



ST PAUL'S PARISH NEWS



Services throughout Christmas to the New Year

Christmas Eve:

14:00 Crib Service with Christingle at St Paul's Scotforth Road

15:00 Christmas Eve Creative Crib Service at St Paul's, Hala (there is a limit on numbers that can attend this service, please book a seat by emailing Claire@stpauls-scotforth.org – thank you)

23:30 Holy Communion at St Paul's Scotforth Road

Christmas Day:

08.00 BCP Holy Communion at St Paul's Scotforth Road

10:00 Holy Communion at St Paul's Scotforth Road

Sunday 26th December:

There will be no services at either St Paul's Scotforth Road or St Paul's Hala

Morning Prayer by telephone conference each Wednesday – at 09.00.
Please contact Margaret Ives if you would like to join the telephone conference.

Thursday 30th December:

No service today

Sunday 2nd January 2022:

08.00 BCP Holy Communion at St Paul's Scotforth Road

09:45 Holy Communion at St Paul's Scotforth Road

11:15 Holy Communion at St Paul's Hala

Sunday 9th January

08:00 BCP Holy Communion at St Paul's Scotforth Road

09:45 Altogether All-Age Service to celebrate Epiphany at St Paul's
Scotforth Road

11:15 Holy Communion at St Paul's, Hala

A message from Reverend Rebecca:

Covid and Christmas. Again. Watching and listening to the news over the last two weeks has brought a renewed sense of discouragement and worry. Covid is once again looming over Christmas and has found its way into our home as we self-isolate. Fear and hope are at the heart of the Christmas story, as Christ our hope drives out our fear.

Christmas reminds us that God tends to work in the most unlikely of places, and through the most unlikely of people. Given the extraordinary events of Christmas, of angels, stars, and the Incarnation, we also recognise the ordinariness of shepherds, a young couple, and the meagreness of a stable and that God is at work in our everyday lives.

Imagine the shepherds in the field that night, tending to their sheep as usual. A night much like any other, maybe huddled together around a fire for warmth, shepherds chatting, sharing conversation before turning in for some much-needed sleep. Then, all of a sudden, an angel appears and instructs them to go to Bethlehem to '*see this thing that has taken place*'. How wonderful that they encountered God in their place of work! Not in a synagogue or temple; not in a place where spiritual things are 'meant' to happen. God works in the ordinary as much as the extraordinary.

Over the last year our homes have doubled as workplaces, and places for remote home learning and even places of worship, may we sympathise with those shepherds. I pray that our Christmas, different this year as it may be, will remind us that God is not confined to a single place in time - in Bethlehem over 2000 years ago. Rather, God is present in our homes, in our places of work, in our schools, and in our hearts. And that should give us reason to hope.

One of my favourite Christmas Carol lines is from 'O Little Town of Bethlehem' where 'the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.' For in Jesus, in that little stable, in the rickety manger, in the fragile flesh of God made person, hope and fear meet. There is space for our very real fears about the world around us, and for our hopes of joy, peace, and love. At Christmas, hope and fear are held in God's everlasting arms; fear is transformed the more we learn to hope and live in Jesus.

This Christmas, wherever and however we are celebrating, let us admit our fears so that we can live in Jesus' eternal hope and love. This is not just a year to pass-over, a year to look forward to when things will be different or how they always are again, but a year to know that even here, and here most of all, Immanuel, God is with us.

FOR OUR PRAYERS

Our mission Partners: Stephen and Marit Impey managing Wycliffe Bible Translators Ethiopian work, the work of Global Link and MIND (Lancashire).

From our Parish prayer diary: All those who worship at St Paul's but do not live in the Parish

From our Church prayer diary: Our Parish Office Staff; Our Home Groups

Those who have asked for prayers for healing: Mary Wilson, Eunice Parkinson, Marion Corkill, Katherine McHale, Maureen Thorpe, Jacqueline Gothard, Rev Rebecca, Kath Beck, Val Gedge, Olive Jenkinson, Mollie Glover, Ruth Territt, Pirkko Leong,

All who mourn: Mark William Satterley, Peter Hudson, David Henedy, Yesudian Jeremiah

Christmas Eve

Collect for 24th December 2021:

Almighty God,

you make us glad with the yearly remembrance
of the birth of your Son Jesus Christ:

grant that, as we joyfully receive him as our redeemer,
so we may with sure confidence behold him

when he shall come to be our judge;

who is alive and reigns with you,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and for ever.

Readings for 24th December 2021:

Isaiah 9.2-7

² *The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.

³ You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.

⁴ For the yoke of their burden,
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

⁵ For all the boots of the tramping warriors
and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

⁶ For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named

Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷ His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.

He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onwards and for evermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Luke 2.1-14 [15-20]

²In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. ⁸ In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah,* the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host,* praising God and saying,

¹⁴ 'Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

Post Communion Prayer for 24th December 2021

Eternal God, for whom we wait,
you have fed us with the bread of eternal life:
keep us ever watchful,
that we may be ready to stand before the Son of man,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

Christmas Day

Collect for 25th December 2021:

Eternal God, who made this most holy night
to shine with the brightness of your one true light:
bring us, who have known the revelation of that light on
earth,
to see the radiance of your heavenly glory;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Readings for 25th December 2021:

John 1.1-14

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life,* and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. ⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.* ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own,* and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the

flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son,^{*} full of grace and truth.

Post Communion Prayer for 25th December 2021

God our Father,
in this night you have made known to us again
the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:
confirm our faith and fix our eyes on him
until the day dawns
and Christ the Morning Star rises in our hearts.
To him be glory both now and for ever.

Sunday 2nd January

Collect for 2nd January 2021:

Almighty God,
in the birth of your Son, you have poured on us the new light
of your incarnate Word,
and shown us the fullness of your love:
help us to walk in his light and dwell in his love
that we may know the fullness of his joy;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Ephesians 1.3-14

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in
the heavenly places, ⁴just as he chose us in Christ^{*} before the

foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight ⁹he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, ¹⁰as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance,* having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, ¹²so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; ¹⁴this* is the pledge of our inheritance towards redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

John 1. 10-18

10 He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own,* and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son,* full of grace and truth. ¹⁵(John testified to him and cried out, 'This

was he of whom I said, “He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.” ’) ¹⁶From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son,* who is close to the Father’s heart,* who has made him known.

Post Communion Prayer for 2nd January 2021

All praise to you,
almighty God and heavenly king,
who sent your Son into the world
to take our nature upon him
and to be born of a pure virgin:
grant that, as we are born again in him,
so he may continually dwell in us
and reign on earth as he reigns in heaven,
now and for ever.

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Readings for next Sunday:

Isaiah 43.1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8.14-17; Luke 3.15-17, 21-22



***Worshipping God,
Growing in Faith,
Serving the Community.***

Carol Singing in Marketgate:

Thank you to all from St Paul’s who sang carols in Marketgate on the morning of Saturday 11 Dec and helped to raise a total of £331.11p for the Lancaster and District Homeless Action Service Christmas Shelter.

Christine and Arton Medd

The Omicron Variant:

The Church of England has issued new guidelines for us to use to ensure that our services are as safe as practicable for all to attend. We have reviewed these and can confirm that the steps that we have in place - sanitising on entry, wearing of masks, ventilation, the one-way system, communion in one kind, singing wearing masks - are still appropriate for the uncertain situation we now face. In line with Government guidance please do consider taking a free NHS Lateral Flow Test (LFT) if you are feeling any Covid symptoms.

Within the Church we believe that everyone is known and loved individually by God and that as many members within one body we are called to be responsible to and for one another, respecting the more vulnerable whose suffering is our suffering (1 Corinthians 12:12-27). Where we are now means we are being asked to take even more personal responsibility around coronavirus. If we all do this as a church family, we can enable as many as possible to join in worship.

Our Holy Communion services at 08.00 on Sundays and 09.15 on Thursdays allow for plenty of space for social distancing. There is no singing at these services. We hope that if you are feeling vulnerable or nervous at this time you may feel that these services would be appropriate for you.

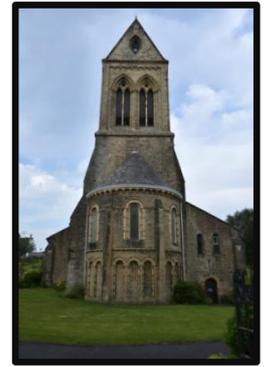
Contactless Giving in Church is now available.

Our machine will be at the back of church so that on your way out, rather than giving a cash donation, you could consider giving by card.



Church Tower Appeal:

If you would like to make a donation but don't have access to the internet then you can send a cheque to the Parish Office, St Paul's Parish Hall, Scotforth Road, Lancaster, LA1 4TS – please write 'Tower Appeal' on the reverse of the cheque. Or if you contact us then we can let you have our bank account details to make a BACs transfer. Please tell your friends and family about our appeal. If you have any questions about how you can donate or the building project then please contact either Jayne or Tony via the Parish Office.



Parish Office Closure:

The parish office will close at 12 noon on Thursday 23rd December and re-open again on Tuesday 4th January. The telephone and emails will be monitored for urgent communications during this time.

There will be no Parish News next week and the next edition will be emailed on Thursday 6th January. We would like to wish everyone in the Parish a very Happy Christmas and best wishes for the New Year and to thank you for all your support during the year.

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- **VICAR:** Rev Dr Rebecca Aechtner –
- Tel: 749693; Email: vicar@stpauls-scotforth.org
- *Rest day is Friday – if you have an urgent enquiry then please contact a Churchwarden.*
- **PIONEER MINISTER:** Rev Claire Cooke:
- Email: Claire@stpauls-scotforth.org
- *Work days are Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday*
- **WARDENS:**
- Mrs Jayne Weatherill:
- Tel: 60597; Email: sjayneweatherill@gmail.com
- Mr Tony Walker:
- Tel: 382397; Email: walkerar@hotmail.co.uk
- **PARISH OFFICE:** The office is open Monday – Friday from 9.30am – 12 noon.
- Tel: 01524 843135; Email: office@stpauls-scotforth.org
- **BAPTISMS AND WEDDINGS:** Booking enquiries - please contact the parish office or
- Email: lifeevents@stpauls-scotforth.org
- **CHURCH WEBSITE:**
- <https://stpauls-scotforth.org>
- **FACEBOOK:** regular updates about life at St Paul's can be found: @scotforthstpaulschurch
- **INSTAGRAM:** @scotforthstpauls
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