



Holy Trinity



St.  
Gabriel

# The Parish of The Good Shepherd, Ashton-under-Lyne



St. James



St. Peter



St. Michael and All Angels

**DECEMBER 2021**

**Price 50p**

## Editorial

Waiting is not popular in our culture, when so much can be obtained simply at the press of a button! Advent, when we wait for the coming of Christmas, is also an opportunity to learn what it means to be waiting for the promised return of Jesus. He says: *'It's like a man going away: he leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with their assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch. Therefore, keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back'* (Mark 13:34-35).

We live between Jesus' first and second comings and this parable reminds us of the need to watch and wait, as disciples living faithfully for Him. It reminds us of two kinds of waiting: *passive* and *active*. Imagine you're at the railway station, awaiting the arrival of a train. On the platform a man is asleep, as he thinks there is plenty of time before the train arrives. He is *passively waiting*. There is also a small boy on the platform who is excited about the train coming. He can't sit still and constantly looks down the track to see if the train is coming. He is *actively waiting*, for he expects the train to arrive at any moment.

Advent gives us a choice: *how will we wait for Jesus' coming?* Passive waiting doesn't require much attention on our part. We can live our Christian life pre-occupied with our own concerns, rather than looking to God. However, active waiting involves an eager expectation, as we await Jesus' return or simply look to Him coming to us today. All we want is to be found faithful as His disciples. There is nothing more important than being ready to meet our Master!

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*The views expressed in articles in this magazine are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Parish of The Good Shepherd. The editor reserves the right to amend articles as appropriate, for editorial purposes. Please consider writing something for the magazine yourself! And, if you have any comments to make on the Magazine you can contact the editor, Roger Farnworth on 0161 330 2771 or talk to a member of your DCC or PCC who will pass on any comments that are made.*

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### The Parish Prayer

 Father God, whose Son came to bring love and peace to the world, help us to grow in faith and share our hope and joy with all whom we meet, so that we can work together to build your kingdom in Ashton, welcome new people into our churches, and be relevant to those around us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Farewell from Revd Roger Farnworth

We are right at the start of the Church's year. Advent is both about waiting in anticipation and about change. It is a time for reflection and hope.

If you are not already aware of my retirement, then this will be news to you. My wife Jo has accepted the post of Rector of Central Telford and Associate Archdeacon of Salop. We are moving to Telford in just a very short while now and, as we do so, I will be taking early retirement. I have relatively recently signed away the rights and responsibilities of Team Rector of the Parish of the Good Shepherd ready for my retirement.

Our final services in our Parishes will be on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> December. The Parish of the Good Shepherd has decided to hold one service on that Sunday which will be at St. Peter's Church at 10.30am. If you are able to be there, please do join us for the service.

On Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> December (3pm to 7pm) we will be hosting a drop-in at St. Martin's Church, Droylsden and on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> December (3pm to 7pm) we will be hosting a drop-in at St. Peter's Church, Ashton-

under-Lyne. Again, it would be wonderful to see you as we say "Goodbye."

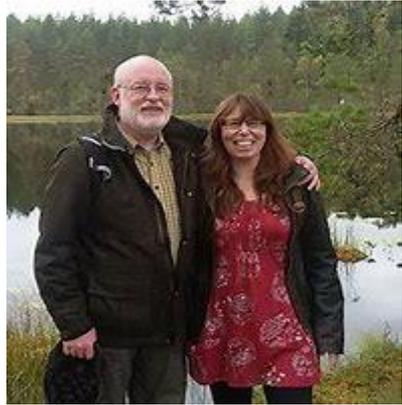


Jo and I have been living in Ashton-under-Lyne since we moved here in May 2003. We have loved living and ministering in Ashton-under-Lyne and Tameside. We love our home, and we are delighted to have been living so close to the centre of Ashton. I have been blessed to be able to be part of the life of our 5 church schools over that time. I have had significant roles within the life of our town and borough over that time, both as Area Dean and Borough Dean and have been able to contribute to the life of the town with important roles in a number of charities and Inter-faith dialogue and action.

I will greatly miss all of this!

We are leaving just as the New Church Year gets underway, and perhaps that is, in itself, significant. Just as Jo and I believe that God has called us to new things, I am also convinced that God is also calling our Parish on to new and different things.

This is a time of significant change in Manchester Diocese and particularly for what was the old Deanery of Ashton. Re-organisation is taking place. There is now a full-time Area Dean with a responsibility for Oldham and Ashton-under-Lyne. I know that some of you have already met Revd. Daniel Ramble.



Many of the clergy positions in and around Ashton will be vacant in the New Year. This gives the best opportunity for change, and I know that the Church Wardens of our five churches are working together to secure a future for our churches. They will be liaising with Daniel Ramble, with Archdeacon David and Bishop Mark to discern together what God wants for the churches in the area and particularly in our Parish.

Nothing, at present, is however set in stone and change can be very unsettling.

As we all go forward into 2022 and as we look forward with anticipation, almost certainly tinged with a little anxiety, to what the future holds, I am reminded of one of the early Christmas/New Year broadcasts by King George VI.

There was no TV in those days and the broadcast went out by radio. At Christmas 1939, he reassured his people by quoting a poem:

"I said to the man who stood at the Gate of the Year, 'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.' And he replied, 'Go out into the darkness, and put your hand into the Hand of God. That shall be better than light, and safer than a known way.'"

The poem was written in 1908 by Minnie Louise Haskins who studied and then taught at the London School of Economics in the first half of the twentieth century.

Ultimately this is what we as Christians believe, that we do not need to fear the darkness, or an uncertain future, because in the midst of all we face we hold the Hand of God. Never has God promised that life will be easy. We know that it isn't. God has not promised us that having faith will allow us to rise above the concerns and worries of all of our friends and neighbours. What we do have is a promise never to leave us alone, always to be present alongside us in everything we face.

That is also essentially the theme of the poem, "Footprints in the Sand," by Mary Fishback-Powers. She looks back over her life and sees God's footprints alongside her own. She is troubled by the fact that at the darkest of times, when her life had been so very difficult, she can see only one set of footprints. She assumes that

despite God's promises, God must have left her alone to face the storms. Then she hears God speak to her. It is those imagined words from God which complete her poem.

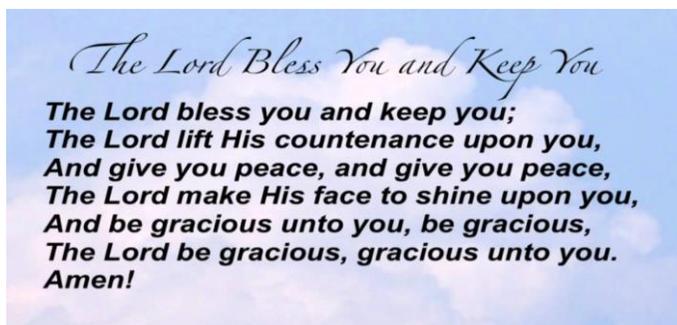
I think it appropriate to leave you with those words of God as I finish this Advent message:

*"My precious child, I love you and  
will never leave you  
Never, ever, during your trials and  
testings.  
When you saw only one set of  
footprints,  
It was then that I carried you."*

May God bless you all in coming weeks and months as you seek to serve God with integrity and look to make God's Kingdom a reality here on earth and particularly in Ashton-under-Lyne.

*Roger*

***Farewell, good luck and God Bless you, Roger & Jo***



# News from St Peter's CofE School

On Friday 1<sup>st</sup> November, we welcomed local MP Angela Rayner to school. Angela visited as part of 'World School Milk Day'.



Angela acted as our Reception 'milk monitor' and she talked to the children about the benefits of milk. Reception also sang their very own version of '5 Milk Bottles'. You can see a video here:

<https://twitter.com/AngelaRayner/status/1443951590864531463>



The video has now been viewed online over 16.5 k times!

Angela also toured our school and spoke to pupils and staff. She loved to hear all about our Trinity Club, Ethos Council and Earth Stewards. She could really see our Mustard Seed Vision in action and went away with her very own Mustard Seed Plant.

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## St James' Church

**Christingle Service**  
8<sup>th</sup> December 7.00pm



**Brass Band Concert**

10<sup>th</sup> December 7.30pm

St. John Mossley Brass Band

Adults £5.00 and £3.50 children

Refreshments and Raffle

Tickets on sale - email or ring Tina 07411 773336

Organised by 3rd Ashton Scout Group

Proceeds split between St James Church and Scout Group



### **3rd Ashton Scouts Group News**

#### **Service for 110 Year Badge Presentation and Explorer Unit Launch**

#### **The Theme of the Service - A Marathon**

The waiting was over, after two years of lockdown the day had come, on Sunday 31st of October a church service was held in St. James' Church to present the 110-year Commemoration Badges and launch the 3rd Ashton Explorer Unit.

Tina Howarth and Mark Howarth had worked long and hard to put together a Commemorative Service sheet to celebrate the Presentation and Explorer event, in fact with the help of the Revd Sheila Cant they both conducted the actual church service which was well received.

The Group had three honoured guests in their midst, Andrew Stone (D. D. C. T. V. and N.T.), Clifford Meadowcroft (GME) and Ken Marks (GME) alongside these were the Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, and Explorer Scouts of the Group, plus parents, supporters, and Parishioners, a grand total of 80 adults and young people attending the service.

The service commenced with the procession of the Group's flags led by Mark Howarth carrying the Union Jack whilst the hymn, "I Vow To Thee My Country" was sung by the congregation.

This was followed by the singing of the song "If I Was A Butterfly", by the Beavers and the Cubs which was well received by the congregation. The service then carried on like all church services with the Praise, Psalm 24, and another hymn "Lord the Light of your Love is Shining"

After which Mark Howarth gave a talk of the 110-year history of the 3rd Ashton, the theme being a "MARATHON", the group was formed under a gas lamp just outside the main gate of St. James' church by six young lads in 1908 and has run continuously, never closing. We believe we are the oldest into the unit scout group in the world, he stressed that the Group is still running its' MARATHON, the prize being the continuation of the 3rd Ashton.

The most important part of the service then took place, with the presentation of the 110-year Celebration badges to all members of the group by Alexander Stone, he followed this up by investing Jade Dixon into the scout movement as the Explorer Unit Scout Leader, followed up by investing Finlay Holt into the unit becoming its' first member. Andrew Stone then asked all members of the scout movement in the congregation to stand and renew their Scout Promise.

The service then came to an end with a Blessing from Revd Sheila Cant, followed by the National Anthem.



The GSL of the group thanked everyone in the congregation for coming along and supporting a celebration of the Group's scouting history and especially their support of all the scouts in the group, it was a truly memorable occasion. Roll on 2028 when we shall celebrate 120 years!

After the service refreshments were served with generated feedback from the parents who said: "The service was a very moving experience and they were glad they had been part of it".

It was truly a Baden Powell moment

Tina Howarth  
GSL 3rd Ashton

# **Christmas Services in the Parish of the Good Shepherd, Ashton-under- Lyne**



## **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> December**

**6.30pm** – Civic Carol Service at St Michael's

## **Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> December**

**4.00pm** - Carol Service at St James'

**6.30pm** - Carol Service at Holy Trinity

## **Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> December**

**3.30pm** – Holy Communion at Holy Trinity

## **Friday 24<sup>th</sup> December - Christmas Eve**

**5.30pm** - Christingle Service at St Gabriel's

**9.30pm** - First Communion of Christmas at St Michael's

**11.30pm** - Holy Communion at St James'

## **Christmas Day**

**10.30am** - United Service of Holy Communion at St Peter's

(there will be no other services in the Parish on this day)

## **Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> December**

**10.30am** - United Service of Holy Communion at St Gabriel's

(there will be no other services in the Parish on this day)

No midweek services between 26<sup>th</sup> December and 1<sup>st</sup> January inclusive

*Merry Christmas  
and a Happy New Year*

# December Services

We are still asking people to wear masks and to maintain social distancing and all government safety advice. It may be necessary to change or cancel any of these services at short notice should government or local guidance change.

**Please check our weekly sheets or with your wardens for up-to-date information.**

*Please note that those who are extremely clinically vulnerable/shielding, or who have symptoms of a continuous cough or a high temperature or loss of or change to sense of smell or taste, should not attend church.*

<b>Advent 2</b> Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup> December	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>St Peter</b>	<b>Roger's final service with us</b> <b>United Parish Service</b>
<b>Advent 3</b> Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup> December	9.30am	St. James	Holy Communion
	9.30am	St Gabriel	Morning Prayer
	11.00am	St. Peter	Holy Communion
	11.00am	St. Michael	Morning Prayer
	4.00pm	St James	St James on Sunday Afternoon
<b>Advent 4</b> Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> December	9.30am	St. James	Morning Prayer
	9.30am	St Gabriel	Holy Communion
	11.00am	St. Peter	Holy Communion
	11.00am	St. Michael	Morning Prayer

**For Christmas Services see page 9**

<b>Epiphany</b> Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup> January	9.30am	St. James	Morning Prayer
	9.30am	St Gabriel	Holy Communion
	11.00am	St. Peter	Morning Prayer
	11.00am	St. Michael	Holy Communion

**Thursdays – Holy Trinity 3.30pm Evening Prayer**  
2<sup>nd</sup> December, 6<sup>th</sup> January      Holy Communion

**Please be aware of the need to maintain social distancing and wear your mask in church unless you are exempt from doing so.**

We shall continue to send out, either by post or email, a weekly sheet containing prayers and readings for each Sunday and the readings for the following week.



## St. Peter's CE Primary Reception 2022



If your child is due to start Primary school in September 2022 you will need to apply for a school place. As a Tameside resident, you should apply using the online application form which is available on the School Admissions pages of Tameside's website at the following address from **1<sup>st</sup> NOVEMBER 2021.**

[www.tameside.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.tameside.gov.uk/admissions)

The closing date for application forms is **15<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2022.** Any applications submitted after the closing date will be treated as 'late'. It is really important to apply on time. 90.98% of parents who applied on time in 2020 were allocated a place at their first preference school; only 71.12% of those who applied late got their first preference.

We have invested in our EYFS and have well-resourced indoor and outdoor learning spaces. We pride ourselves on our engaging learning environment, exciting book led curriculum and close parental links. All Reception children have weekly, music and PE sessions (with specialist teachers). We also employ our own Artist in Residence and Speech and Language Therapist.

If you have any further questions or, wish to book yourself on a personalised tour, please phone our School Office on: 0161 330 1691 or email:

[help@st-peters-ashton.tameside.sch.uk](mailto:help@st-peters-ashton.tameside.sch.uk).

We look forward to hearing from you soon.



# ***Look what's on at St Gabriel's Church!***

**Mondays 9.30am-12.00**

**Place of Welcome**

We meet every week for tea & coffee, toast and cake and the chance to chat. With activities such as bingo, beetle drives, word puzzles, hand massage and yoga/meditation there is something for anybody who may be feeling lonely or socially isolated.



For more information please contact:

Sandra on 07740 766687 or Sheila on 07880 936411

**Monday 6.30pm-8.00pm**

**16th Ashton Brownies and Rainbows**

Please contact Sharon Oldham on 07795 957114 for details



**Tuesday 8.00pm-9.00pm**

**Belly-Dancing Class**

For ladies of any age, fun and great exercise!

Contact Linda Revill on 0161 339 6063 for more details

**Wednesday 10.30am-11.30am**

**Sweaty Mama**

A post-natal exercise class for mums and their babies.

Contact Kim for more details on 07450 525791



**Wednesday 6.00pm-7.15pm Exercise and Fitness Class**

All round workout to music for all ability levels

For more info please call Julia on 07922 756844

**Thursdays and Saturdays - various times**

**Baker School of Dance**

Dance classes for children of all ages.

Please call Christine on 07795 032249 for more details

St Gabriel's Church Hall is available for private hire at only £10 per hour and includes kitchen, accessible toilet facilities, tables, chairs and other equipment as required - please contact Sandra on 07740 766687 for details and availability.

## Unto Us A Child Is Born

The most important person and moment in history – God’s one and only Son is born, the Living Word in human flesh. His message of goodwill and peace to everyone is and always will be relevant in a broken world.

We must not forget, the Lord is King and Jesus is our saviour – and despite commercialisation over the years, many people still celebrate Christmas for the right reason.

Rejoice, the Lord is King rejoice, again I say, rejoice.

God bless us all

Barry Bowden

P.S. “All who come to me are welcome – I will not turn anyone away”

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### Smile Lines

The little boy was to be an angel in the Christmas play and his one line was: “Behold, I bring you good tidings.” He asked what tidings were and his mother explained that the word meant news.

On the night of the play, the youngster had stage fright and, after a long silence, blurted out: “Hey, have I got news for you!”

It was so cold last night, the thermometer knocked on the door and wanted to come in.

Once you’ve seen one shopping centre, you’ve seen a mall.

Bakers trade bread recipes on a knead-to-know basis.

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## Beavers Are Back!

3rd Ashton Beavers at St James’ Church - Mondays 6.00pm to 7.00pm  
6 years to 8 years old. If you would like more information  
please contact Tina on 07411773336

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# Parish Notices

From the November registers:

## Funerals

We pray for the family and friends of:

Jennifer Morris      Moira Brown Davies      Philip Jones

*There were no baptisms or weddings in November*

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## Free national phonenumber bringing worship and prayer

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, recently launched a free national phonenumber to bring worship and prayer into the homes of those without access to the internet.

Daily Hope, which is available 24 hours a day on 0800 804 8044 – offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England.



## CONTACT DETAILS

**CLERGY:** (\*usual day off)

Revd Roger Farnworth, Team Rector (\*Tues.)

The Vicarage, Westbury Street, Ashton OL6 9NL

330 2771

Revd Sheila Cant, Associate Priest

336 1566

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The Parish of the Good Shepherd, Ashton-under-Lyne  
is a Fair Trade Parish. Our churches have promised to serve only  
Fairly Traded Tea and Coffee and to work for justice for the world's poor

