

Keep in touch with St Alban's Church

Revd. Marie Flint

Parish Office: 0161 477 0456

(Mon & Fri 9.30-12.30)



November 2024

To Contact the Church.....

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| 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 and X and
www.achurchnearyou.com

Marie writes-

I've been doing a lot of remembering lately. In October, Simon and I celebrated our 20th wedding anniversary and decided to have a weekend away together. We thought back to the day of our wedding at St. George's Church in 2004, and our last weekend away together, which was 10 years ago. This year, we stayed in North Wales, close to where I spent many childhood holidays and so I was reminded of having fun as a child. And while I can picture some of the detail of those memories, the thing that I remember most is the feelings. I remember the excitement of preparing for a wedding and the fun of having a party with all our friends and families. I remember the joy of being on holiday, the wonder of the beauty of the mountains and waterfalls and the feeling of being loved and treated. For me, feelings are the strongest part of my memories.

In November we tend to do a lot of remembering as well. As we move through the season on Remembrance with All Saints Day, All Soul's Day and Remembrance Sunday we remember people who we love who are no longer with us; and we remember people who died in wars fighting for the freedom of others. It's a poignant time as we also think about people suffering and dying in the Middle East as well as Ukraine at this moment in time. I wonder what feelings of memories displaced people from Gaza, who have had their home destroyed, will recall in 20 years' time.



In a previous chapter of my life, I worked as a nurse and have nursed lots of war veterans who have been very forthright in sharing all sorts of personal information and stories with me – but rarely spoke of their memories of war. They kept their war memories for themselves, perhaps unable to put their feelings into words. In their silence lay their remembrance.

We, too will be expressing the silent language of remembrance at 11 o'clock on Remembrance Sunday. The sort of silence that is intentional and collective. The sort of silence that is calm and mutual. The sort of silence that is before God and with God.



11 o'clock is a significant time for silence. On the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918 the guns fell silent across Europe. After 4 years of bitter fighting the so-called Great War was finally over. After 4 years of the noise of gunfire, explosions, suffering, shouting and screaming, there was silence. Can you imagine the silence

experienced then?

Salford born poet and volunteer at the Imperial War Museum Brian Kirkham writes in his poem 'The Guns fall Silent':

The shells were stopped
and Rifles were dropped
on a place, of a Belgian field
war was ceased, and peace revealed
on a field in Flanders.

A Silence fell,
on this muddy hell
Release and Relief showed on the face
of every Brit and German placed
on a field in Flanders
Agreements made
and shells laid
down without being fired
as a peace (of sorts) was inspired
on a field in Flanders

And Guns on the left
and Guns on the right
stayed silent together that night
as warring factions stopped the fight
on a field in Flanders.

Remembering matters because God remembers us and Jesus calls us to remember him. Every time we participate in the Eucharistic feast we remember Jesus, his sacrifice and God's ultimate promise to us that he will live with us in peace. There will be no more war, no more crying, no more pain, no more mourning.

To remember rightly we must have a vision of this future. We must take our remembering and live in the light of it, inviting the Holy Spirit to guide us in hope and peace, remaining steadfast to our faith.

So, as we remember, in the language of silence, let us hold onto that Christian hope. As we remember those who have followed that great command; that greater love hath no one than this, that they lay down their life for their friends, we, their friends, will remember them in silence and in hope.

Rev'd Marie



Congratulations!



Many Congratulations to Brenda Baxendale on her 20 year anniversary as a licensed lay reader, which we celebrated together on 20th October.

'Thank you for your steadfast ministry and service Brenda.'



St Alban's going for Bronze in 2024

I was racking my brains what animal to choose this month – so why not one of my favourites, the **OTTER**. Most of you will know that the otter is an excellent swimmer, I've been lucky enough to spot an otter twice, both times in Scotland, and both by chance, the first time was near Glentroll in Dumfries & Galloway and the second was in the sea off the West coast of the Isle of Syke at Duntulm, no photos I'm afraid as I was too busy watching, you'll have to take me at my word.



They can be quite elusive but may be seen mainly in West Wales, the West Country and East Anglia, hunting in wetlands, rivers and along the coast. They need clean rivers, with an abundant source of food and plenty of vegetation to hide their secluded holts.

Otters are a protected species, they are a rare and elusive animal but are widespread over the country except central and southern England, Isle of

Man, Isles of Scilly and the Channel Islands.

Otters have their babies in underground burrows called Holts and the young are swimming by 10 weeks old

The otter is well suited to a life on the water as they have webbed feet, dense fur to keep them warm, and can close their ears and nose when underwater. They eat mainly fish but will eat waterbirds, frogs, toads and newts and even crustations.



Ring of Bright Water is a book by Gavin Maxwell about his life in a remote house in coastal Scotland where he kept several wild otters as pets. He wrote this in 1960 and a fictionalised film of the same name was released in 1969, this was my first encounter with otters.

Gavin Maxwell was born near Port William in Wigtownshire. He was a naturalist and author. They erected a memorial to him just above Port William. It says Gavin Maxwell 1914-1969 Author and Naturalist. Haec loca puer amavit vir celebravit 'This place he loved as a boy, as a man he made it famous'. I visited in July 2023 (my photos). Well worth a visit and the views are glorious.



PREPARE FOR A GREENER CHRISTMAS taken from my Eco News November 2023

These ideas are still relevant in 2024. How can we make sure our Christmas is both a celebration of Christ's coming and better for His creation?

Here are some Eco Christmas ideas

Advent Calendar. Support overseas farmers by ensuring that your advent calendar, and any Christmas chocolate, is Fairtrade.

Natural wreaths and decorations. Collect holly sprigs, ivy trails, pinecones, rose hips... Don't take too much and do leave some berries for the birds. Then make a beautiful wreath and Christmas decorations from natural materials.

Homemade gifts. Baked goods for example or buy gifts from a charity shop. You could buy an attractive glass or vase and fill it with chocolates or flowers. Kilner jars, and other glass jars, filled with small items also make attractive gifts.

No Palm Oil. Many beauty products contain palm oil. Its production causes mass deforestation, air pollution and human rights abuses. Read labels carefully. Avoid products with unsustainable palm oil.

Dim the lights but not the joy! LED Christmas lights help to save energy and money. Use eco-friendly candles made from beeswax, soy or other vegetable alternatives – avoid paraffin-based candles.

Try a Veggie Christmas meal. Would your visitors be willing to try a tasty new vegetarian recipe? Check out the Eco News November 2023 which has a recipe at www.stalbanofferton.org.uk If you do eat meat, make sure it's free-range or organic, and buy it from a local farmer or independent retailer (see ECO Tips November 2024 on the website)

Recycle right. Christmas increases our countries waste. Paper Recycling - most wrapping paper is not recyclable. You can test it by doing the 'scrunch' test. If it springs back, it isn't recyclable. And always remove the Sellotape. No Glitter or foil. Same for Christmas Cards



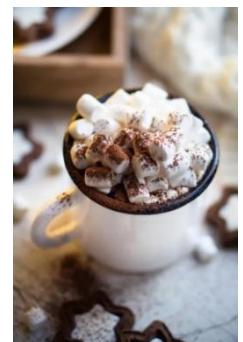
National Hot Chocolate Day

Celebrate with us, come along to church
and indulge in a yummy hot chocolate and biscuits.
(or if you prefer coffee or tea)

Friday 13th December

12.30pm-1.30pm

All funds raised will go to Church funds



CHRISTMAS FAIR

St Albans Christmas Fair

Saturday 30th November 11am-2pm

Raffle, tombola's, tea/cake, Father
Christmas and much more.

Come along and join in the fun



November 2024

November ECO TIPS

Eat seasonally

Make your shopping basket more sustainable by buying seasonal products, locally produced where possible. Doing so reduces the energy spent growing foods out of season or flying food to the UK. Support UK farmers by eating with the seasons.

There are a number of good reasons to eat more local, seasonal food:

- to reduce the energy (and linked CO2 emissions) needed to grow and transport the food we eat
- to avoid paying a premium for food that is scarcer or has travelled a long way
- to support the local economy
- to reconnect with nature's cycles and the passing of time
- seasonal food is fresher and so tends to be tastier and more nutritious

What's in season in NOVEMBER

- artichoke, beetroot, butternut squash, cauliflower, celeriac, celery, chicory, horseradish, jerusalem artichoke, kale, leeks, parsnips, maincrop potatoes, pumpkin, shallots, swede, turnips, watercress
- apples, clementines, cranberries, passion fruit, pears, pomegranate, quince, satsumas
- almonds, brazil nuts, chestnuts, cob nuts, hazelnuts, rosemary, sage, walnuts
- beef, duck, goose, grouse, guinea fowl, hare, lamb, mallard, partridge, pheasant, rabbit, turkey, venison, wood pigeon
- clams, cod, coley, crab, dab, dover sole, gurnard, haddock, halibut, hake, lemon sole, lobster, mackerel, monkfish, mussels, oysters, plaice, pollack, red mullet, wild sea bass, sea bream, skate, squid, turbot, winkles

Why not try one of our local farm shops I found on the internet.

NORBURY FARM SHOP - Jacksons Lane, Hazel Grove, Stockport, Cheshire SK7 5JS
www.norburyfarmshop.co.uk

NIXONS FARM SHOP - Outwood Farm, Bolshaw Road, Cheadle, Cheshire, SK8 3PS has a Tea Room. www.nixonsfarmshop.co.uk

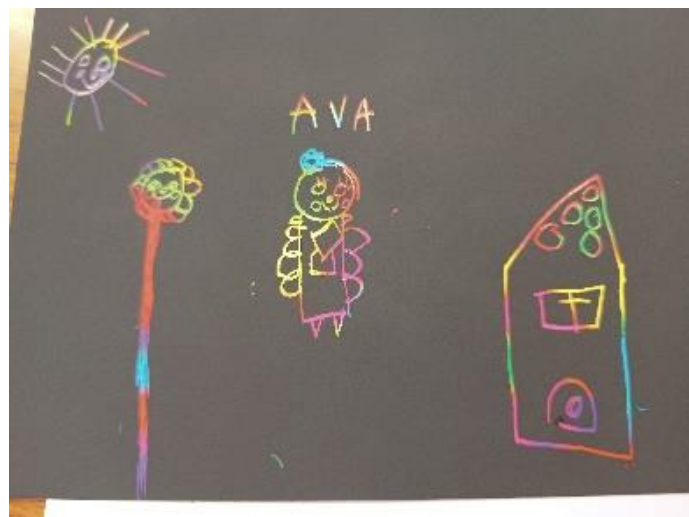
LYMEFIELD Garden Centre, Farm Shop & Tea Room - Lyme field Road, Hyde SK14 6AG
www.lyme field.com Lovely place to go.

OLD MILL FARM, Edge Lane, Mottram, Hyde. SK14 6SE - look up Old Mill Farm on facebook

Messy Church- October

This month the theme was to love one another, those we love and don't know. The activities included making an arrow pencil, mending hearts, camp fires, a strawberry heart man, candles, pumpkin lantern, a dancing leaf man and scratch art town.

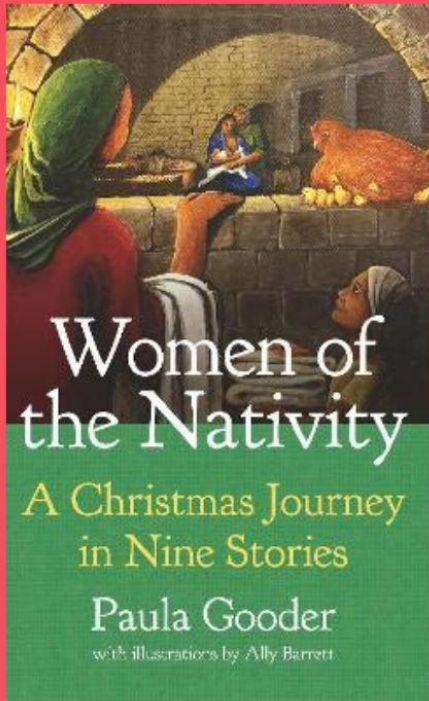




St. Alban's Church & Dialstone Lane Methodist Church

Advent Course 2024

Theme: **Women of the Nativity**



In this season of waiting, you are warmly welcome to join us as we study the Women of the Nativity

Mondays 7.30-9pm
25th Nov, 2nd, 9th & 16th
December 2024

@THE STRAWBERRY GARDENS,
84 OFFERTON LANE,
STOCKPORT SK2 5BS

More Information :
Rev. Marie Flint & Rev. Raj Patta

When children tell Bible stories (*real-life efforts that didn't quite make it*)

*The people who followed the Lord were called the 12 decibels.



* One of the opossums was St Matthew who was also a taximan.

8th November – Four Crowned Martyrs



Sculpture by Nanni di Banco

Has your boss ever tried to get you to do something that is against your Christian faith? If so, here are some saints for you. They chose to make a Christian 'stand' at work, even though it really irritated their boss.

Claudius, Nicostratus, Simpronian and Castorius were simple stonemasons in early 4th century Rome. They worked in the imperial quarries and workshops of Sirmium. They made a number of carvings for the Emperor Diocletian, who had a passion for building.

Then Diocletian decided he wanted a statue of Aesculapius, the ancient Greek god of medicine. Here Claudius, Nicostratus, Simpronian and Castorius hesitated: they were Christians, and not comfortable about making a 'god'. They demurred. Their line manager Lampadius was furious, and soon had them imprisoned for refusing to sacrifice to the gods. Claudius and his friends were in bad trouble – and then it got worse. Lampadius suddenly died. His family were distraught and blamed the stonemasons. Claudius and his companions were killed by drowning.

The courage of these four simple stonemasons to risk everything rather than make a stone statue of a god, was a great inspiration in the early Church. Their story was told and retold down the centuries.... eventually Claudius and his friends became the patron saints of guilds of stonemasons in England.

4th November- Charles Borromeo – The un-ordained archbishop



Why should being a 'lay' person stop you from as full a ministry as being ordained? Here is a saint for all lay people who suspect they can do as good a job....

Charles Borromeo was an Italian who lived in Milan from 1538 to 1584. His uncle, Pope Pius IV, made him Archbishop of Milan three years before Charles even became a priest, let alone a bishop. Charles, however, was one of the ablest and most compassionate Christian leaders of his age. He established theological colleges to train future clergy, encouraged children to be taught the Christian faith, and increased the help given to the poor.

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.**



**Offerton
Youth
Music
Club**



**St. Alban's Church
Offerton** www.musicproject.uk **STAMP**
Stockport Music Project

Thursdays 6.30pm - 8.30pm

St. Alban's Church
1A Salcombe Rd, Offerton SK2 5AG

All abilities music activities & learning, age 11-16

All enquiries please e-mail
stockportmusicproject@gmail.com

Macmillan Coffee morning



Thank you to everyone who supported the Macmillan coffee morning.

We raised around £400 for the charity!



Nigel Beeton writes: The Letter of James, chapter two, opens with a warning not to show favouritism between those who may want to visit our church. James compares a rich, well-dressed man with a filthy smelly beggar, but there are so many other people that we can, unless we are very careful, show a bias against:



God so loves them all

If God so loved the world
He sent His only Son,
The meaning of that phrase, unfurled?
That He loves *everyone*.

Oh yes, that does mean me,
And it means you, as well;
And those whose clothes are fine to see
And those whose clothes may smell.

The homeless man, remote.
The Earl within his hall
The migrants in their rubber boat –
For God so loves them all.

And so both you and I
Must love all these the same;
For Jesus came down here to die –
For *all* these souls to claim.

By Nigel Beeton

Superheroes came to help at Gardening club



Cycle of Prayer

This month we pray for the staff and pupils at the Fairway and we pray for more renewable energy projects in our community.



Books to borrow

Did you know that there is a good selection of Christian books to borrow at the back of church? Please help yourself and just return it when you've finished with it. We'd love to hear what you think of them too, so we'd welcome any short reviews of any of the books for inclusion in this magazine. Please email stalbanofferton@gmail.com with your reviews. Happy reading!

Our Royal Army Chaplains



For centuries, armies worldwide have taken their clergy to war with them. And while over the years the roles of chaplains may have changed, still their presence among the troops has remained as important as ever. For the British, it was in 1796 that the Army Chaplain's Department was founded by the Revd John Gamble, who became its first Chaplain General.

In 1854, the Crimean War found it had 26,000 troops depending on only one chaplain: the Revd Henry Press Wright. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) hastily financed more chaplains, and eventually 60 were sent out. In 1879 the Revd James William Adams became the first chaplain to be awarded the Victoria Cross – for his brave actions during the Second Afghan War. During the First World War (1914 – 1918) chaplains became known and loved for their bringing of comfort, care and compassion to the troops.

In 1919 the King honoured the army chaplains by granting them the prefix 'Royal'. The Second World War (1939-45) saw chaplains learning new skills like parachuting with the Airborne Forces. During those years of violence and turmoil, Royal Army Chaplains were everywhere, even sustaining captives in Far East prison camps and on the Burma-Siam railway. Since 1945, Royal Army Chaplains have continued to serve wherever British soldiers are sent. The wars may vary in shape and locations, but the need for care, compassion and prayer for the soldiers remains constant.

Currently the Royal Army Chaplains' Department looks like this:

- Chaplains are typically assigned to bases or units in sets of three, including Anglican, Catholic, and Non-Conformist chaplains.
- Chaplains are non-combatants and are not permitted to carry weapons.
- Four civilian chaplains minister to Buddhist, Sikh, Hindu, and Muslim soldiers.
- All chaplains are expected to provide pastoral care to any soldier, regardless of their faith or denomination.
- The ranks of the Royal Army Chaplains' Department are:

Chaplain-General (CG) = Major-General

Deputy Chaplain-General (DCG) = Brigadier

Chaplain to the Forces 1st Class (CF1) = Colonel

Chaplain to the Forces 2nd Class (CF2) = Lieutenant-Colonel

Chaplain to the Forces 3rd Class (CF3) = Major

Chaplain to the Forces 4th Class (CF4) = Captain

It has been said that: "Life as an Army Chaplain is a calling like no other...it is a vocation that is both demanding and rewarding and offers an adventurous journey of faith." The current chaplain general, the Revd M Parker KHC CF says: "As chaplains, we have time for people and time to care for them. We celebrate with them. We listen to them when they're having problems. We are there for them in all of the challenges that they might face, whether on operations, serving at home or times of separation from their families. "It may to us be the smallest example of our vocation – listening, comforting, advising, praying – but to those we serve, it can be a life changing encounter."



Congratulations



Congratulations to the Smith family on Freddy and Jorgie's baptism on 28th September as well as Hayley and Ash's wedding, which happened on the same day - much to the surprise of all the guests!

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 (term time)

Wednesday

10.30am Holy Communion – St John's (not on 1st Wed)
10.30am Healing Service – St Albans (1st Wed only)
1.00 – 3.00pm Support Group - Bereavement (1st Wed only)

Thursday

2-4pm Craft Club
6.30 – 8.30pm Youth Music Group (term time)

Saturday

10.00 – 12.00pm Gardening club (1st Saturday of month)
3.30pm-5.30pm Messy Church (1st Saturday of month)