

St. Aidan's Church

Sep 26th

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| Hub Leader | Rev Jeremy Thomas | 01942 727275 | hubleader.south@churchwigan.org |
| Ass. Hub Leader | Rev Sue Fulford | 01942 242369 | ahl.south@churchwigan.org |
| Reader | Helen Steele | 01744 894111 | hrsteele@tiscali.co.uk |
| Reader in Training | Lesley Leppard | 01744 892713 | Ring between 7pm and 9pm please |
| Hub Admin | Sue Thomas | 01942 727275 | hubadmin.south@churchwigan.org |



'You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.' (Matthew 5:14-15)

The badge of St. Aidan includes the motif of a Beacon - a light on a hill! Our new **Beacon Service**, a special contemporary service, which this month includes the commissioning of new school staff, will start at **10.00am** on Sunday September 26th. Each 'Beacon' will

be different! We will not normally ask for pre-booking, but because of school involvement and high expected numbers the service on Sept 26th had to be pre-booked.

Updates:

Once delivery of a Parish magazine is established for you to receive news of services and events there will no longer be a regular update. On occasions information may be sent out by email. If you do not wish to receive this any longer please let Helen know by email or phone (details above)

Hub Clergy:

Regretfully rev Sue Fulford is still affected by long Covid, and is on Sick Leave. This may last for a long period. Please pray for a full recovery for Sue. We miss her ministry so much. The addition of Sue Thomas to the team is good news and she has taken our Baptism services, but she is not able to take a Communion Service until she is Priested next summer.

Magazines:

The new style of **church magazine** was launched in September, but because of issues beyond our control in the printing we did not receive them until after September 12th. Thank you to all those who are once again taking out magazines into our community. We are so pleased to be able to do this once again.

There are a few **changes**. The magazine is printed in Ashton by the Hub, but members of St. Aidan's are involved in helping with the printing. Many thanks to Sandra Ferry who has helped with printing and co-ordinating those delivering magazines. I am still collecting and sending the articles for St. Aidan's to Jess, who edits the magazine, but I wish to hand this over to someone with more free time as soon as possible - could you help? Please contact me (Helen Steele) using the contact details above.

Our previous practice had been to publish magazines the weekend before the given month, but each monthly magazine will now normally be published for the first Sunday in the month and will be distributed shortly after this. i.e. do not expect the magazine for October before October 3rd! The cost is 60p per issue. It is printed in black and white though it can be seen for free in glorious technicolour on our website.
staidanbilinge.org.uk

If you usually pick up magazine at the back of church rather than having it delivered please inform Helen, as we are trying to reduce waste and wish to only purchase those magazines which are required. If you have had your magazine delivered but now wish to use the on-line version please contact Sandra Ferry on 893423, or contact the person who delivers your magazine as soon as possible.

Service practices:

We have agreed that we need to be kind and to keep one another safe! We have seen rates of Covid infections and death increased recently. 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. In church you will still be requested to gel your hands, to wear a face mask and to use social distancing. To reduce risk of contamination, the words of most services will be on the screen. If you wish to use a bible, please bring one with you.

Services in October:

On October 3rd there is a **Holy Communion service at 9.30am**

On October 10th **Sta's4all** meet at St. Aidan's School at **10.30 am**. This is a themed, activity based event suitable for young families and the young at heart. Anyone is welcome. The theme this month is 'love'.

There will be a **Harvest Festival** service of Evening Prayer in church at 4pm on October 10th. Because of current health risks we are asking that any Harvest gifts should be of wrapped items with a good shelf-life. These will be distributed in the week after the service.

October 17th - 9.30am Morning Worship, October 24th - 10am Beacon service

October 31st 9.30am Morning Worship

The following services will remain available - please keep a note for future reference:

St Andrew's phone in service

A traditional service at 9.30 each Sunday run by St Andrew's. To join them, please phone 0203 794 0272 and use Conference ID 772 710 483# (don't forget the # at the end) Please don't press anything after this and ignore the automated voice about muting/unmuting.

Church Wigan Morning and Evening Prayer

At 9am and 9pm each day (apart from Sunday mornings) live on the Church Wigan Facebook page . <https://facebook.com/ChurchWigan>. There is a speaker at 7pm on

Sunday evening, again on Facebook Live. There are also daily reflections on the Church Wigan website and Facebook page for further details see <https://transformingwigan.wordpress.com/>

If you are isolating and wish to tune in to an online Sunday service from the hub 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/>

Future St Aidan's services : The changes made to services and service times, intended to start from September 26th, will be for a trial period of 6 months, and will be in stages. Morning service had been planned to start at 10am from this point to be in line with the majority views from the **service Survey** and the **availability of volunteers** to Steward and be Venue Managers at those services. However, because Rev Sue Fulford is still on sick leave, and is unlikely to return soon, Holy Communion must remain at 9.30am for a little while longer. We have therefore decided that Morning Prayer will also remain at 9.30am until stage 2!

Stage 1 - On the 2nd Sunday each month Sta's4all will take place at School and on the 4th Sunday of the month our Beacon Service will take place at 10am. We still seek some extra volunteers to enable us to extend to more than one service - at 4pm on the 2nd and 4th Sundays each month, to retain a traditional service each week! Could you volunteer? Please contact Peter Hughes on 01744 732890.

Holy Communion on Wednesdays at 10am will alternate between St. Aidan's and Holy Trinity. (Providing Jeremy is not unavailable). Apologies that the Holy Communion had to be cancelled on Wednesday September 22nd.

The new children at **St Aidan's School** are settling in well. They no longer need to have staggered starts and ends to the day, which will be a blessing to staff and children alike! They have unfortunately had to place the Early Years section into bubbles after 4 people, including staff, have tested positive for Covid.

Zoom Toddler Church takes place on Wednesday 6th and 20th October 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

Following the series of reflections in September for **Church Wigan Month of Vision** when we have looked at encouraging our communities to bloom spiritually and culturally as the Church renews its rich heritage of sharing God's love. It has been good to see how this vision matches our own vision for St. Aidan's. Church Wigan prays 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. Our last reflection on the theme will be presented by Jeremy at our Communion service on October 3rd. They call us to end our series by praying together for God's vision to come

to fruition in this area. We know that conversations and communications have been difficult and this needs our prayer. Our role is to pray and discern where the Holy Spirit is at work beyond our current church activities, and to join in. This was described as to dig 'new wells'. I will end this update with a few prayers topics on this theme which you can use over a period of time.

We wish a **Happy Birthday** for this week to Roy Breeze and David Hodgetts and next week to Bill Fagan. Congratulations to Sandra and Richard ferry who celebrate their silver Wedding Anniversary in early October.

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. The list that has been on these updates is also used in church services.

We include Paul Brookes, a relation of Marjorie Shufflebottom in our prayers. He had a foot and ankle amputated last weekend.

Please pray by name for Lorraine Webb, Les Parkinson, May Carnforth, Darren Buckley, Sue Fulford, Yvonne Cumberbirch and Paul Brookes. And we remember the bereaved - the family and friends of Janet Whalley.

Please pray for the launch of the Beacon service, for those who will take part, that it will be filled with the Holy Spirit and well received by those who attend. Also for our school, that there will be no more disruption from infections.

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 17th and 18th Sundays after Trinity, which you may use at home, or share it on the phone with friends or family.



Please pray for

- wisdom for all as we continue to battle against the Covid infections to protect ourselves and others
- all in leadership positions in this country, amongst those countries we work closely with, and those we don't that God's wisdom may be seen in their decisions
- the situation in Afghanistan, the safety of interpreters who have had their email addresses released and all those at risk where governments oppress their people

- those people and countries affected by 'natural' disasters
- all those who are still affected by the Covid pandemic, the medical staff and NHS support staff, the families affected by illness, the loss of loved ones, and the worldwide strain on medical services
- all those who have other illnesses, and delayed medical treatment, especially those who are trying to hide their difficulties from 'the world'.
- those who are suffering from anxiety, depression, loneliness or abuse

A prayer by Claire Hargreaves - a Refugee and Interfaith advisor

Loving Lord Jesus, help us to be as respectful of strangers as you were and to meet them as equals and valued human beings, not as objects of charity or as people to be avoided because they are different.

May we be sensitive to unknown backgrounds, aware of our own prejudices, open to and accepting of other cultures and willing to learn from them.

Help us to hear their lament for a lost country, for family left behind, for poverty or persecution in a former life - exchanged for the hostility and indifference of an unfair society, where opportunity is far from equal and judgments are made on superficial evidence.

Lord, may our welcome be as genuine, honest and loving as yours. Amen.

Some areas that we could pray for over the coming weeks, extending the 'vision' for Church Wigan, for South Hub and for St. Aidan's Church:

- ◇ Thank God that, even when things may seem dry, God's purposes for the world are good and that in Christ he is making all things new. In particular we thank God for his promise to 'water' the land of Wigan with the refreshing power of the Holy Spirit.
- ◇ Pray that God refreshes our long established worshipping communities and shows each one where he wants them to reach out in mission.
- ◇ Pray that God reveals new 'wells' he wants us dig, showing us new opportunities to share the gospel.
- ◇ Ask that God encourages each one of us, from the oldest to the youngest, to show us our part in being 'fishers of people.' Help us discover our individual spiritual gifts and callings, and our role in the 'team' so that the whole church might be strengthened.
- ◇ Pray particularly for those who have felt overlooked or disempowered. Give us grace where necessary to forgive each other and help us become a church where every member feels valued and loved.
- ◇ Thank God for all he has done in Wigan and Billinge over countless years. Thank him for the faithfulness and sacrifice of Christians in Wigan who have gone before us. May we, like they, be fruitful and faithful for the gospel in this generation.

- ◇ Pray that we will get ever better at showing love and care for one another, particularly those who feel isolated or forgotten or in need of contact. Help us find ways to practically demonstrate our love - for those in the church and those outside.
- ◇ Thank God for the gift of prayer, of being able to meet with him, hear his voice and receive his love and instruction. Pray that by the power of the Holy Spirit we may increase in prayer, individually & collectively.
- ◇ Ask for generosity of spirit towards each other, just like the first church in Jerusalem. Give us grace to make time and listen to each other, especially when we have opposing opinions. Help our leaders discern God's voice and make wise decisions in line with his will.
- ◇ Ask for increasingly effective ways of working together as one church. May God show us how we can learn from each other so that many creative expressions of mission and care will spread across Wigan.
- ◇ Ask God to bless those who serve us so tirelessly 'behind the scenes:' wardens and assistant wardens, treasurers, vergers and others; also for our Core Services team that helps us be a safe and well-run church in these increasingly complex times.
- ◇ Ask God to reveal the Big Conversations he wants us to have altogether as a Church, and that through these we may grow in unity and faithfulness.