

WHO WE ARE

Welcome in the name of Jesus to the Church of England parish of Kirkdale, Liverpool, comprising St. Lawrence church and St. Paul's church.

Everyone is welcome to attend our church services, our ushers on the door will look after you.

Our regular **Sunday** services are **10.30am** at **St. Lawrence** and **4.30pm** at **St. Paul's**. We also have lunchtime Music and Prayer every Wednesday lunchtime. Please contact us for more details.

Our churches are available for Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals.

Our church halls are available to hire for Birthdays, Anniversaries, Community events and Corporate events, and can be booked online at kirkdale.org.uk/venues

Contact us

St. Lawrence, Westminster Close, Liverpool L4 1XB

St. Paul's, 35 Celia Street, Liverpool L20 2BG

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ST. LAWRENCE & ST. PAUL'S

KIRKDALE

Christmas Magazine 2024



Associate Priest, Rev Gill Hoy

FINDING CALM AT CHRISTMAS

Are you calm? We live in tense, anxious times worried about global conflict, climate change, the cost of living the increased tensions and divisions in society. When we retreat into our church communities, we become anxious about numbers, finance, and buildings. As a church we stress about the theological and doctrinal divisions that we strive to avoid tearing us apart.

It is hard to find calm. In church life finding calm at Christmas is nearly impossible. It is the season where the work seems to increase. Christmas fairs, carol concerts, extra services all great in themselves yet all increasing the busyness and stress. Then there is the getting ready for the festivities, shopping, cooking, decorating – all things to aid our enjoyment but all adding to the pressure, the stress, the noise.

We need calm. We cannot live our lives at full pace hurling ourselves from one thing to the other. That's why we have the sabbath, made for humanity by an omnipresent God, A God who does not need to rest but recognised at the moment of creation that the world would need peace. At least for a moment.

Silent Night, Gruber's famous carol first performed on Christmas Eve, has formed the inspiration for the church of England's advent and Christmas campaign 2024. It offers a note of calm often in the midst of a rousing carol service or concert. It is in itself a simple quiet carol that contrasts with most of the others we sing and provides a moment to quietly reflect on the beautiful moment of God's incarnation. Through the inevitable trauma of labour and childbirth comes the time when all is still and we can sleep in heavenly peace. While the shepherds are quaking and the choirs of angels are singing at the centre is the calming presence of Jesus. Jesus, who later would calm the storm, would model times for prayer and solitude in the midst of his busy ministry, and would stand calmly defiant in the face of the persecution that led to his victory on the cross.

We all have storms in our lives and we all need to recognise for the people and communities we serve Christmas is not always a time of joy and celebration but can be an occasion when the storms in their lives reach a crescendo and they need calm.

This advent, this Christmas, I pray that your church can be for you and for your community a place of calm. That you can bring yourselves and others to stand before the prince of peace to find the peace, the calm that you need this Christmas.

Bishop John, Diocese of Liverpool

Parish events this Christmas:

30th November - **Tree and Treats**
12.30pm at St. Lawrence

8th December – **Christingle Service**
10.30am at St. Lawrence

9th December – **Over 60's lunch and fun**
12.00pm at St. Paul's

15th December - **Carol Service**
10.30am at St. Lawrence

22nd December - **Christmas Lunch**
1.00pm at St. Lawrence (prebook)
Adults £7.50, Children over 5 £5.00

22nd December – **Carols by Candlelight,**
4.30pm at St. Paul's

24th December – **Midnight Holy Communion**
11.30pm at St. Paul's

25th December – **Christmas morning Service**
10.30am at St. Lawrence

CHRISTMAS WORDSEARCH

Can you find all the words !!!



ADVENT, ANGELS, BETHLEHEM, BIRTH, CAROLS, CHRISTCHILD,
DONKEY, EGYPT, EPIPHANY, GABRIEL, GIVING, GOD, GOODWILL,
HEAVEN, HEROD, HOLLY, ISRAEL, JOSEPH, JOY, LIGHT, LOVE, LOWLY,
MANGER, MARY, NATIVITY, PEACE, PROPHECY, TRUMPET, SON, STAR,
TRUTH, WISEMEN, SHEPHERDS

REV MIKE GRIFFIN

THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

We read in Genesis that darkness covered the face of the earth. This past year we have seen too much darkness within this world. With the ongoing war in the Ukraine and the terrible catastrophe unfolding in Israel. Many other appalling and evil atrocities around the world. Not to mention what is happening to the environment! This past year has been a dark one for us.

But within the backdrop of all this does God still care? Is He still visible? These are very important questions for us to consider. Why? As a Christian I read my Bible every day. As I read it, I find that in every situation known to humanity God is to be found. The Psalms especially help us to discover the truth of this, and as we read them, we are encouraged and challenged to re-engage and discover this afresh. What a blessing this really is!

Darkness once covered the face of the earth. As God continued to create the world, we read of a brilliant relationship that two people shared with God. Adam and Eve. Before things went pear-shaped with their disobedience all seemed wonderful and perfect. Then a new darkness entered creation. Through the subtle lies of the serpent. We know him as Satan!

Did God give up on humans then? Not at all! He was planning the restoration of humanity through the offering of His Son, Jesus! God's atonement for our sin and all of it poured out upon Jesus on that first Good Friday. Love come down in the form of human flesh. This is what Christmas is all about. The light of Christ shining through a world fallen into darkness.

Has God abandoned each of us? No! Has He given upon creation? No! If he had, then there would be no Good News to share. God still has everything in the palms of His hands. Including you and me. So, take joy this Christmas. What God has begun He will bring to completion. The Bible says so and that is good enough for me.

This will be my last Christmas message to you as I retire at the end of July. May God bless you all, and may His light perpetually shine upon you.

God bless you all.

REV GILL HOY

FAMILIES AT CHRISTMAS

Christmas and families – What a fabulous time it can be. Laughter, Joy, sharing of gifts, and spending time together around the Christmas tree, and around the table to share a meal. I asked my son, ‘What was the most important thing to him about families at Christmas’, and he said, ‘Christmas dinner and everyone talking to each other’. It sure gives us a warm feeling when we think of that. But we are also aware that for some families it is very different. Our prayers this Christmas are for those who are missing a loved one, for those who are away from home, and those who will be cold, hungry, and lost.

Our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ was born in a lowly manger with very little in the way of possessions, yet He was filled and surrounded by love. He is God’s gift to us and the most important gift we will ever receive. Wherever we are this Christmas time we can be assured that God’s love is for us all. Each of us can come in out of the cold and darkness that surrounds many of us; join God’s children in worship and meet Him at the cross or the manger and feel His love and presence that is available to us all. God invites us in, and at St Lawrence with St. Paul’s Church, we too invite you to come in and feel the warmth of God’s comfort this Christmas time.

We look forward to meeting with you and sharing God’s love.

God Bless

In Memoriam

Leah Gradwick born on 29 December 1945, passed away 30 January 2013

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

TREE & TREATS:

Saturday 2nd December 2023 from 12.30 to 2pm at St. Lawrence.

Join us for a hot lunch and a chance to help dress our Christmas tree. Dress the Trees, Nativity dress up. Sweets and Cakes, Hot scouse and bread, Christmas card making. Hot chocolate and Marshmallow. Join in the family fun and get ready to celebrate Christmas. RSVP Rev Gill Hoy

YOUNG at HEART Christmas Party

Monday 11th December from 12 to 3pm at St. Paul’s.

Festive food, fun, friendship and entertainment. All welcome. Suggested donation of £4 or whatever you can afford. Contact Pauline Worthy or Don Rivers for any further information.

CHRISTMAS LUNCH

Sunday 17th December at St. Lawrence.

Full meal with all the festive trimmings. All welcome. Suggested donation £10 per person. Contact Val for more information.

SLOW COOKING Course

Thursday, 1st February 2024 9am at St. Lawrence

Slow cooking is a very economical way to cook healthy meals for you and your family. All participants will get a taste of all the recipes and take home a slow cooker. Contact Marjorie Griffin to register for this course.

Coffee mornings at St. Lawrence

Wednesday’s 9 to 10.30 am
Parents and Toddlers welcome

SISTER MARJORIE GRIFFIN

I love singing Christmas carols, so I get excited when each year, the calendar turns onto December. I like to concentrate on Christmas for spiritual meaning rather than the mad buying of presents and eating too much chocolate.

I would like to share a couple of things about two of my favourite carols. The first is a verse from the carol 'In the bleak mid-winter.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him
Nor earth sustain;
Heaven and earth shall flee away
When He comes to reign:

I love those words 'Our God, heaven cannot hold him.' Our wonderful, gracious God came in human form, to show us how he understands us, how close he is to us, how much he loves us and wants us to enjoy the abundant life he offers. This Christmas gift is on offer to all and from O Little Town of Bethlehem:

How silently, how silently
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him,
still, the dear Christ enters in.

Jesus is not just a historical figure, he lives, and his promises are as much for now as when he walked the earth.

"Where meek souls will receive him -still, the dear Christ enters in."

And the best thing? This special gift lasts past Christmas – it lasts for eternity!

If you have never considered Christmas and the gift of Jesus to the world this way before – why not give it some thought this year? And if you receive him, Christ will enter in. And the wonderful things he offers will be yours.

And if you do know Jesus, how will you be sharing him with your neighbours this year? Many around us need acknowledgement and kindness. Perhaps we can pray for ways we can share God's blessings with them.

SAVE YOUR STAMPS



**Collect stamps for RNIB
and make a difference to blind and partially sighted people.**

As Christmas approaches you'll probably receive Christmas cards through the post, so instead of just putting the envelope in the recycling bin why not help the RNIB by saving the postage stamp? Make sure you leave a centimetre of envelope or packaging around each stamp. (This is just a recommendation and stamps that have been trimmed less or more will still be accepted). There is a box at the back of church for you to put the stamps in.

By collecting stamps you're helping to break down the barriers that stop people with sight loss living life to the full. They accept all stamps: new or used, first or second class, foreign, first day covers, presentation packs or albums. Stamps are sold by weight and they raise £20 per kilogramme of stamps, so it's a brilliant way to raise money.

Pauline Worthy

CHRISTMAS SAFETY NOTICE

1. All members of our community planning to dash through the snow in a one horse open sleigh, going over the fields and laughing all the way are advised that a Risk Assessment will be required addressing the safety of an open sleigh for members of the public. This assessment must also consider whether it is appropriate to use only one horse for such a venture, particularly where there are multiple passengers. Please note that permission must also be obtained in writing from landowners before their fields may be entered.
2. To avoid offending those not participating in celebrations, we would request that laughter is moderate only and not loud enough to be considered a noise nuisance.
3. Benches, stools and orthopaedic chairs are now available for collection by any shepherds planning or required to watch their flocks at night. While provision has also been made for remote monitoring of flocks by CCTV cameras from a centrally heated shepherd observation hut, all users of this facility are reminded that an emergency response plan must be submitted to account for known risks to the flocks.
4. The angel of the Lord is additionally reminded that, prior to shining his/her glory all around, s/he must confirm that all shepherds are wearing appropriate Personal Protective Equipment to account for the harmful effects of UVA, UVB and the overwhelming effects of Glory.
5. Following last year's well-publicised case, everyone is advised that Equal Opportunities legislation prohibits any comment with regard to the redness of any part of Mr R Reindeer. Further to this, exclusion of Mr R Reindeer from reindeer games will be considered discriminatory and disciplinary action will be taken against those found guilty of this offence.
6. While it is acknowledged that gift bearing is a common practice in various parts of the world, particularly the Orient, everyone is reminded that the bearing of gifts is subject to Hospitality Guidelines and all gifts must be registered. This applies regardless of the individual, even royal personages. It is particularly noted that direct gifts of currency or gold are specifically precluded, while caution is advised regarding other common gifts such as aromatic resins that may evoke allergic reactions.
7. Finally, in the recent instance of the infant found tucked up in a manger without any crib for a bed, Social Services have been advised and will be arriving shortly!

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

COURSES



ALPHA Course starting 10th January 2024 at St. Paul's

Register at www.alpha.org.uk/try-alpha



**CONNECT Group on Wednesday evenings
6 to 7pm at St. Paul's.**

Join us for Bible study, Prayers and Companionship.
We share hot soup and bread rolls.