

## St. Aidan's Church May 2024

Wigan South Bible passage for 2024:

*Shout with joy to the Lord, all the earth! Worship the Lord with gladness. Come before him, singing with joy. Psalm 100:1-2 (NLT)*



Ascension Day May 9<sup>th</sup>

He was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.' Acts 1:9..."

Pentecost Sunday May 19<sup>th</sup>

In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Acts 2:17



Services for May:

Wednesday May 1<sup>st</sup> 10am Holy Communion, Sunday May 5<sup>th</sup> 10am Holy Communion

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> May Ascension Day Holy Communion at 7pm at St. Aidan's Church for all of South Wigan. Please come long and support this special occasion.

Sunday May 12<sup>th</sup> 10.30 Sta's4all in School and 4pm Evening Prayer in church, when our preacher will be Rev Sandra Jones.

Wednesday May 15<sup>th</sup> Holy Communion.

Sunday May 19<sup>th</sup> Pentecost Sunday - 10am Morning Worship

Sunday May 26<sup>th</sup> Trinity Sunday - 10am Beacon Service 4pm Holy Communion

### **Retirement of Rev'd Jeremy Thomas**

Last Sunday, it was announced in church that Jeremy is to retire from stipendary ministry at the end of June. He says that he will be forever thankful to God for calling him to Wigan South. He has particularly valued the fellowship of all in our churches, where the talents and service of so many people have made each of our worshipping communities places of welcome and encounter with God. It was a hard decision to make, but he is clear that retirement is the right thing for him. Rev Sue Thomas will take a four month sabbatical from July, returning to continue her ministry amongst us on 3<sup>rd</sup> November. Please pray for them both as they seek Gods guidance as to what he has planned for Jeremy in the future.

Advanced Notice: Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> June, being the fifth Sunday of the month, will see a Wigan South service at 10.30am at St Thomas' Church. This will be Rev Jeremy Thomas' last service before his retirement. All are welcome to join this service and to stay for cake with friends afterwards.

### **Billinge Parish Council Awards:**

Congratulations to our church members who received an award in April - George Cooper and Harry Thompson who were awarded the Young Citizen Award, and Colin Philips, Peter Preston and Joan Roberts who gained a Service to the Community Award for their service to the Aidan's Food Pantry. We are very proud of you all!

## **Prayer and Pastries -**

A new venture for the whole of Wigan South - Saturday 11 May 09 00 - 10 30 - St Thomas' Vicarage, Ashton : Do you have a heart for prayer, Jesus and others? You are welcome to join us to hear God's Voice and bring our request to Him.

## **Parish Annual Meeting (APCM)**

The APCM for Wigan South will be held on Wednesday May 22<sup>nd</sup>. This very important meeting is a time to celebrate achievement and to think about who we are and what we can be in the next year. It starts at 7.30pm and will be held at St. Thomas Church, Ashton. This meeting reports on the activities and finances of our churches within this group and new church wardens and parish council members will be elected. In order to be able to vote you must be on the Electoral Roll.

Each of the 6 churches who make up Wigan South has a number of representatives on this Committee. A very big thank you to Lesley Hughes who has completed her term of office, where she has served us very well. She must now step down for at least a year. Would you be willing to act as a representative of St. Aidan's Church on the PCC?

## **Electoral Roll**

This year there is a minor revision of roll members. If you are already on the electoral roll you do not need to do anything, but if you are not a member and wish to become one, then you must fill in an application form. These can be found in church and must be completed by the end of April. The next major revision (when everyone must reapply) takes place in 2025.

## **RISE UP**

Rise Up stands for Respond, Inform, Support, Empower, Unite and Pray. This is a Mother's Union campaign to raise awareness of and provide support for the victims of domestic abuse. We no longer have a Mother's Union at St. Aidan's, but a number of our members from St. Aidan's are attending a group at another church. The Church Committee have agreed to support this worthy cause by allowing the donations in the 'bucket' in Church to be given to this worthy cause during the month of May.

In June the speaker at the Friendship Group will be Jane Longworth who will be speaking about the Rise Up Campaign - RISE UP against domestic abuse. If you would like to know more please join them.

The speaker at May's Friendship group, on May 23<sup>rd</sup> will be our very own Brenda Bridge, sharing her adventure (with John) down under!

## **Thy Kingdom Come:**

From Ascension Day (May 9<sup>th</sup>) to Pentecost Sunday (May 19<sup>th</sup>) we join with individuals from all around the world in praying for God's Kingdom to come here in our local community, and God's will to be done as it is in heaven. We can cry out to God for more people to come to know the life transforming love of God. We are invited to choose five people who do not yet know the love of God for themselves, and pray for them each day. Go to [www.thykingdomcome.global](http://www.thykingdomcome.global) to find a copy of the prayer book, exploring a variety

of ways to pray from across different denominations and traditions. (There will be few copies of the book in church for those who are not able to access the internet.) As you journey through these 11 days, faithfully interceding for your five people, their hope is that you will be refreshed by what you learn, and inspired to encounter God in new ways. Why not give it a go! Also available on the site are the 'Cheeky Pandas' videos - great for young children.

### **The Memorial Stone:**

There are a few names outstanding to be engraved onto the memorial stone. This can only take place when the weather is fine. The firm who do this have informed us that they will not be able to attend for at least 3 months because of a backlog of work caused by the bad weather.

In previous years places have been reserved on the stone for people to be listed alongside of a spouse or other family member. In some cases the family may not be aware that this had been the wishes of the loved one. Unfortunately contact details of the extended family were not recorded at the time and, where they no longer have links with the church, we are now unable to contact some families to ensure that they are able to take up the reserved spot on the death of this loved one. If you know phone numbers or email addresses to help us contact family members please contact Barbara Goulden or Peter Hughes. Thank you

### **Volunteers:**

We still need volunteers to enable the church to work efficiently and make our worship worthy of our Lord. This is becoming urgent. So far no-one has come forward for any of the roles. Current leaders cannot take on any more! If no-one comes forward we may have to stop some of our activities.

You may be aware that June Phillips has had a period in hospital and she will not be able to lead evening services for some period of time. She will be missed by all. We have been able to plan the next few 4pm services of Evening Prayer, but this will have to be under review in the long term. Please ask God to send a few more volunteers to train to fill the role of service leaders, who knows it could even be you!

Since Dawn left as organist we have been greatly blessed by Roy Lawrence, who is playing at two 10am services each month, Peter Hughes, who is playing at 2 worship events each month and Lesley Leppard who has helped to play at some 4pm services, on top of her role in leading services and giving reflections. I know that not everyone is keen on the electronic hymnal, but it does provide music for some services and I am grateful to John Bridge, Peter Preston and Philip Stott for their input to this. I am also grateful to Frank Lowe (from Holy Trinity) for playing for a 4pm service. He is willing to play for us again but unfortunately he has an injury in one hand, is undergoing medical treatment and so he is unable to play for us at present. Perhaps God is showing us that we should not take our volunteers for granted!

**Flowers in church:** We need someone who has an artistic eye and a love of flowers to use our good quality artificial flowers, and when sponsored for special occasions, fresh flowers to decorate our church. Please contact our Assistant Warden Barbara Goulden (01744 894694) for more information if you could offer your services.

**Funeral Verger Team:** We have a vacancy for a Funeral Verger. Could you work as part of a team? This is a very practical role. It is not to provide pastoral care for the family - that is the role of the minister. The role involves unlocking church, making sure the building is ready, such as putting out the service sheets, reserving seats for those who will follow the coffin in, maybe putting on a CD in the service, recording the numbers attending and locking up after all have left. If you think that you could help with this please contact Barbara Goulden (01744 894694) Barbara will continue to co-ordinate the details and will give full training to willing helpers.

**Church Cleaners :** A small group meet every other Thursday morning from 10am - 11am. This is a valued job which benefits a wide range of people. Because of ill health the group size is depleted and they urgently need one or two people to help in this role. Please ring Jean Breeze on 01942 519618 for more information, or let Helen Steele know that you are interested.

**Opportunity for poets and Artists:**

Billinge Medical practice are wanting to include the work of local people in their surgery. You do not have to be a patient to offer your art, photos or poetry. Please see the advert attached.

**Prayer for the Parish**



Please pray for Jeremy and Sue Thomas as they reach this significant milestone in Jeremy's life, and pray for Sandra and Sue Fulford and they prepare for the inevitable changes to their work pattern from the beginning of July.

Please pray for volunteers to come forward to all those places where we have a shortage, including service leaders, PCC members, flowers, cleaners, Funeral vergers, organist/musical help.

Please pray for Young Janie, Jeanette Caine, Judith Burns, Lorraine Webb, young Kai Pritchard, Vivienne Haugh, young Elsie Hickey, June Phillips and those you know who need God's healing touch. And we remember the bereaved who are feeling the pain of separation from their loved ones at this festival time.