



St. David's



**Mill Park Drive, Eastham
Wirral CH62 9DG**

Dec 2023/ Jan 2024

Dear Friends,

Hello!

Do you ever have a song lyric drop into your brain unannounced and stay there? As I was thinking about what to say in this December and January edition that covers both Christmas and New Year - a Christmas Carol lyric dropped into my brain.



The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

The Christmas carol loving amongst you will know it comes from O Little Town of Bethlehem. The whole verse says:

O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see the
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light;
**the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.**

That gives the impression that Bethlehem is a quiet cosy little backwater of a place, a sleepy, still place in the night of Jesus' birth. That wasn't true then and it certainly isn't true now.

We live through dark and cold times. The days are not only darker and colder weather wise – but also when we turn on the news and see what's happening in the world.

As I write the today's news tells us of a four day ceasefire in the hostilities between Hamas and Israel. A ceasefire that the BBC said would definitely continue and be escalated once hostages has been returned. It so desperately tragic and one wonders where it will end?

The same news today informed me that gas and electricity prices were to go up in January. Not the best news either.

In Bethlehem on the night of Jesus' birth, as now in Eastham – there is fear in need of being illuminated by hope. Then and now we need the light that Jesus brings.

The carol reminds us that Bethlehem symbolically stands as the crossroads for meeting human hopes and fears over all the years. For, where there's fear, there's the need for hope. Jesus was born in the right place at the right time where he would come into the world, to provide the hope for saving humankind from fear.

There was enough fear in the Christmas story too. Angels first words to Mary, Joseph and the Shepherds were 'Do not be Afraid'.

Biblical angels are not the cute cherubs or tinsel covered nativity toddlers we would expect – but be literally terrifying in appearance – no wonder they had to say Do Not Be Afraid when first coming before humans!

Mary, Joseph and the Shepherds all had fear that was met by hope in the Christmas account. Life was never the same for them.

There may be fear in need of hope in our own stores this Christmas and New Year.

We may need to rehear the angels message of Do not be Afraid in 2023-2024.

Do not be afraid, because Jesus brings hope, healing and good news.

The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.



And today, and tomorrow and every day. May you know that to be true for you this Christmas and New Year.

My love to you all,

Louise. x

Date	Leader	Readers	Vestry Elder
Dec 3rd. Advent	Chris	Richard & Marj	Lisa Lisa & Marj
Dec 10th	Robert	Chris & Bethan	Marj
Dec 17th	Café Church Louise	TBC	Bethan
Dec 24th 6.30pm	Louise	TBC	Judith
Dec 25th	Bethan	TBC	N/A
Dec 31st	Chris	Diane & Sheila	Lisa
Dec 31st 6.30pm	Candlelight Prayer	NA	N/A
Jan 7	Louise	Richard & Lisa	Marj Bethan & Judith.
Jan 14th	Paul	Hilary & Marj	Bethan
Jan 21st	Café team		Irene
Jan 28th	Chris	Heather & Bethan	Judith.

Do mince pies taste better at Christmas?



Pop into the hall after the Christmas Eve Service to have a taste and make your mind up!!!

ELDERS—Don't forget to bring some mince pies!

Date	Names for refreshment teams
Dec 3rd	Sonya & Kevin
Dec 10th	Lisa & Heather
Dec 17th	Christingle Café Church
Dec 24th 6.30pm	All Elders. Mince pies in the hall.
Dec 31st.	Diane & Peter.
Jan 7th	Sonya & Kevin
Jan 14th	Lisa & Heather
Jan 21st	Café Church.
Jan 28th	Diane & Peter

Please note there will be
no service at St. David's
 On the morning of December 24th.

**The Candlelight service on Christmas Eve
 Starts at 6.30pm**

Don't forget to mark these dates in your diaries -

Dec 2nd—Afternoon Tea. 2pm

Dec 16th—Port Sunlight Lyceum Band lead us in our
 Community Carol Sing in the grounds of
 St. Davids. at 7pm

Dec 17th—A Christingle Café Service. 10.15am

Feb 25th—CTBE Café Church. 6.30pm

A Prayer for the growth of St. David's.



God of mission,
Who alone brings growth to your church,
Send your Holy Spirit to
Give vision to our planning,
Joy to our worship,
Wisdom to our actions,
And power to our witness.
Help our church to grow in numbers,
In spiritual commitment to you,

And in service to our local community.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer chain

People sending requests have felt they are not alone and have benefited by the support and prayers.

If anyone would like to join the chain, or send a prayer request please see Val or phone her on 0151 327 2249.



Our thoughts and prayers are with those members and friends who are in hospital, unwell at home, or in nursing homes.

Water, Water Everywhere—and not a drop to drink!!

I'm not sure where that saying comes from—but we have an excess of water in our hall storeroom, and the two classrooms.

In the small classroom we have a collection of arm chairs and a settee. They are looking for a new home.

Do you, or someone you may know, want them?

They need to go asap.

Thanks.

It is a tradition in St. David's to wrap a gift to the church, put under our tree and open it on Christmas Day. Our Gift list would normally have tea, coffee, cleaning materials etc. but this year we have a plentiful supply of all those provided by the grant.

So, if you would like to buy a gift for our church please choose from printer paper, printable card, laminating pouches, cling film, silver foil, paper plates and serviettes.



Obviously all your gifts are appreciated, so if you still want to buy tea, coffee or indeed can think of anything else we can use, please, please do. Thank you.

Christmas Cards at St David's

It has been a long-standing tradition in St. David's to have our post box out for Christmas, so we can all post and share Christmas card greetings. This has become a little difficult to organise, so if you want to send cards to members and friends in the congregation, please leave them on the table by the foundation stone.

They should be in **alphabetic order of first name** to help people find their cards. The last day for leaving cards is Sunday 17th December.

Please take any cards addressed to you and any that you could pop through a neighbour's door or pass to a friend in the week. Thanks for your help.



**COMMUNITY
CAROL SING
WITH
PORT SUNLIGHT
BRASS BAND**

**DECEMBER 16TH AT 7PM
IN THE GROUNDS OF
ST. DAVID'S CHURCH EASTHAM**

Refreshments available

**Come and raise your voices
Singing your favourite Carols.
Bring your friends and neighbours
Ring Judith 07845266831 for more details.**

**Donations of Hot dogs and cakes for the
Community Carol Sing
Very gratefully received.
Thank you.**



**Please join us at
the Delamere
Centre for**

**Christmas
Day 2023** 
From
12.30pm - 3pm

**Would you like to spend Christmas
Day with other local residents?**

Well why not join us this year for a delicious
Christmas lunch with great company.
We would love if you could join us!

Spaces are limited and you must book by the 15th
of December by calling the Delamere Centre on

0151 327 8767



**DELAMERE
COMMUNITY
CENTRE**
making the pieces fit

Christmas Tree Festival
St. Barnabas Parish Church
Bromborough

November 29th to December



CTBE Café Church
February 25th 6.30pm
At St. David's.
Save the date, share the news and
Invite everyone you know.

We will need plenty of cake
So if you can make some
there will be lots of grateful people munching away.

We are trying to reintroduce the CTBE Service to the churches of Eastham and Bromborough. We joined for our Remembrance Parade, and Bromborough Methodist hope to open their doors on a Sunday in January. So we will take our turn in February tempting everyone with singing and cake.



I am hoping to hold a **Local Church Leaders** meeting before the end of the year. It would be amazing if we could get some dates filled in on the calendar for 2024. If you have any ideas, big or small, you would like to share please let me know. December 9th, 2pm at 7 Helsby Ave is the date for your diaries if you would like to come and join with your ideas.
Judith.

2024

St. David's Chill & Chat Group
Our Thursday Morning coffee meeting.

Meet On Thursdays from 11am to 12.30pm

Chill & Chat is somewhere for you to come
and meet friends, old and new.

Refreshments of tea and cake available

Everyone is welcome

Bring your friends and neighbours

Contact Judith on 07845266831

St. David's Mums & Tots



Meet on Mondays and Wednesdays
from 10.30am till 1.30pm.
during term time.

Our Christmas Celebrations
will be on 4th & 6th December 2023
Dinner will be ticket only.

Tots Group offers warmth
Fun and friendship
Please come along and join us,
we look forward to meeting you.

For more details contact Judith on 07845266831
jb.hill26@outlook.com



St. David's United Reformed Church

At St. David's we meet for worship every Sunday Morning at 10.30am.. Our worship is led by a different Worship Leader each week.

As a rule the first Sunday of the month we celebrate Holy Communion.

On the third Sunday of each month we take our worship into the church hall for Café Church. We share a breakfast of bacon butties, tea and toast and cereal.

You could also find yourself outside the church building on occasion at Forest Church. Worship among the natural world is something to try—at least once. We only meet four or five times a year, so details are shared ahead of each meeting.

At St. David's we offer - Infant Baptism

When a new baby arrives, families and friends want to give thanks for the miracle of new life and very often they bring the baby to Church for Baptism (also called Christening). Baptism is more than just giving thanks; it marks a new beginning in our life as Christians and looks forward to Confirmation. Baptism is the sacrament of entry to the Church, so is administered only once.

The Thanksgiving Service

Some parents cannot make the statement of faith on behalf of their child, or they may be unable to promise to bring the child up in the life and worship of the church.

Other parents believe that the child should make their own decision about Baptism when they are old enough.

For these parents, the church offers a Service of Thanksgiving (or Dedication) for the Birth of a child.

***If you would like more information on either of these services , or any other service offered by the URC please speak to Louise, Chris or Judith.
Contact numbers on back page.***



Letter from the treasurer

Dear Members & friends of St. Davids,

We have recently received details of the payment we need to make to Synod for next year's Maintenance and Ministry. This is the cost of paying URC minister's salaries training and pensions. You will all be aware that this fund paid for Karen's training.

The cost for St David's next year is £8088, this amounts to £425.68 for each member, as we now have 19 members, or £8.20 each week.

In addition to this we have the general running costs, gas, electric, water, insurance, cleaning etc, so altogether it costs about £20 per week for each member.

These costs do not include any ongoing maintenance or repairs e.g. fire extinguisher servicing, portable appliance testing etc.

The above costs are for us to function as we are now and does not include any costs we may incur whilst we look to the future of our buildings and St. David's place in the community of Eastham.

We are all aware of how much costs have gone up and I realise that everyone has different amounts of income, however I would ask you all to consider how you spend any non-essential income and prayerfully consider increasing the amount you are able to give each week to maintain our church and help to further the work of God's kingdom in Eastham. Thank you.

Light up a Life – Sunday 10th December

Wirral Hospice St John's will be lighting up the hospice gardens with 10,000 beautiful lights this December. Light up a Life started in 1996 and has been raising much-needed funds for the Hospice ever since. This year we are celebrating 27 years of Light up a Life.

On Sunday 10th December, we will invite all our supporters to come together in our hospice gardens for our annual Switch-On Service. The lights will be switched on at 5.30 and our Books of Honour will be available to view at the hospice from 4pm.

Light up a Life offers an uplifting and meaningful way to remember family and friends who are no longer with us whilst supporting the care we provide at Wirral Hospice St John's. We would like to invite you to sponsor a light to remember your loved ones this Christmas.

More than ever, the hospice needs your support. For each light sponsored a personalised Light up a Life card will be printed and your loved one's names will be published in our Books of Honour, a special personal copy of the Book of Honour will be available for pre-order and keepsake tree decorations are available.

If you would like to sponsor a light in memory of a loved one or loved ones, please sponsor a light online Or please call the Fundraising Office on 0151 343 0778 (Mon to Fri 9 am-5 pm). We kindly ask for a minimum donation of £5 per light.

For each light sponsored you will receive a personalised card and your loved one's name will be included in both our printed and online Books of Honour. You will also have the opportunity to pre-order your own copy for a donation of £5.00. Pre-ordered Books of Honour will be posted in the weeks following Light up a Life.



St. Johns Hospice 2023 keepsake decoration is a gold heart. Each heart is made out of metal and hung on a green ribbon. We kindly ask for a minimum donation of £5 per tree decoration, there is no additional charge for postage.

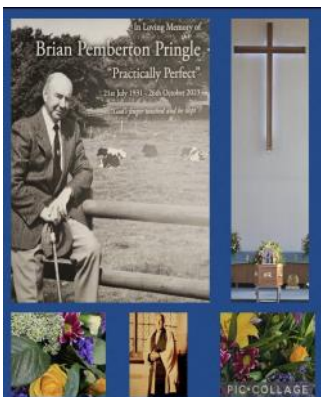


To order a keepsake tree decoration, please [sponsor a light online](#) or call 0151 343 0778



An Old Irish Christmas Blessing.

*May the blessings of Christmas be
with you,
May the Christ child light your way,
May God's holy angels guide you
And keep you safe each day.*



Judith, Bethan and Nicola wish to express their thanks for every expression of love and sympathy shown to them following the death of their Dad.

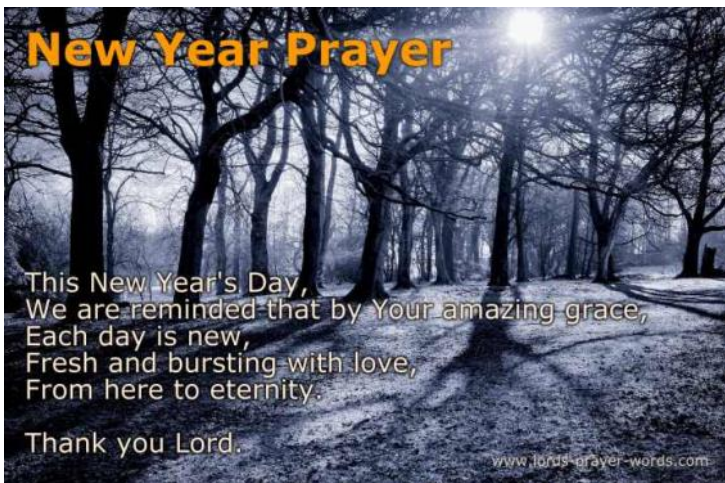
We would also like to thank the staff of Alex Taylor Funeral Directors for the care and support shown to us.

Thanks also to the New Easter Lily for the beautiful flowers and the staff at Eastham Lodge Golf Club for the lovely food. Indeed, heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped us at this time.

**New Years Eve
Candlelight Prayers
at St. David's
pop in between
6.30 & 7.30pm**

I have lit a candle Lord in the stillness.
Within its flame
I glimpse your light.
I have lit a candle Lord in the stillness.
Within its warmth
I sense your love.
I have lit a candle Lord in the stillness.
Of this moment.
I bring my prayer.
Amen

Lighting a candle can be a helpful way to pray.
Take a moment to quiet your mind, and remove all distractions.
Reflect on where you are in life, what you would like to pray for and the promise God has made to you.
Ask God to comfort you and speak to you.



FIRST FOOTING.

First-footing was a custom practised in Scotland, England and Wales. Folk would go from house to house on New Years Eve, and the first person over the threshold after midnight was believed to bring good luck.

There would be a warm welcome at the door and blessings shared for the coming year. First Footers would bring a gift of wood, or a piece of coal, to put on the fire. It would be put on the fire in silence, and when the fire was stoked there would be cheers all round. Out would come the mince pies and whisky.

The English rite of hospitality and charity at New Year was the Wassail. This would happen on New Years Eve and Twelfth Night.

Wassail, which is from the old English for “be whole”, or “Your health” is an old drinking toast.

A Wassail cup is an ornate bowl full of warmed, sweetened ale or cider spiced with nutmeg, and had roasted apples and pieces of toast floating in it.

One form of wassailing meant going from house to house, and donations were given as the cup was shared. Or the Wassail bowl could have been taken to the orchard and a toast was sung to the trees, or just one tree. The bowl was passed round and drunk from, and the rest poured over the roots of the trees, to ask for a good apples harvest later in the year.

Songs would be sung like this one from Sussex.

“Stand fast root, bear well top.

Pray God send us a howling good crop.

Every twig, apples big, every bough, apples now”

A prayer for New Years Day Morning.

Come oh God and first-foot over the threshold of my heart.

Brig with you a coal to touch my lips that I might speak in tongues of love.

A coal to touch my feet that I might walk this day knowing you.

A coal to touch my hands that their work might be blessed.

A coal to touch my belly that I might always have food.

A coal to touch my heart that I might open my door to another.

Lord God of new things, I welcome you as I set forth this day.

Amen.





Just so you all know

The Easter Trail
Is returning to St. David's
between *March 11th—15th*



We will need lots of volunteers to make this event run smoothly.

The trail needs Peters, Marys, housewives, tea makers, techno people, guides—

IN FACT IT NEEDS YOU!!!

We already have schools booked in for each day, and people asking if we will be holding an evening showing. Although the trail is open to visitors from the 11th— a party of volunteers will be needed for the week before to actually build the trail.

Do you know of anyone in other churches who could help with the acting roles? Please ask them.

Please speak to Judith or Hilary to let us know what you can do to help. Thanks.



St. David's opens its doors to the Wirral Foodbank each Wednesday between 12 noon and 2pm.

The ladies and gentlemen volunteers meet many people struggling to pay bills and put food on the table for their families.

We can help by bringing donations of food and necessities along to church with us each week and placing them in the container by the Foundation stone.



St. David's Hall.

**The hall is available for use by
Community Clubs and Groups,
And very popular with children's parties.**

If you would like more details about using our hall, please contact
Judith on 07845 266 831
or email jb.hill26@outlook.com



St. David's United Reformed Church

You can join us on Facebook at
St. David's URC or our web page
stdavidsurc.co.uk

Also follow the tots on their own page