



**Christ Church Walmersley  
and  
St John with St Mark Bury  
in the United Benefice of Walmersley Road**



***CANDLEMAS***

**February 2019**

**50P**

## **REGULAR SERVICES**

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### **Sunday**

8.30 a.m.	Holy Communion	St John w St Mark (Barritt Room)
9.00 a.m.	Holy Communion (BCP)	Christ Church
10.30 a.m.	1 <sup>st</sup> Holy Communion 2 <sup>nd</sup> Family and Parade 3 <sup>rd</sup> Holy Communion 4 <sup>th</sup> Service of the Word	Christ Church
10.30 a.m.	Sung Eucharist 2 <sup>nd</sup> Parade Service	St John w St Mark
10.30 a.m.	3 <sup>rd</sup> Morning Prayer	St John w St Mark
10.30 a.m.	5 <sup>th</sup> United Service	Alternately CC/SJM

### **Monday**

7.30 p.m.	1 <sup>st</sup> Listening Prayer	150 Walmersley Road
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### **Tuesday**

7.30pm	Christian Meditation	St John w St Mark
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### **Wednesday**

10.00 a.m.	Holy Communion	St John w St Mark
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### **Thursday**

2.00 p.m.	1 <sup>st</sup> First Thursday Prayer	Christ Church Hall
7.30 p.m.	Holy Communion	St John w St Mark

Other services as announced  
Evening Prayer will be said in St John w St Mark's Church  
Monday - Thursday at 5 p.m.

If you need transport to church please contact the wardens.

Both churches have Fairtrade status



## ***SHOULD WE JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER?***

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When we visit our younger daughter in London, we try to travel by bus as this enables us to see far more of the sights, but sometimes we have to use the Tube, although we try to avoid the rush hour as the sheer volume of people can be overwhelming. It can be frightening waiting on the edge of a platform for that hiss of wind from the tunnel that signals the arrival of the train.

I read a story of an event which happened on a tube station in the heat of this Summer. As the crowd on the station was reaching its peak an elderly person suddenly turned a very funny colour and collapsed on the floor. An official from London Transport appeared and asked for people to move away to give the passenger breathing space and for any doctor to make themselves known. As often happens, many people didn't move away but crowded nearer (with phones in hand) for a better view. The official rather more sharply asked again for people to move back.

This time most people did except for a young six foot six West Indian man dressed sensibly in shorts and a string vest and sporting dreadlocks. This tall man knelt down by the passenger and in doing so really annoyed the official. "Will you please move back and find a Doctor?"

The young man looked at the official and with grace and patience said "I am a doctor." To which the official replied "But you don't look like a doctor." The young man answered "This is what a doctor looks like." and turned the passenger into the recovery position.

The station official had let his preconceptions of what a doctor looks like get the better of him - a reminder to us all that sometimes our preconceptions about people are misconceptions and that they can make us miss something vital or wonderful.

The Magi recognised the infant Jesus as the King they had been seeking. How easy it would have been to think that a king would never be found in such a humble home.

When Mary and Joseph took the infant Jesus into the temple forty days after this birth, he would be wrapped in swaddling clothes looking no more like peoples' preconception of the Messiah than he had in that stable in Bethlehem.

But Simeon saw beyond the fact that he was a tiny baby and said "This is what God is like, now I can die happy." He didn't use those exact words but those of the Nunc Dimittis.

"Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace;  
according to Thy word.  
For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation;  
which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people;  
to be a light to lighten the Gentiles  
and to be the glory of thy people Israel."

Do we have preconceptions about what God is like? Do we think he only exists in church? Do we recognise him in the stranger in the street? Do we find him in the kindness of others? Or does the stranger or the helper not look like God?

Do we have preconceptions about others? I wonder how many times Gill, our former curate was told, "You don't look like a Vicar."

Do we have preconceptions about ourselves? In our advent course we were asked if we saw ourselves as disciples. When we look in a mirror do we say "No, a disciple doesn't look like that."

Let us pray that our preconceptions do not stop us encountering God or from realising what we have to offer to His kingdom.

Yours in Christ Margery

## ***BIBLE READINGS FOR FEBRUARY***

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Feb 3 **Candlemas**

Malachi 3: 1-5

Hebrews 2:14-18

Luke 2: 22-40

Feb 10 **Fourth before Lent**

Isaiah 6: 1-11

1 Corinthians 15: 1-11

Luke 5:1-11

Feb 17 **Third before Lent**

Jeremiah 17: 5-10

1 Corinthians 15: 12-20

Luke 6: 17-26

Feb 24 **Second before Lent**

Genesis 2: 4b-9, 15-25

Revelation 4

Luke 8: 22-25

Mar 3 **Next before Lent**

Exodus 34: 29-35

2 Corinthians 3: 12 -4: 2

Luke 9: 28-43

## ***FLOWERS IN CHURCH***

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At Christ Church

Feb 3 In memory of Mr & Mrs Barcroft Wolstenholme

Feb 10 Vacant

Feb 17 In memory of Betty and David Brown

Feb 24 In memory of Sarah Melling and Jack Illesley

If you would like to donate towards the cost of the flowers in church, perhaps in memory of a loved one or in celebration of a special event, please speak to Betty Winterbottom (Christ Church) or Rosemarie Ashworth (St.John with St.Mark).

*\*\* Photo on front cover by Mercedes Bosquet on Unsplash.com*



## **FROM THE REGISTERS**

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### **Baptism**

December 23      Holly Joyce Dickinson  
                             Hattie Rose Headley

*"In the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit....."*

### **Church Funeral**

Nov 20              Joseph Platt

### **Interment of ashes in the garden of remembrance:**

Dec 3                Joan Mellor Khilchi  
Dec 16               Joseph Platt  
Dec 23               Harry Driver

### **Funeral Services held at the Crematorium**

Dec 17               Elaine Greenwood  
Dec 18               James Gardner

*"I am the resurrection and the life ....."*

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### **THIS ANNOUNCEMENT WAS MADE IN BOTH CHURCHES IN THE BENEFICE ON 16 DECEMBER 2018**



*The Revd Paul Sanderson has been appointed as Priest-in-Charge of St Stephens, Elton.*

*Paul is currently Assistant Curate within the Benefice of Walmersley Rd, Bury but has been on placement at St Stephens, Elton for the last year.*

*The date of his institution is still to be arranged.*

## **DIPPING WAFERS IN WINE NOT RECOMMENDED**

The Bishop of Manchester has advised churches not to dip wafers into the Holy Communion wine to prevent worshippers catching flu.

The Right Rev David Walker also raised concerns that people with gluten allergies can be affected by the tradition:

"We are becoming increasingly aware of the severe reaction some people have to gluten. As a result, churches are now used to providing gluten-free bread in services of Holy Communion. However, what is often overlooked is that dipping wafers in the wine can introduce gluten, which others then drink.

It is already advised nationally that, for reasons of hygiene, the intinction of wafers should be avoided.

When a wafer is given into the hands of a communicant it may become contaminated by germs lying on the skin. Intincting the wafer then introduces those germs directly into the wine.

"There is also the possibility of finger tips inadvertently dipping into the liquid."

As a result of this advice churches in the diocese have been advised not to allow intinction to take place.

In his letter to the diocese, Bishop David wrote:

"Should anyone not wish to drink from the chalice, perhaps through having a heavy cold, then he or she may be assured that to receive the sacrament in one kind alone – bread or wine – is to receive the sacrament in its entirety."

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## From the Vicarage

- \* Thanks to those who contributed to the retiring collection at the Carol Service at Christ Church. £200 was donated to the Freedom Church for their work with the homeless in Bury. Thanks also to those who brought toys for local families at our Christingle services. These were distributed via both Wood Street Mission and the local Salvation Army.
- \* Please let a member of the ministry team know if anyone is ill and requires a home or hospital visit. At the heart of our ministry to the parish is pastoral care. This is not the exclusive concern of the clergy but part of each Christian's duty to love one another.
- \* Gateway Ministry have decided that they are unable to continue to hold their Saturday services at the current time. Please pray for the Gateway leaders as they seek God's guidance for the future.
- \* Thanks as ever to those who contribute to our regular copper collections. These are always well received by the charities that we donate to and we welcome new suggestions of organisations to support. The recent donation from Christ Church went to Mothers' Union Manchester's Welcoming Strangers fund, supporting those working with refugees and asylum seekers. St.John with St.Mark have opted to support the homeless in Bury - a suggestion from the children themselves. Thank you!
- \* The meetings of the MOB – Men of the Benefice – have moved to the Towler Inn following the recent closure of the Sundial. Details of the monthly meetings can be found in the church News Sheets / Bulletins.
- \* The Ministry Team consisting of all the Clergy, Licensed Readers and our Authorised Lay Minister meet every month – usually on the second Monday evening. If you have an issue that you would like us to discuss, please contact one of the team.

\* Porch Boxes are always in need of food items to meet their current demand. A box is available at the back of church. Thanks to those who regularly support this worthy cause. Anyone in need of food should in the first instance contact Bury Community Support Fund at Bury Town Hall or Whittaker Street in Radcliffe on 0161 253 7030. Please do not take out food without checking with Porch first.

\* Any enquiries about baptisms or weddings / marriage banns etc should be made at the Parish Office at St.John with St.Mark's Hall any Wednesday evening between 6.30-7.00.

\* Both the churches in the United Benefice of Walmersley Road are now on Facebook! Search for both Christ Church, Walmersley and St.John with St.Mark, Bury and "like" and "follow" to receive messages from the site. We now also have a twitter feed – the twitter handle is @cofewalmersley.

\* If you would like to donate towards the cost of the flowers in church, perhaps in memory of a loved one or in celebration of a special event, please speak to Betty Winterbottom (Christ Church) or Rosemarie Ashworth (St.John with St.Mark).

\* Both of our Church Halls are available for a whole range of activities for use by church and community groups. Please however check with the bookings officers (June Banks for St.John with St.Mark and Jennifer Wood for Christ Church) if the building is otherwise occupied before anything is arranged.

\* Material for the parish magazine should be given in by the 14th day of the previous month. Articles may be sent via email to wrub@live.co.uk



THE PAST IS IN YOUR HEAD.  
THE FUTURE IS IN YOUR HANDS.

**Christ Church Walmersley PCC report 9<sup>th</sup> January 2019**

1. It was suggested that George Fryer's memorial bench should be installed near the memorial garden in early Spring.
2. All the fire extinguishers in the church and church hall have been checked and certified for the next 12 months.
3. The treasurer reported that we had paid £24,000 of our parish share of £30,125 and we would not be able to pay any more due to the number of large bills we had incurred during the year for the electrical inspection of the church and the church hall, the repairs and servicing of the church hall heating systems and the work still to be done on the electrical system in the church.
4. The vicar noted that we need to consider a GDPR statement on the electoral roll form if there is not one on the standard format to be received from the diocese.
5. The sale of the church field was discussed and the discussion on the heads of terms contract continues with the solicitors.
6. The question of parade services was discussed and the vicar is liaising with the uniformed organisation leaders on this.
7. Health and safety, the quotation for the remedial electrical work in church has been requested from the electrical contractor.
8. The pastoral report was circulated prior to the meeting.
9. The vicar asked PCC to give consideration to which of the three church building proposals should be considered as the best one. Two leaflets had been produced, one describing the church history and one describing the church itself, aimed at children. These were discussed and the vicar asked that the PCC review them and come back with comments at the next PCC. Our Mission action plan has been submitted to the diocese.

10. Under any other business, a brass band concert in December 2019 and the new electoral roll which has to be re-written this year were discussed.
11. It was noted that our treasurer Brian Crow will be retiring from the position in April 2019, the vicar thanked Brian for all his work as treasurer for the PCC.

### **St. John with St. Mark PCC meeting of 2nd December 2018**

The meeting of 2nd December was held to discuss the charities we would be supporting with 10% of the annual planned giving. The following charities are to receive £308.00:

CMS, Embrace the Middle East, Water Aid, Practical Aid, St. Joseph's Prayer Centre, Caritas, CRISIS, Solidarity, Bury Cancer Support & Save the Children. North West Air Ambulance will receive the proceeds from the Christmas giving.

Ian & The Vicar had attended a meeting with Diocesan reps to discuss the Parish share, which was considered too high. A review has taken place and the result is a reduction in the share over the next 3 years.

### **St. John with St. Mark PCC meeting of 10th January 2019**

It was noted this was the first PCC since Paul's appointment at St. Stephen Elton.

A meeting is to take place after the service on Sunday 13th January to set the social dates for 2019. Events that have already been organised are a coffee morning on Saturday 16th February and Buffet dance on Friday 8th March. It was noted there will not be a Chinese New Year celebration this year.

More stats from the Website for November & December 2018 were shared.

The disabled access from Church to Hall was discussed. Due to increasing costs and building work it is now being considered to construct a covered walkway across the garden as opposed to a corridor lift. Quotes will be sought.

Café Church was discussed. It was felt the overall content of the recent services has been very good and enjoyed by many but the drop in numbers attending on these days still needed to be addressed. It has been proposed to produce a questionnaire for the congregation to let people have their say about what they like or dislike about Café Church and then take it from there. It was also noted that some changes had been made to the Morning Prayer service on the third Sunday.

The next two parade services are proposed for 10th March & 23rd June.

The draft accounts for 2018 were produced and discussed. These were approved unanimously and the accounts have now been passed for independent examination. Thanks were recorded to Ian for having the accounts produced by the first week of the year.

The Vicar advised he had contacted two Churches in USA, also St. John with St. Mark, with a view to sharing news, ideas and possible link pages from the Website. One is in New York (Lutheran) and the other Pennsylvania (Episcopal).

The next PCC meeting will be held on Thursday 28th February at 8.00pm, a joint PCC meeting with Christ Church will take place on Shrove Tuesday 5th March at St. John with St. Mark (with possible pancakes before!!) and the APCM will be Sunday 28th April at 12noon.

## ***ELECTORAL ROLL REVISION***

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2019 sees the preparation of new church electoral rolls, which means that everyone must re-apply. This takes place only once in every six years.

New electoral roll forms will be available very soon.

If you have been a regular worshipper at for at least 6 months, please consider filling in a form to join the electoral roll.

**Please note: Only those on the Church's Electoral Roll may vote at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting.**

**February 25 – March 10**



Fairtrade is a simple way to make a difference to the lives of the people who grow the things we love. This is done by changing the way trade works through better prices, decent working conditions and a fair deal for farmers and workers in developing countries.

Fairtrade Fortnight is an annual promotional campaign, organized and unded by the Fairtrade Foundation to increase awareness of Fairtrade products.

During these two weeks - together with the Fairtrade farmers and workers - campaigners up and down the country highlight the difference fair trade can make to lives and communities.

This year, Fairtrade Fortnight will focus on cocoa. Farmers of this iconic Fairtrade product have seen prices crash to crisis levels in the last few years, particularly in West Africa where most cocoa is grown. The situation highlights in stark terms the scandal of unfair trade.

**We have a choice about whether we take a stand against this.**

Fairtrade goods are available in all supermarkets and other shops. The list of fairly traded goods is ever increasing, with items such as bananas, honey, coffee, oranges, cotton, dried and fresh fruits and vegetables, juices, nuts and oil seeds, rice, spices, sugar, tea and wine – as well as cocoa – able to be bought.

**PLEASE HELP PROMOTE FAIRTRADE BY PURCHASING  
FAIRTRADE GOODS WHEREVER THEY ARE AVAILABLE**

## **PRAYER DIARY**

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*PLEASE PRAY FOR THESE SUBJECTS ON A DAILY BASIS.  
THEY FORM PART OF THE PRAYERS AT EVENING PRAYER  
AT 5.00pm AT ST.JOHN WITH ST.MARK FROM MONDAY - THURSDAY*

- SUNDAY:** For all our worship services.  
All who receive Holy Communion in their own homes.  
Those who read, lead intercessions and serve in our churches
- MONDAY:** Our music ministry. The Study Groups.  
Those considering lay or ordained ministry  
Links with the other faith communities in the benefice.
- TUESDAY:** All the educational establishments in the parish.  
School Governors. Nurseries, Pre-schools, Primary Schools,  
St.John with St.Mark CE School.  
Our pastoral care to all the community,  
especially to those bereaved.
- WEDNESDAY:** Links with other church communities across the world.  
Mothers' Union  
Our care of the church buildings. Mission Action Planning
- THURSDAY:** The Sunday School /Junior Church and  
all our work with young people.  
Those preparing to be married in church.  
Our baptism ministry.
- FRIDAY:** Links with our local communities.  
The PCCS and their committees  
Those who provide and arrange church flowers  
Those who use our church halls.
- SATURDAY:** The Vicar, Curate and the Assistant Priest. The retired clergy  
The Licensed Readers & ALM.  
Ecumenical Links within the benefice.

## ***3rd Thursday Lunch***

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Our 3rd Thursday Lunches are approaching their third birthday – we started out in Lent 2016. It is very affirming that this project has been blessed with great support from ‘customers’ and ‘workers’. Most Thursdays we see around thirty people – sometimes more. Our regular ‘customers’ come from members of both churches in the Benefice and several from our surrounding community – we are open for all and welcome all!

Importantly, we would emphasise that there is no charge for lunch. If you are able to make a donation to help cover costs that is gratefully received. The main aim is social, not a fund-raiser. As the scriptures tells us, “practise hospitality.” So do come and enjoy a light lunch with friends and, perhaps, make new friends. If are already a regular, think about inviting along someone who has not been before.

Amazingly, over the last year, through the generosity of our patrons, we have not only covered costs but made a profit which has enabled us to send money to Tearfund (£300), Porch Box (£60), Save the Children (£105), and to Christ Church Walmersley (£610). So a big thank you to all those who come and support this project.

Also a special thank you to all our regular helpers – Claire, Margery, Alan, David, Margaret and Bob – and to our occasional helpers. We couldn’t do it without you!

If you have not yet come to lunch with us then do come give us a try. You will find not only a hearty midday snack but a hearty welcome from staff and customers alike – we are a very friendly bunch!! Lunch is served from 12 noon till 1.00pm at Christ Church Hall (back room). The next lunch is on Thursday February 21st.

Barbara & Nigel Silvester



## ***QUIET MOMENTS IN FEBRUARY***

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### **Week One**

At this time as we remember Jesus as the light of the World, we pray that his light may enter the dark places in people's lives

where there is division, the light of unity  
where there is anger, the light of reconciliation  
where there is sorrow, the light of joy.  
where there is loneliness, the light of comfort  
where there is war, the light of peace  
where there is hunger, the light of nourishment  
where there is despair, the light of hope.

### **Week Two**

Lord Jesus in your mercy, we ask you to send your Spirit of wisdom into the corridors of power and the hearts of the powerful.

May it move our leaders into a new humility and compassion that truly seeks to serve the people of this nation as they make decisions which will affect the long term future of our country.

And as they try to determine our path in an international community facing so much conflict, terror and uncertainty,

Lord in your strength guide them..

Lord in your wisdom inspire them.

Lord in your mercy lead them – whether they know you or not.



### **Week Three A prayer for personal guidance.**

Lord Jesus Christ

Show me the way you would have me go;  
what you would have me do;  
how you would have me live;  
and help me to follow obediently  
trusting you to guide. Amen

### **Week Four A prayer for Spring**

In the lengthening of days,  
Snowdrops emerging,  
from winter's frozen ground.  
**we see the creator's hand**

In the sight of a tiny lamb  
joyfully bounding  
across hillside farm  
**we see the creator's hand**

Creator God, forgive our moments of ingratitude,  
the spiritual blindness that prevents us  
from appreciating the wonder that is this world,  
the endless cycle of nature,  
of life and death and rebirth.



Forgive us for taking without giving,  
reaping without sowing.  
Open our eyes to see, our lips to praise, our hands to share and our  
mouths to praise.

Happy New Year to you all.

In December members, led by Barbara Taylor, discussed the campaign "16 days of Activism against Gender-based Violence". We learned that 1 in 3 women globally will experience some form of GBV; in England and Wales 7 women a month are killed by a current or former partner. Many more statistics are available online.

We enjoyed an evening of food, fun and fellowship at our Christmas meal at the Red Hall. Everyone present received a Secret Santa gift.

The theme for Mothers' Union in 2019 is : Listen, Observe, Act – in step with God.

Our meeting in January was a Holy Communion service presided over by the Vicar, followed by a chat.

On February 6th member David Andrew will give his second "Two Greats" talk. The first, on Martin Luther, was extremely well received so be sure not to miss this one, the subject to be kept under wraps but another well known figure from the past!

Our second meeting (on 20<sup>th</sup>) will be the Annual General Meeting. Please make every effort to attend to voice your thoughts and opinions as to how you would like to see Mothers' Union move forward in the future.

Everyone welcome to any of our meetings. Make it a New Year's Resolution!

Bob Taylor  
Branch Leader

## ***THE OPEN GROUP***

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The Open Group closed their 2018 programme with a get together for Christmas on Wednesday 12th December. The evening included sandwiches, nibbles, trifle and drinks as well as a couple of quizzes and a chance for chat in the Barritt Room. Thanks to M & S for the sandwich platter, and most importantly to June for the delicious trifle. All who attended said they had an enjoyable time.

For 2019 I have already booked Jack Sutton to talk about his recent visit to Brazil, Nigel Silvester to discuss the Scilly Isles and regular contributors Ian Banks & Paul Sanderson.

However we will be starting on Wednesday 13th March and Reverend Dave will lead us in a Desert Island Discs evening. We would therefore like you, if possible, to come along to the meeting with a CD of your favourite or chosen piece of music and then spend a few minutes explaining the reasons for your choice.

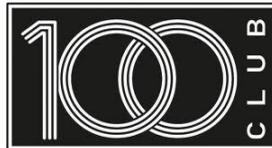
Don't worry if you have not got a CD as we should be able to find it on a Laptop or phone. All are welcome to this and any other meeting. I intend to produce an annual programme of events for 2019 and distribute during February.

David Robinson

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### **NOVEMBER 2018 WINNERS**

1st Prize ~ Betty Roe  
2nd Prize ~ George Hall



### **DECEMBER 2018 WINNERS**

1st Prize ~ Val Dawson  
2nd Prize ~ Kelly Watson

### **CHRISTMAS 2018 WINNER**

Laura Clark

**CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL**



## **SATURDAY WALKING GROUP**

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During December and January the group were involved in two walks, both of which we have done before, but were ideal for the shorter days and winter months. On 8th December we took the Metrolink to Manchester Victoria station and begun our walk back along sections of the Irwell Sculpture Trail.

This route took us through Peel Park alongside the River Irwell, Drinkwater Park in Prestwich and Outwood Trail in Radcliffe. There was a slight variation this time in that we were able to venture across Kersal Dale nature trail behind The Cliff training ground. Our previous outing had prevented us from doing this due to redevelopment works so we were pleased to be able to explore this section.

Despite a reasonable start to the day, we unfortunately had to continue the final third in the pouring rain, resulting in our lunch stop being relocated to underneath the bridge near the old Outwood railway station.

We fared much better with the weather though for our next outing on 5th January, which was led at the last minute by Ralph due to Paul's unfortunate absence.

This time we explored the three reservoirs of Bolton; Jumbles, Wayoh and Turton & Entwistle, but again with slight variations. Our day began with car shares to Jumbles Country Park (thanks to Michael & John for the driving duties) and we then set off on a figure of eight route around each of the reservoirs. This is a mainly flat route with the odd ascent up to sections of the Witton Weavers Way and through woodland.





Familiar places on this walk include the village of Entwistle and Strawbury Duck pub (note the spelling). All three reservoirs were extremely popular today with cyclists, runners and dog walkers who were no doubt making the most of a fine and dry Saturday (albeit slightly chilly). Our elevenses stop was at the edge of the Wayoh reservoir and we enjoyed lunch by the Turton & Entwistle. It was noted how many of the trees alongside were adorned with Christmas decorations, either in memory of loved ones, or just for the sheer fun of decorating a tree with tinsel and baubles.

We made our way back through the village of Chapelton to collect the cars at Jumbles for the journey home. We all had a super day and thanks to Ralph for leading.

NB – If you have transport, it is worth an outing to these reservoirs, if not for the walking, then at least to sit and relax for a while next to the usually still waters.

It was also great that Gill has continued to join us on these walks following her appointment in the Deanery of Rochdale. There is talk of us doing Healey for one of our future walks so watch this space.....

Best foot forward, David Robinson

*Photos were taken looking out over Wayoh*

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*When one door closes, another opens;  
but we often look so long and so regretfully  
upon the closed door  
that we do not see the one  
which has opened for us.*

Alexander Graham Bell

I am very proud to belong to an amazing movement of over 4 million members in 84 countries. A movement that works tirelessly to:

- strengthen communities all over the world
- help the most disadvantaged at home
- shape how we advocate for the rights of families
- build supportive, loving relationships
- develop our relationship with God

So why “Apologia”? I am conscious that over the past 12 years I have probably given many people the impression that membership of Mothers’ Union entails lots of meetings, hundreds of emails, a fair amount of travel, some amazing opportunities and some very humdrum times but the chance to commit to home and parish has been limited, to say the least.

I feel that I have not played as full a part as I should in sharing with everyone here in the Benefice many of the stories I have heard, and which I have gladly shared with members across the province.

I have given as examples to others the contribution Mothers’ Union makes here but often have not shared with those who are not yet members.

Are you aware, for example, that Mothers’ Union at Christ Church provided and maintains the pew bags (with books, colouring materials and quiet toys) for toddlers, or the boxes for slightly older children? that they designed, paid for and write the ‘welcome to a new home’ cards for everyone to take and distribute in the parish? that couples marrying receive a card? a child at baptism receives a card, a teddy and some literature for its parents?

Many of our members are involved in diocesan projects such as knitting to meet varied requests from our hospitals, cross stitch crosses, collecting toys for inner city children, providing gifts for those without a permanent home, passing on warm clothes for those in need, giving support for families of prisoners – the list of practical contributions is almost endless.

Welcoming Strangers, a fund to help those working with asylum seekers and refugees, welcomes all contributions as does Away From It All, giving breaks to families who otherwise could not enjoy time together away from the stresses of everyday life.

Centrally Mothers' Union is a key player in many policies which support families, such as the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence or the current consultation on Relationships and Sex Education in the UK, and it contributes to the Commission on the Status of Women at the UN.

Not forgetting work in developing countries – empowering them to live out our vision themselves.

Underpinning all that practical expression of love is prayer. Opportunities to share in worship, in quiet days, a worldwide expression of support for each other in the midday Wave of Prayer, alongside lots of resources on the web. (mothersunion.org)

Dave has said he would like Mothers' Union to be involved in the next joint service – March 31 is Mothering Sunday. Liturgy has been compiled by students from St Mellitus, with the guidance of Jane Williams (wife of Archbishop Rowan). This service would be a fantastic opportunity for you to be enrolled as a member or as a friend.

I have tried to give a glimpse of what is Mothers' Union, so what is it not?

- it is not primarily a fellowship group (Although that fellowship is important for many and all are welcome at our meetings it is not a condition of membership);
- it is not limited to mothers! are you male or female, married, widowed, single, divorced, with children or without?

So what would you be committing to if you were to step forward? To being a part of the largest Christian mission agency; with a vision to show God's love through loving, respectful and flourishing relationships. This is a goal we actively pursue by praying, campaigning and enabling.

Could you support . . . through prayer? . . . by giving financially? . . . by sharing information with others? . . . through various practical ways?

Membership is open to all who have been baptised in the name of the Trinity. If you have belonged to another church or are starting a faith journey then join as a Friend – the only difference is that you can't hold office. Which brings me back to why I am writing this in the first place! This is the first time in over 30 years that I shall simply be "a grassroots member", part of the amazing backbone of this movement. I'm looking forward to it.

Barbara C Taylor

## ***TRADITIONAL FOOD QUIZ***

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The result was a tie between Denise and Jack Ives and their daughter Gillian so I did a draw "out of a hat" and Denise and Jack won the chocolates.

The winner of the previous quiz was Mavis Nwkobia who is the tutor of our Friday art groups. Recent winners have been Margaret Noble of Christ Church and David Robinson of St. John with St Mark.

I am about to prepare a new Quiz in the next few weeks. Sincere thanks to all of you who buy the quizzes to help church funds. Each quiz raises about £50 - £60.

Alison Fewtrell

## ***A Child's Smile***

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What a lovely day at ST John with St Mark's Christmas Fair. I love helping run the Teddy Bear Stall, a prize every time, so much enjoyment for David and myself. We love to see the happiness on children's faces, it makes us smile. There's something about the **smile** of a **child**, it brings true happiness, when God sees a child smile then God smiles back.

I read that when the Coca Cola Christmas train advert appears on the TV this means for some it's officially Christmas. Now I feel that when we have the Christmas Fair at St Johns with St Marks it is officially Christmas and time to put on our Christmas jumpers.

Well done to all who made this a lovely community event and start Christmas with smile.

Christine McKenna

## EVENTS FOR FEBRUARY



### COFFEE MORNING & BOOK FAIR

St. John with St. Mark Church Hall  
Saturday 16th February from 10.00am

**BOOKS**

**TEA & COFFEE**

**HOT SNACKS**

**HOME MADE CAKES**

**OTHER STALLS**

ALL PROCEEDS TO CHURCH FUNDS



### Third Thursday Light Lunch

at CCW Hall  
12 noon/1.30pm

The next lunch will be on  
**Thursday 21st February**

As always there will be no set charge – if you are able, please give a donation but if you can't just come and enjoy the food and fellowship.

**YOU** will be most welcome!! There really is such a thing as a 'free lunch'!!

SATURDAY 23rd FEBRUARY  
10 AM TILL 12:30 pm

**BACON OR SAUSAGE SANDWICHES**

£3:50

Tea or Coffee included  
or 50p a cup



**BOOKS FOR SALE**  
CHRIST CHURCH CHURCH HALL



***Sunday @ Seven***

We next meet for our regular Sunday evening informal  
worship (song/reflection/prayer)  
Sunday, 24 February

**FILLED TO THE MEASURE**



Back Room, Christ Church Hall

Do come and join us – it lasts about an hour –  
tea/coffee and cake/biscuits are served.  
You will be most welcome!

Please make sure these dates are in your diary:

**ASH WEDNESDAY**

Services to mark the beginning of Lent  
as we remember the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness  
in preparation for his public ministry.

A day of penitence  
to cleanse the soul at the beginning of this important season.

**6 March**

*St. John with St. Mark at 10.00am & 7.30pm.*

*Christ Church at 7.30pm*



ST. JOHN WITH ST. MARK CHURCH INVITE YOU TO

**BUFFET DINNER DANCE**

AN EVENING OF LIVE MUSIC & DANCING  
WITH DELICIOUS BUFFET  
AND GUESTS, LITE MUSIC GROUP

IN ST. JOHN WITH ST. MARK CHURCH HALL  
ON FRIDAY 8th MARCH ~ 7.30PM

TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM CHURCH  
(Rosemarie Ashworth or June Banks)

£7.50 EACH

ALL WELCOME

Some more dates for your diary:

**NEXT CAFÉ CHURCH SERVICE, led by Archdeacon Jean.**

Christ Church  
Sunday 17 March  
10.30am

**"COMMUNION BY NUMBERS"**

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**MOTHERING SUNDAY**

SUNDAY 31 MARCH

***BENEFICE SERVICE***

at Christ Church 10.30 am

led by members of Mothers' Union

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**SEDER MEAL in HOLY WEEK**

Wednesday 17 April  
**An adaptation of the Passover**  
for the United Benefice of Walmersley Road  
St.John with St.Mark Hall  
£7.50

Nearer the time there will be a sheet at the back of the churches  
to sign up if you would like to attend

Even more dates for your diary:

**ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETINGS**

St.John with St.Mark:      Sunday 28 April      12noon  
Christ Church:              Monday 29 April      7.30pm

**COME ALONG & INFLUENCE THE WAY  
YOUR CHURCH OPERATES**

There will be a revision of the Electoral Roll this year  
(see page 12)

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**ARCHDEACON'S VISITATION**

Thursday 23 May 7.30pm  
at St John with St Mark

Wardens and Sidespersons are asked to attend.  
PCC members are invited to make their commitment  
and everyone is welcome at this service.

***FIRST AID TRAINING***

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The First Aid course led by a representative of the British Red Cross in November last year was attended by 11 people. If any others have an interest in the course but were unable to attend this date we have booked a further session on Saturday 2nd February from 9.15am to 11.15am in St. John with St. Mark Church Hall (Barritt Room).

A list is available to put your name down for this or please speak to Ian Banks if you would like to attend and for more details. We would be looking for a maximum of around 12 to attend the course.

## WHAT'S ON IN FEBRUARY

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Sat 2	9.15am	First Aid Course (SJM)
Sun 3		<b>Candlemas</b> Services as usual
Mon 4	7.30pm	Deanery Synod (BCHS)
Wed 6	7.30pm	Mothers' Union (CC Hall)
Sun 10		<b>Fourth before Lent</b> Services as usual
Mon 11	7.30pm	Listening Group (150 Walmersley Road) CHANGE
Sat 16	10.00am	Coffee Morning and Book Fair (SJM)
Sun 17		<b>Third before Lent</b> Services as usual
Wed 20	7.30pm	Mothers' Union (CC)
Thu 21	12 noon	Light Lunch (CC)
Sat 23	10.00am	Bacon Butties and Books (CC)
Sun 24		<b>Second before Lent</b> Services as usual
	7.00pm	Sunday @ Seven
Thu 28	8.00pm	PCC (SJM)

Please let us know if you are planning any events so we can help you to publicise them.



If you would like items posted on Facebook or Twitter please email [wrub@live.co.uk](mailto:wrub@live.co.uk) too and we shall do our utmost. If you are using a graphic and send it then all your publicity will show a common image.





## ***Christingle Services***



***were held in both our  
churches in December***



**Thank you to everyone who supported both services, to date raising £709.50 for the Children's Society and collecting many toys and books for less fortunate children.**

