags is essential.
- Install energy-efficient appliances – saving you money in the long run.
- Support local food sources – such a Stockport Market for your fruit, veg and meat
- Use public transport and check out the new Interchange whilst you’re at it. A single journey costs £2 per adult see how far you can go for £2
- Compost your uncooked food scraps to reduce landfill waste.
- Switch to eco-friendly, non-toxic cleaning and personal care products.

Kinder to the environment, kinder to your home and kinder to you.



19th May –Fire of Pentecost



“You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you will be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth” Acts 1:8

We all get tired and battle weary sometimes. The disciples of Jesus had just been through a three-year long roller coaster adventure with Jesus that had culminated in His death, resurrection and ascension into heaven.

The range of emotions would have been hugely taxing in the days leading up to Pentecost, as they remembered Jesus weeping in the garden of Gethsemane, betrayed by Judas, brutally beaten and crucified, and then dead and buried. Then there had been the shock and awe of finding out that He was alive again! But then He had left them again, to return to His Father. By the time the day of Pentecost arrived, the disciples would indeed have welcomed some fresh spiritual fire!

For us today, many of us have felt emotionally drained with the uncertainties caused by Covid 19, the worry of prices rising at an alarming rate, and now the pain and uncertainty of what will happen in the war in Ukraine.

So, what better day to pray for fresh spiritual fire for each of us? As we celebrate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and birth of the Church, let us thank God that He will never leave us or forsake us.

Remembering Beethoven's greatest symphony



Two hundred years ago, on 7th May 1824, the first performance of Ludwig van Beethoven's Symphony No 9 took place in Vienna. It is regarded as Beethoven's greatest work and is one of the most-performed symphonies in the world.

This last of his symphonies is known for its revolutionary structure and majestic emotion, and it is all the more remarkable because it was completed when the composer had gone profoundly deaf. Indeed, although Beethoven stood as conductor for the first performance, the musicians and singers were in fact guided by a separate musical director.

At the close Beethoven did not even hear the hugely enthusiastic response of the audience and had to be turned round by the young contralto so that he could witness it.

The complex ninth symphony, completed over many years with multiple changes, is in fact part symphony and part oratorio – a device that mystified some of the less adventurous critics of the time, who regarded his iconoclastic style as a little too rock-and-roll. The key final movement is a magnificent setting of Friedrich Schiller's famous poem, *An die Freude (Ode to Joy)*, which celebrates brotherhood and freedom and has been used to mark many notable occasions. The most striking of these was perhaps the concert on Christmas Day 1989 in Berlin, shortly after the Berlin Wall came down. It was led by American conductor Leonard Bernstein, using musicians from East and West Berlin. For this one occasion the word Freude (joy) was replaced by Freiheit (freedom).

Beethoven's music to *An die Freude* is used as the European Union Anthem – but without the words.



May Bank Holidays

Who doesn't enjoy the fair month of May?
Not one day but two we can spend time away;
With workbags and satchels left under the bed
We sing as we pack up a picnic instead!

The sun in the sky and the wind in our hair
As we eat our lunch in the fresh open air;
The river chants secrets to daisies nearby
And birds sing their anthems beneath the blue sky.

Replete, we can take to our feet, or a bike
Instead of a schedule we can do what we like!
Catch up on a novel, or stroll 'neath the trees
Our laughter transported on warm summer breeze.

From two days of duty we are thus relieved
And so we should judge them a blessing received;
A pause in life's rhythm, a gift from above
To substitute stresses with laughter and love.

By Nigel Beeton

**1ST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH
AT ST. ALBAN'S**



**10AM-12PM
GARDENING CLUB**



**2PM-3PM
CHILDREN'S CLOTHING BANK**



**3.30PM-5.30PM
MESSY CHURCH**

Chester Diocese News

If you have access to a computer you may want to catch up on the latest news by logging on to –

www.chesteranglican.org

**St Albans Church is a vibrant and active
Church of England Parish Church in Stockport**

We welcome visitors of all faiths and of no faith. Our services are as inclusive as possible and all are welcome to join the church family for services and events.

Regular Services and Events at St Alban's & St. John's

Sunday

9.00am Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer
(1st Sunday only)

10.30am Holy Communion

Tuesday

10.30am Praise & Play

Wednesday

10.30am Holy Communion – St John's

Friday

10.00am Coffee morning

Saturday

3.30pm-5.30pm Messy Church (1st Saturday of month)