

St. Aidan's Church December 1st

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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)

December can feel like chaos - lots of social events, services, Christmas presents to buy, never-ending to-do lists and the pressure to create the perfect Christmas. But in the midst of this chaos, our church can offer an opportunity to find peace during this busy time.

The Church of England's theme for Advent and Christmas 2024 is '**Follow the Star: Calm and Bright**' drawing on the world-famous carol, Silent Night.



You might like to download a new app available from the Church of England which will allow you to access daily reflections to inspire, equip and encourage you in your everyday faith. They will include daily reflections for Advent and the Christmas period. 'Everyday Faith' is now available to download for iOS and Android. If you already have the Watch & Pray app installed, you will automatically get the update.

You can download the Everyday faith app by going to:
www.churchofengland.org/faith-life/exploring-faith/everyday-faith

The idea for Everyday Faith is twofold. The app forms part of one of the Church of England's objectives of missional discipleship: "To become a church of missionary disciples where all God's people are free to live the Christian life, wherever we spend our time Sunday to Saturday." But the app also responds to overwhelming demand from users for an app that delivers inspirational reflections year-round rather than focussed on seasonal content during Lent and Advent. They wanted to create a space encouraging Christians to grow in their faith daily.

The app will provide you with carefully curated daily reflections, including selected Bible readings, a simple prayer to prepare you for the day ahead, and thoughts based on that week's theme.

Upcoming Services:

December 1st is Advent Sunday. We start a new liturgical year. A new advent Candle will be used at our services in December. Advent means 'coming' when we remember the coming of Jesus at Bethlehem, and look forward to his coming in power at the end of time.



Dec 8 th	10.30 am	Sta's4all & Beacon;	4pm	Evening Prayer
Dec 15 th	10am	Morning Prayer	4pm.	Carols and Lessons by Candlelight
Dec 22 nd	10am	'Beacon style' service	4pm	Holy Communion
Dec 24 th	4pm	Crib Service	8.30pm	Christmas Holy Communion



If you wish to take Holy Communion on Christmas Day itself you have 3 options:

9.30am at St Andrew's Garswood, 10.30am at St Peter's Bryn or St Thomas, Ashton.

Dec 29th 10am Hub Holy Communion at St Andrews. (5th Sunday - We join together as usual - there is no other services in Wigan South)

For those who find Christmas difficult emotionally, there is a special 'Blue Christmas Service' on Dec 8th at St. Thomas Church, Ashton starting at 4pm.

Quiz Night Thanks to all the team who gave us a great night. Good food, good company, Interesting questions! Just over £200 was made at this event.

St Aidan's Pantry

Please note that Pantry will not be open on Fridays December 27th and January 3rd.

Christmas Cards - a reminder that the **Christmas Card Baskets** are in church. We leave cards to be picked up by others who are attending church. Please do not leave cards for people who are not attending. They are **not** delivered to people's homes. The large **charity Christmas card** is up in church for you to sign a greeting to other church members and leaving a charity donation. This saves on cards as well as postage! This year our nominated charity is the **YMCA**.

Bereavement Group

We still only have 2 volunteers to assist with the possible Bereavement Group which we were hoping to set up. It doesn't look likely to take place. We would need at least 1 more volunteer if this is going to get going. If you could assist in this way please let Helen or Barbara know.

Empty tablet blister packs - A reminder that we can only continue to send these to St. Thomas if people are willing to donate a small amount to costs. To date only one donation has been made. If you wish to continue to recycle these items then you are asked to make a small contribution in an envelope marked for recycling and left in the box holding the empty blister packs

Experience Christmas was hugely enjoyed by 4 classes from our primary schools and by our volunteers! A big thank you to them all, especially Margaret who coordinates it. We have received words of thanks from the St Aidan's and Chapel End Schools.

Playing the Organ Roy Lawrence currently plays at the 10am service on the first and third Sundays in the month. (He has played since the 1980's!) We have been praying for Roy who has problems with his hip and back. If he is to continue to play for us then he needs to change the time when he practices to Sunday mornings before the service (8.30am). For health and safety purposes he cannot be alone in church. Is there anyone who would be willing to come into church with him from 8.30am on the first and third Sundays? (Service volunteers start to arrive from just after 9am.) Please contact Helen if you are willing to do this.

Safeguarding - a letter from Bishop John†

Over a week has passed since the Archbishop of Canterbury resigned and many in the Church of England reflected on their safeguarding practices in the light of the Makin Review. Last Friday's bulletin restated our collective shock at the details of the report and our desire to keep survivors at the front of our thoughts and prayers. It also highlighted mine and Dean Sue's commitment to encourage the best possible safeguarding culture for our diocese.

When something like this occurs, we have to look at what we can learn from and improve on. We have a strong platform of good practice to build on. Our safeguarding team has developed robust policies and procedures which are often shared with other dioceses as best practice examples. I have regular meetings with Andy Holmes, our Diocesan Safeguarding Officer, and am encouraged to hear the work that the majority of our parishes are doing is good.

We cannot and must not be complacent and I need you, as ministers with oversight in your parishes, to ensure that your parish is doing all it can to follow best practice. You can find what you need at <https://liverpoolcofe.org/safeguarding-matters/>

Following best practice means you need to

- 1) adhere to the robust policies and procedures the safeguarding team have put in place. I have asked Andy to tell me of any places where this is not the case or is being resisted so that I can take appropriate action.*
- 2) make sure that all activities are appropriately risk assessed.*
- 3) carry out safer recruitment for any roles that are offered in the parish. You can find that guidance here <https://liverpoolcofe.org/safeguarding-matters/safer-recruitment-for-parishes-and-churches/>*
- 4) carry out all training on a regular basis. You must complete your training every three years. This is not an excessive request and we know many people may have had safeguarding training with other bodies they engage with however the church is a unique place. Your leadership, and the leadership of the PCC is vital in establishing the safe churches we all want.*

Myself and the diocesan safeguarding team are committed to the best possible practice and I am aware of the tireless commitment of so many of you, your PCCS and Parish Safeguarding Officers. I thank you for that. We are horrified by the details of the Smyth report and would not want a repeat of that. Changing the culture through committing to and following the 4 actions above will go a long way to making sure we have safer churches in the Diocese of Liverpool. +John

You may like to be aware that at St Aidan's we do adhere to the robust policies and procedures the Diocesan safeguarding team. We were inspected by them earlier this year. All our volunteers complete the safeguarding training and documentation every 3 years.

December magazines There was another problem with the printer. It is hoped that the machine can be mended early this week and the magazines delivered before the end of the week. Please note that the December magazine has already been published on our website.

Prayer for the Parish

If anyone needs to be added to our prayer list please let Helen or Margaret Stott know. The person or 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.

For confidential prayer needs contact Jennifer Berry for the St Aidan's Prayer Circle on 01942 389715 or Brenda Bridge on 01744 894528.



Please pray for all those you know who need God's healing touch, those who are struggling in Body, Mind and Spirit. We remember especially Lorraine, Tracey-Ann, Jeanette, Brenda, David, Linda, Judith, Baby Ellie, Betty, Karla and Roy. And we remember the bereaved, especially the family and friends of Betty Lee and all who are feeling the pain of separation from their loved ones, whether that is recent or a while ago.

Please pray for

- a warm welcome to be experienced by visitors at events and services in church over the Christmas period.
- Those who will struggle to celebrate Christmas because of difficulties or memories in this period when we are expected to be 'happy'