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'The parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom.' (Isaiah 35:1)

Continuing updates

At present I am sending an update every 2nd week. The next update will therefore be due the weekend of September 26th. If you wish any news to be included I need it by September 20th please (I am scheduled for my cataract operation on Sept 22nd and will want to get it all done ready.)

Diocesan News

The announcement of Bishop Paul's forthcoming retirement has triggered the national process of episcopal discernment and selection. This included consultation processes, and of the process by which colleagues will draw up the Diocesan Statement of Needs. Please pray for all involved in this process of discernment. Fuller information about the pathway to be followed, and of the work involved, may be found in this national document:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/Briefing%20for%20the%20Vacancy%20in%20See%20Committee%20%28January%202020%29.pdf>

Church Wigan Month of Vision

For 4 weeks all churches in Wigan are sharing in the presentation of the vision which underpins their work in this Deanery. In an introductory leaflet they say:

Two and half thousand years ago God promised to make a dry land burst into life and colour as his people returned from exile, back to the blessing he intended for them.

We believe God is promising such a time of recovery for Wigan as well. We believe our communities will bloom spiritually and culturally as the Church renews its rich heritage of sharing God's love.

The vision includes reaching out to others without neglecting the pastoral care of our faithful members. They pray that re-engaging with God's vision for all will stimulate greater unity, inclusivity and new conversations about how we can proceed hand-in-hand with the spirit and each other.

Parish News

We have agreed that we need to be kind and to keep one another safe! Covid infections are going up again! Although we cannot legally insist on any restrictions, in the interests of loving and respecting our church family we are strongly urging people to continue to

follow preventative practices designed to keep people safe and to provide reassurance for those who are nervous about the changes in social distancing.

Our Morning Prayer will start at 9.30am on Sunday September 12th and September 19th. You will need to complete our Test and Trace form with your name and contact details before coming into church, or use the QR code on entering church if your phone has the appropriate app. You may also join one of the **Phone service from St. Andrew's worship services** or use the printed service sheet provided.

You will still be requested to gel your hands, to wear a face mask and to use social distancing - we are using spaced rows and we ask you to leave 1 seat between each bubble. If you wish to use a bible, please bring one with you.

Church Wigan Morning and Evening Prayer will continue into the foreseeable future.

If you are isolating and wish to tune in to an online service from a Hub church you may join the 10.45 am Family Service from St. Thomas' Church from 10.40pm The service will be broadcast live on Facebook and you can join using this link:

<https://www.stthomasstluke.org.uk/online/>

Parish Clergy- Rev Jeremy is back from his sabbatical and in full ministerial action! Rev Sue Thomas began her first year of curacy on September 1st. Sue T has already taken 2 baptism services at St. Aidan's, but she cannot preside at a Communion Service until the second year of her curacy. Sue T is a self-financing minister, so costs the parish nothing. **Rev Sue Fulford** will remain on sick leave for at least this month. Sue F is experiencing both lung and heart problems, possibly as a result of the Covid infection that she experienced earlier this year. Please keep her in your prayers. This means that there are implications on the provision of those services which must be lead by Jeremy (Holy Communion).

Future St Aidan's services : Changes will begin from September 26th for a trial period of 6 months. These changes are in line with the results of the **service Survey** and the **availability of volunteers** to Steward and be Venue Managers at those services. Because the provision of Holy Communion at the most popular morning time of 10am is not currently possible there will be a number of steps to the changes.

- The Holy Communion service on the 1st Sunday and the Morning Worship on the 3rd Sunday will remain at **9.30am** until Clergy can accommodate the change to 10am for Holy Communion.
- A service called **St. Aidan's Beacon** will begin on **September 26th at 10am** in Church, (the 4th Sunday of the month); and **Sta's4all** will restart at school (on the 2nd Sunday) starting on **October 10th**. These are modern worship activities.
- We still seek some **extra volunteers** to steward, to enable us to extend to more than one service on the 2nd and 4th Sundays each month at 4pm, one of which will be Holy Communion if possible, retaining a traditional service each week! These will not start

before October 10th. Could you volunteer? Please contact Peter Hughes on 01744 732890.

Holy Communion on Wednesdays at 10am will be at Holy Trinity on September 15th. The service at St. Aidan's on September 22nd is not yet confirmed as clergy cover needs to be found. I will let you know next week if this has to be cancelled. The pattern will be for the services on the first and third Wednesdays to be at Holy Trinity and the second and fourth Wednesday's of the month at St. Aidan's.

Only 6 people have requested the **printed Sunday service sheets** each week. I will continue to send these out whilst sending these updates, but they will cease when the church magazine is established next month.

A new style of **church magazine** is available to pick up from church on September 12th. It is being printed centrally in the Hub. Because of holidays there has been a little delay in the preparation and printing. In future months it will be available from the first Sunday of each month, with a double issue in July to cover August. It will carry our own specific information such as services, points of contact, any local news to St. Aidan's, with contributions from school and other groups, and local adverts. Information and articles common to all Hub churches will also be included. The cost is 60p for a paper copy. It will also be available to download from our website staidanbillinge.org.uk

Thanks to **Sandra Ferry** who is working hard to try to re-establish delivery for those who want it. A big thank you to those who have delivered magazines for us in the past, and a particular thank you to those who are able to continue. We need at least 2 more people to help with monthly deliveries, one to cover Newton Road, and another to cover Royden Road and its surrounding streets. Sandra is working from old lists that she has been given, so there may be some inaccuracies. If you used to receive a magazine and you do not receive one by the end of September or you can help with deliveries please contact Sandra on 893423.

On a temporary basis articles for inclusion in the magazine can be sent to Helen Steele by email. The deadline for materials to Jess (the Editor) for the **October magazine** is September 23rd, but because of my scheduled operation that week articles should be sent to me by **20th September** please. We urgently need someone to step forward to take on this role - collecting the articles from individuals and sending them to the overall editor, Jess Bradley, on our behalf. It is not an onerous job, and can be done by anyone with basic computer/email skills.

Hot Chocolate - plan to start up face to face again. Some members are now moving to new things and we look forward to new members joining us. It's exciting to think about where God may be leading us next! One thing is certain though - we need your prayers that God will set our feet on the right paths, give us creativity in our thinking and bring us the young people he is calling. Raising up the next generation of disciples is our priority. Jesus said, "Feed my lambs" and we, the leaders, have this firmly at the heart of our mission. Our members are 10+ and teenagers and we meet once a month. If anyone is interested in joining please contact Lesley Hughes on lesleyjo1@hotmail.com

Zoom Toddler Church takes place on Wednesday 22nd September at 10 am. This is for pre-school children with their parents or carers. If you know any carers of pre-school children that may wish to be included please email Harry to receive an 'invitation' harrywareing@talktalk.net

St Aidan's Beacon -

Each 'Beacon' will be different! The first of these special contemporary services is planned for **September 26th** beginning at **10am**. At this month's service we are commissioning Mrs Rachel Fisher as Head Teacher, Mr Stephen Moore as Deputy Head, Mrs Sutcliffe as Business Manager and also welcoming new staff - Miss Crompton, Mrs Martland and Miss Burrow. A choir from Year 6 will also be attending to help in the worship. It is going to be an exciting new venture. Because we need to maintain social distancing it will be essential to **pre-book** in order to attend this service.

For this service only, please give your **name, contact details** for Test and Trace, and the **number in your family bubble** to Helen, preferably by email - hrsteele@tiscali.co.uk or ring and leave a message on the answer phone **on or after Monday September 13th**. Closing Date for booking will be **Monday September 20th**. (Please note that I have a family weekend this weekend, and I will not be taking phone calls until the evening of Monday September 13th).

Envoy - Here's a great and most encompassing way of learning and engaging in evangelism. It takes place in the context of discipleship and doing that as a way of life. The course is offered by Church Army and is free, but you need to sign up in September ready to begin in October. For more details click on the link below or ring Kelvin Bolton for more details (01942 583273).

The website for more information about Envoy <https://churcharmy.org/growing-faith/envoy/>. If you scroll down on the first page you can sign up for one of the open day slots. Please be warned the film clip is aimed for under 30s but Envoy engages equally well with those over 30. Ask Kelvin - he did the course earlier this year

We have received a note of thanks from the **British Red Cross emergency appeals** team for the sum of £81 sent from St. Aidan's in aid of the Haiti appeal, after the collection in church on 2 Sundays. Thank you to all who contributed to this.

We wish a **Happy Birthday** for this week to Margaret Gibbins and next week to Enid Hitchen and Helena Dixon, and the following week to Susan Garside. Congratulations also to Eric and Ann Crank who celebrate their wedding anniversary this week and to John and Brenda celebrating their wedding anniversary next week.

Prayer for the Parish

If anyone needs to be added to our prayer list please let Helen or Margaret Stott know. The family must give permission for any name to be added to the list.

May Cornforth is awaiting a hip operation. Yvonne Cumberbirch is waiting for a new knee! Please pray that these operations will not be delayed for a long time (up to 2 years quoted!)

Please pray by name for Lorraine Webb, Les Parkinson, May Carnforth, Darren Buckley, Julia and Michael Pratt, Margaret Peacock, Sue Fulford and Yvonne Cumberbirch. And we remember the bereaved.

Please pray for St. Aidan's school, especially those in a new leadership role, as they start a new term; for those working to take forward the services and ministry of church into the future that we may spread God's love within our community; for God's love to be felt by His Spirit at the 'Beacon'.

For confidential prayer needs contact Jennifer Berry for the Mother's Union Prayer circle (01942 389715).

I attach notes for this week's collects and readings for the 15th and 16th Sundays after Trinity, which you may use at home, or share it on the phone with friends or family. ???



Please pray for

- all in leadership positions that they may be equipped through God's grace with the skills they need and time to deliver their responsibilities
- the ongoing situation in Afghanistan and the safety of those at risk
- actions to secure the future of our Social Care sector
- those who need treatment under the NHS, and those who are tasked with reducing waiting lists
- all to make wise decisions about actions to prevent the spread of infection of Covid
- the reduction in the spread and number of cases of infection
- those mourning the death of a loved one
- those still struggling with isolation, shielding, depression and other mental health problems

A Prayer by St Dimitri of Rostov [The Orthodox Church]:

Come, my light, and illumine my darkness. Come my life, and revive me from death. Come, my physician, and heal my wounds. Come, flame of divine love, and burn up the thorns of my sins, kindling my heart with the flame of my love. Come, my King, sit upon the throne of my heart and reign there. For thou alone art my King and my Lord. Amen.