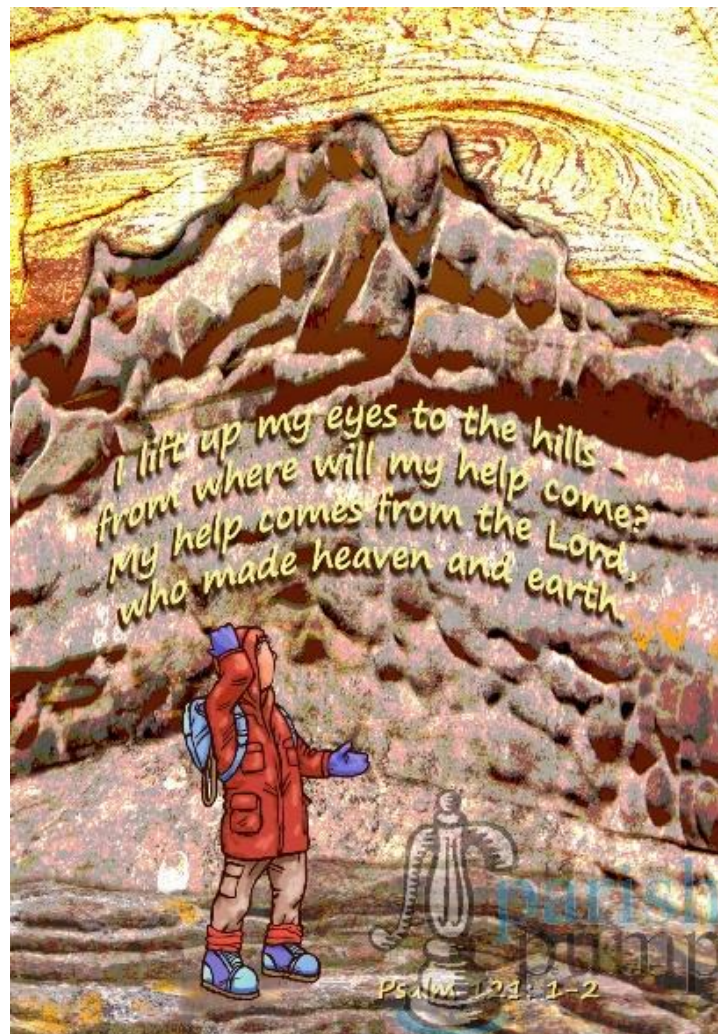


Keep in touch with St Alban's Church

Revd. Marie Flint

Parish Office: 0161 477 0456

(Mon & Fri 9.30-12.30)



September 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

Brenda writes-

During Advent last year we discussed what it meant to be an inclusive church and what the Bible tells us. How does it fit with today 2000 years on.

As you can imagine there was much discussion as we live in a very different world, different traditions and beliefs.

One thing that came up was the role of women in the church today and the role that they appeared to have in Jesus' time.

How do we interpret the Bible now to fit in with modern day living.

The fact that many people still don't think Jesus had female disciples.

The dictionary definition of disciple is 'a personal follower of Christ during his life.'

We all know that Jesus had many followers who were women, and although none of the twelve Apostles were, Jesus and the Apostles must have relied on the female followers for support and help as they travelled from town to town.

When we look around our churches today not only are the majority of our congregation's women but also a large number of our clergy are too.

30 years ago this year the first 32 women were ordained in Bristol Cathedral and now we have female Bishops and our new Archdeacon of Macclesfield is a woman, the Revd. Jane Proudfoot.

In March we celebrated Mothering Sunday and this year the Monday of Holy Week we celebrated Lady Day commemorating the announcement of the Incarnation by the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary.

I have a book called 'Women of Holy Week' by Paula Gooder, this book takes you from Palm Sunday through to the Ascension 'An Easter journey in nine stories'. The ninth woman is Mary, mother of Jesus

The next main festival after Easter and Ascension is of course Pentecost.

Last year I went on a cruise down the Rhine, Bob and Joan Read were also on the cruise, one of our stops was Heidelberg. We went to visit the church dedicated to The Holy Ghost.

I had never heard of a church with this title before.

When we went in to look around we walked up to the altar and then turned round to look at the back of the church and were very surprised at what we saw. There above the door was this sculpture.

We were very pleased to find an explanation in English as well as in German.

RUACH

Holy Spirit Female?

In their creed, or statement of belief, Christians profess, besides the Father and the Son to the “creative” Spirit as the third Godly or divine person, who thus belongs to the trinity.

As God’s divine power is hard to conceive various pictures provide assistance: doves, storms, breath, fire tongues.

In the Old Testament, “ruach” describes the sound that the wind makes, the breath of wind as a soft whisper. It is used to describe the action of God, which corresponds to the Christian idea of the Holy Spirit. The word “ruach” is feminine in Hebrew, which is why we can also think of the Holy Spirit as feminine.

In the Jacobus Church in Urschalling/Oberbayern since the 13th century there is a portrayal of the Holy Spirit with female features.

The Wood Sculptor Bernhard Apfel (1947 -2019) from Leimen seized this interpretation and customized in his own artistic handwriting a powerful dynamic sculpture of “Ruach”.

With her flaming hair, an expression of passionate, creative awareness she shows us with an explicit hand gesture to go forth and mould the world in an ingenious fashion.

Let us go forward and do likewise women disciples of Jesus Christ



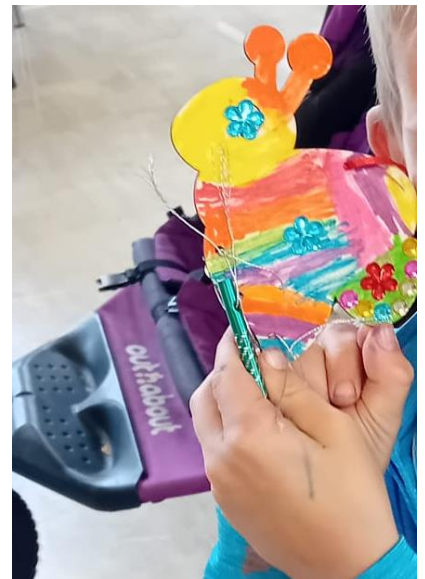
OUR GARDENING CLUB



MESSY CHURCH – JULY

In July the theme was the Olympics and keeping yourself fit in mind and body. The activities included a breathing wand, wind chimes, exercise dice, edible dumb bells, a journey stick, cloud of witness, scavenger Olympic rings and edible medals.





St Alban's going for Bronze in 2024

Create habitats for wildlife in your garden

using ideas from www.rhs.org.uk

A small space or lack of a garden doesn't mean you can't help wildlife. Ground beetles, centipedes and woodlice can make a home under a pot, a robin may choose to nest in an undisturbed hanging basket and pollinators flock to container favourites such as lavender and nasturtium



Your lawn can be a rich environment for wildlife. Short grass is a good spot for birds such as blackbirds to search for ants and earthworms. Allowing your lawn "weeds" such as clover and dandelions to flower in between cuts will provide nectar for pollinating insects and seeds for birds.

Joining in NO MOW MAY and letting the grass grow long can feed the caterpillars for various butterflies.

If you have the room in your garden you could make a small pond, if you don't have much space, make a pond in a plant pot or a washing up bowl (see our March Eco Newsletter) - it will still be a help to wildlife



You can also put out a source of shallow water for birds and other wildlife to use for drinking and bathing.

If your garden lacks a lot of natural cover and nest sites, put up nest boxes for bats and birds.

You can also install solitary bee nesting tubes though remember to clean out or replace every two years in late summer.



Having well-stocked **flower beds** means there are lots of provisions for wildlife. They are a source of nectar and pollen for bees, butterflies and other flower visitors. As the flowers go over there are seed heads for seed-eating birds and insects. And if the annual cut back of is delayed until early spring, there are hollow stems and foliage available for overwintering invertebrates.



In the natural world decaying vegetation and dead wood teems with just as much life as the green, 'living' parts of a garden. We can create this wonderful habitat in many ways, from building a simple log pile or compost heap or leaving our fallen leaves just that little bit longer.

Dead wood provides habitat for approximately 20% of Britain's woodland insect fauna. Logs and standing dead timber is food for wood-boring insects that in turn are eaten by birds.



Decaying plant material seethes with springtails, worms, mites and other invertebrate animals. They are part of the composting process and, along with bacteria and fungi, will convert the vegetation into a rich, crumbly compost. The heap will also be an important feeding area for birds and insectivorous mammals.

Good for wildlife AND good for your garden plants. It's a win win situation all round

A cairn made of our rocks and bricks, covered in turf or a layer of soil up to 45cm (18in) deep will provide a snug overwintering shelter for frogs, toads, newts and reptiles, not to mention many other creatures too. Called a 'hibernaculum', it can also be made in a pit but you will need to insert some pipes or tubes into the pit hibernaculum as you construct it to provide easy access for animals.



Try placing some large, flat stones or slabs on the ground around the garden. Thrushes can use these as 'anvil stones' to crack open snail shells. Listen out for the tell-tale 'tap-tap-tap' of a thrush at work, getting at its tasty meal.



Our church BUG HOTEL is coming along nicely and has lots of creepy crawlies living inside it

MAKE A HOME FOR WILDLIFE IN YOUR GARDEN THIS MONTH



September 2024

Simple ways you can help reduce your impact on climate change

Make your voice heard

We know we are destroying the world, and we could be the last that can do anything about it. Speaking up is one of the most powerful things we can do especially if it's to the right people. Your voice is powerful. It's not just about speaking to the people in charge. Talk to your friends, neighbours and colleagues and get them to make positive changes too. Speak up, speak to everyone, and make your voice heard.



Keep yourself informed

The more you know the better. It leaves you better equipped to have conversations with your friends and family and the people you want to influence. Stay up to date with recent news on the state of our natural world and work out what you can do. Research organisations that are working to make our planet a better place.

Travel well

Cut your carbon footprint by travelling responsibly. Choosing a more sustainable way to get from A to B. How walk or cycle when you can, use public transport, next time you buy a car get a hybrid or electric car (always research first). Transport is one of the most polluting sectors in the UK. Holidaying closer to home can make a big impact on your carbon footprint. One short haul return flight can account for 10% of your yearly carbon emissions, and long-haul flights can completely determine your carbon impact. Travel on trains to European destinations to cut your carbon footprint. Get creative and try to find alternate ways to travel.



Watching what you buy

We can all do more to be more conscious about what we buy, and where we buy it from. Buying less will save you money, reduce waste and improve your environmental footprint. Living a less consumerist lifestyle can benefit you and our planet. Use your purchasing power and make sure your money is going towards positive change. By supporting eco-friendly products which are less damaging to the environment, you're encouraging companies to source and produce their products in a sustainable way.

July's Parade Service



In July's parade service, which was led by Kipling cubs and included a tug of war and some excellent intercessions written by young leaders, we dedicated Kipling's new flag.

CHILDREN'S CLOTHING BANK
at St. Alban's Church, Offerton
Offerton Lane, Stockport, SK2 5AG



Free children's clothes for anyone in need on:

Every Friday 10am-11am

and the 1st Saturday of the month
2pm-3pm.

We also accept donations of good quality children's clothes for re-distribution
www.stalbanofferton.org.uk

Meet the Congregation



Brenda started coming to St. Alban's in 1971. Over the years she has had a number of roles including Sunday school leader, has helped with Junior Church, has served on the PCC and has been Churchwarden.

Brenda did her Reader training in 2000 and spent 2008-2023 serving at St. Luke's, Brinnington as their Reader before returning to St. Alban's last year.

Brenda lives with her dog Rufus in Offerton and enjoys bowling for the St. Alban's team. She loves spending time with her family and helping to look after her grandchildren. She likes reading and knitting.

Tony married Janet at St. Alban's in 1984 and has been a regular member of our congregation for about 10 years. Tony helps with the maintenance of our buildings, serves on the PCC and buildings committee and volunteers at Praise and Play.



In his spare time, Tony spends time volunteering at Debdale Sailing and Watersports centre and is also involved in Scouting. Tony also likes reading and walking.

Jennifer is one of our most hard-working volunteers at St. Alban's and always has a smile. She is on the sides person and welcome rota, coffee rota and is a valuable member of both the Praise & Play and Messy Church team.



Jennifer loves singing, has a beautiful voice and used to sing in the choir. She loves creating Manga inspired fan fiction art which she uploads to her website

www.jinrenchan.me.uk. Jennifer likes to do a bit of gardening and watching anime.

Hymns chosen by You



Will your anchor hold - chosen by Marjorie in memory of Les

Thou didn't leave thy throne – chosen by Joan

Angel voices – chosen by Eileen in memory of her brother

Dear Lord and father – chosen by Linda

All things bright and beautiful – chosen by June and Debbie

I the Lord of Sea and Sky – chosen by Beryl, Brenda and Jeanne

O Worship the King – chosen by Sharon

Only by grace we can enter – chosen by Rosemary

Make me a channel of your peace – chosen by Lou

In Christ alone – chosen by Janet, Sue and Rev Janet

For all the Saints- chosen by Elaine

From heaven you came – chosen by Jennifer

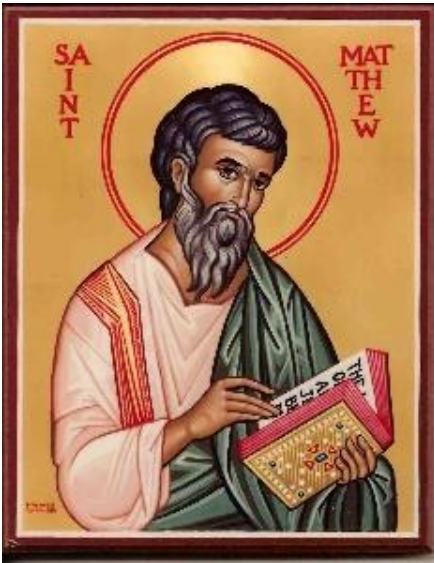
Guide me O thou Great Redeemer – chosen by Eileen for her Dad

My Jesus, my saviour – chosen by Judy

Blessed by your name – chosen by Judy

Jerusalem – chosen by Jean in memory of Derek

21st September – St Matthew



St Matthew was one of 12 apostles. But he began as a publican i.e. a tax-collector of Jewish race who worked for the Romans, before he left all at the call of Christ. From earliest times, he was regarded as the author of the first of the four Gospels. The Gospel of Matthew is in correct, concise style, very suitable for public reading. His usual emblem as an evangelist is a man, because his genealogy emphasised the family ties of Christ. In art, he has been represented as either an evangelist or as an apostle. As an evangelist, he has been depicted sitting at a desk, writing his gospel with an angel holding the inkwell. In the Middle Ages he was even given a pair

of spectacles.

Matthew was martyred by a sword or a spear, some think in Ethiopia.

Lord of the Winds



Lord of the winds, I cry to Thee,
I that am dust,
And blown about by every gust
I fly to Thee.

Lord of the waters, unto Thee I call,
I that am weed upon the waters borne,
And by the waters torn,
Tossed by the waters, at Thy feet I fall.

By Mary Coleridge (1861 – 1907)

The Gift of Music

**“Sound Praises to the Lord, all the earth, break into singing and music,
Psalm 98**



On 29th June we held a fundraising concert for St. Alban's, which was called 'The Gift of Music', to celebrate the musical gifts of the people of Stockport – and what a talented bunch they are! The evening started with a set from Stockport Accordion Band, which got us all swaying in our seats.

We were then treated to some beautiful music from Voces Pulchrae ('beautiful voices'), a small chamber choir directed by David Wynn-Evans and who rehearse on Monday evenings in our church.



Offerton Recorder group followed and then a ladies barbershop quartet called 'Shortcomings'. Our very own George Gibson then did a short set with guitar and vocals of some covers as well as original music and Darren Poyzer, who runs Stockport Music Project (our partner in our new Thursday evening youth music project) completed the evening with his guitar and voice





Throughout the evening, we were also treated to some pianist and keyboard students of Steve Hall (our organist) who all played wonderfully and Steve also played some jazz and the church organ.

The church was packed. We all had a great time and we raised some much-needed funds for church. Thank you to all our amazing performers for sharing their time and gifts with us, to the volunteers who helped on the night and to everyone who came and supported”

Marie

A poster for the Offerton Youth Music Club. The background is pink with white line drawings of headphones, a guitar, and a keyboard. The text is in black and white. At the top is the logo for STOMP Stockport Music Project. The main text reads 'OFFERTON YOUTH MUSIC CLUB' and 'Thursday 6:30 - 8:30'. Below that, it says 'All abilities age 11-16', 'St Alban's Church', 'Offerton Lane, Stockport SK2 5AF', and 'To join / more information please visit: www.stockportmusicproject.com'. At the bottom are logos for Sky|light and St. Alban's Church Offerton.

STOMP
Stockport Music Project

**OFFERTON
YOUTH
MUSIC
CLUB**

Thursday 6:30 - 8:30

All abilities age 11—16
St Alban's Church
Offerton Lane, Stockport SK2 5AF
To join / more information please visit:
www.stockportmusicproject.com

Sky|light Proud to be part of **SHG** **St. Alban's Church Offerton**



August Messy Church



August activities included making ice cream in a bag, a pine cone hedgehog, sand art magnets, clam shell cookies, making a limpet, a cork sailing boat, eternity bracelet, fantasy fish, and a seahorse pencil holder.

Sept 18th – St Joseph of Copertino – the awkward saint



Joseph of Copertino (1603 – 63) should be the patron saint of all awkward people who mean well, but who drive those around them to distraction – especially their church leaders.

Joseph began life in a garden shed, because his father had sold the house to pay debts. Then he grew up wandering about open-mouthed – his mother despised him and called him ‘The Gaper’. Young Joseph’s intense devotion to God led him to try and join the Capuchin monks – but he drove them crazy: forgetting to do what he was told, dropping piles of plates on the kitchen floor, and neglecting to tend the all-important kitchen fire. He was finally accepted by the Franciscans as a servant, and grew so religiously fervent that he was accepted as a novice in 1625, and ordained a priest in 1628.

As a priest he was devout, but apt to do anything – much to the irritation of his superiors. One problem was his repeated levitations, of which there were 70 reported instances. The most spectacular stories are of his flying to images placed high above the altars and helping workmen to erect a Calvary Cross 36 feet high by lifting it into place while he was hanging in mid-air himself. Such feats earned him the name of ‘the Flying Friar’ by admiring locals, but gave his superiors headaches. They were also disturbed by his habit of going into states of ecstasy, from which nothing could wake him.



A Thank you for making Tuesdays our favourite day of the week!

From Elsa and Walter

Welcome



We welcome into our church family -

Luke Joseph Henry-Clouston and Jude Mark Henry-Clouston
who was baptised on 14th July 2024

Everleigh Rose Goddard Nation who was baptised on 11th August 2024

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 (all except 1st Wed each month)
10.30am Healing Service – St. Alban's (1st Wednesday only)
1.00 – 3.00pm Bereavement Café (1st Wednesday only)

Thursday

6.30 – 8.30pm Youth Music Group (term time)

Friday

10.00 - 11.00am Clothing bank

Saturday

10.00 – 12.00pm Gardening club (1st Saturday of month)
2.00 – 3.00pm Clothing Bank (1st Saturday of month)
3.30pm-5.30pm Messy Church (1st Saturday of month)