

THE LINK

50p

January 2024

Tarporley Parish Magazine



Mary, Joseph and donkey
found plenty of warm
welcome in the parish over
Advent.

ANDREW P. DEAN

Dip N.T.C., C.G.L.I., A.V.C.M.

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PARISH DIRECTORY – TARPORLEY

Services See Calendar tab on the website or page 5 in 'The Link'

Weekday Service At St Helen's each Wednesday at 10.00am Holy Communion

Rector: Jim Bridgman, Rectory, High St, Tarporley CW6 0AG **01829732491**

Email: revjimb1017@gmail.com 07526243702

Tarporley: St Helen

Churchwardens Phillip Posnett 01829260251

Liz Neely email: neelyeliza@hotmail.com 07890470899

Treasurer Dave Smithson
email tarporleyparishtreasurer@btinternet.com

P.C.C Secretary Paul Emerson 01829733147

Cotebrook: St John and the Holy Cross

Wardens Walter Gibson
Peter Copland 01829732618

Eaton: St Thomas

Warden Amelia McCourty aemccourty@btinternet.com 01829 730155

Link Editor Andy Jobson 01829732437
email jobsonajpj@btinternet.com items for 'The Link' should
be emailed to the above by the 16th of the month.

Safeguarding Officer Liz Neely email StHelenssafeguarding@outlook.com

Contact points

Please do not hesitate to report cases of sickness, pastoral need to the Rector.

To make arrangements for a Funeral please contact the Rector. 01829732491

Done Room Booking Phillip Posnett 01829260251

To ask about Wedding arrangements, Baptisms or general enquiries

please contact our Rector Jim by email on

Email: revjimb1017@gmail.com

Website: www.tarporleyparishchurch.org

SERVICES FOR THE MONTH JANUARY 2024

January 7th

EPIPHANY

St Thomas	9.00am	Holy Communion
St Helen	10.00am	Holy Communion
St John	11.15am	Holy Communion

With "The Chalking of the Doors" at each service.

14th

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

St Helen	9.30am	Café Church
St Thomas	4.00am	Holy Communion

21st

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

St Thomas	9.00am	Holy Communion
St Helen	10.00am	Holy Communion
St Helen	4.00pm	Evensong

28th

THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE

St Thomas	9.00am	Holy Communion
St Helen	10.00am	Holy Communion
St Helen	4.00pm	Messy Church

Messy Church meets in the Done Room
behind St Helen's Church.



February 4th

THE SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE LENT

St Thomas	9.00am	Holy Communion
St Helen	10.00am	Holy Communion
St John	11.15am	Holy Communion

Each Wednesday at 10.00am at St Helen's: Holy Communion.

Follow us on Facebook:-Search:- [facebook.com/ParishOfTarporley](https://www.facebook.com/ParishOfTarporley)

If you have time, please stay for refreshments after the service

Every Sunday at St Helen's

1st and 4th Sundays at St Thomas'

1st Sunday of the month at St John's



The Rector Writes:-

January is a time for fresh starts and resolutions. As the new year dawns, it is a natural time to take stock, to look back to the past year and ahead to the new, and discern if there are any habits or changes to make. Sometimes that can be focused around particular goals (to lose weight or save money), while at other times it can be about starting new, more life-affirming habits. What are our resolutions as a church and a parish? What are the challenges we are to set ourselves, or habits to cultivate?



Over the last two years, you may remember that each Epiphany I have introduced the 'chalking of the doors'; this is a short, simple tradition originating in Eastern Europe, whereby chalk was blessed on the feast of the Epiphany (when we remember the journey of the Magi or wise men, to Jesus), and then used to mark the door of a house or church.

This symbolises prayer for Christ's blessing on the homes of his people, as well as the Christian's willingness to offer hospitality to the Magi on their journey, and, by extension, to welcome all visitors in the name of Christ.

'Celebrating Christ's Appearing',

Gordon-Taylor and Jones, pp.50-1

Last year, as well as chalking the doors of each church, I also visited both our church schools to chalk the doors there, and encouraged you all to take a piece of chalk and chalk your own home.

Although all the other go-to resolutions are helpful and well meant, perhaps the most long-lasting and effective resolution we could make for 2024 is a commitment to praying for God's continuing blessing on our homes/community/schools/churches, and a resolution to offer the generous hospitality of God to everyone. A prayer to acknowledge our blessings, and in turn to be a blessing to others.

I wonder what we would see if we look back at the end of 2024 if everyone in our churches had committed to pray each day for God's blessing on our parish (for growth in a love and knowledge of God, a growth in the number of people worshipping regularly, a growth in our finances, for our mission projects and building works in the Done Room, for the work of our church schools), and for a deeper sense of hospitality in our homes and churches? What impact might that make?

Despite what the Church and individual Christians have preached in the past (and some do still today) no one is excluded from the love of God: can 2024 be the year that we put it into practice?? When we pray, we are changed, and open ourselves up to see God at work, and to potentially be the answer to our prayers...So will you join me in making this resolution for 2024 – to commit to pray each day for God's blessing on this parish, and the opportunity to show God's hospitality in different ways??

You might like to use this prayer:

Generous and hospitable God,
we pray for this parish to mirror your love and welcome to all.
Open our doors, open our arms, open our hearts
to embrace all those around us this day in the name of Jesus.
Deepen and challenge our faith, grow your church, remind us of our reliance
on you,
and in the power of your Spirit send us out to share your good news in our
community.
Amen

20 + C + M + B + 24

If you wanted to chalk your door at home, pick up a piece of chalk from church on Epiphany and use the following words:

*Say the words in italics and **chalk the letters and numbers in bold.***

The three wise men

C	<i>Caspar</i>	
M	<i>Melchior</i>	
B	<i>and Balthasar</i>	<i>Followed the star of God's Son who became man</i>
20	<i>Two thousand</i>	
24	<i>And twenty four years ago</i>	
++	<i>May Christ bless our home (Christus Mansionem Benedicat)</i>	
++	<i>And remain with us through the year</i>	<i>Jim</i>

Eco-Church update:-

Taking care of the churchyard *and* nature at St John's.

As part of our eco-church project the St John's committee have been thinking about ways to improve the balance between keeping the churchyard neat and tidy for visitors and providing food and habitat for wildlife. Taking advice from Cheshire Wildlife Trust, Caring for God's Acre and A Rocha, we are trying out some new ideas which we hope will meet the needs of all the churchyard users, large and small.

We have learned that to help nature it is best to have a mix of grass lengths – short, medium and long - so that flowers can grow and small creatures have shelter and food. So we are trying out a new mowing regime to this effect. We have selected one area where there are no graves, the north bank alongside Utkinton Lane, to be our 'long grass' area. This year we let it grow from spring through to August, when it was cut hard back and prepared for planting and sowing wildflowers.

With a grant from Utkinton and Cotebrook Parish Council (UCPC), a team of volunteers – Marian Atkinson, Judith and Brian Walters, Jane Thompson and Ian Wright- had raised plants from seed this year. Over 300 knapweed, bird's foot trefoil, rough hawkbit and ox-eye daisy were planted out, and yellow rattle (to control the grass) and red clover was sown. Now we have to wait to see what appears next year! We are hoping to attract bees and butterflies as well as other insects, birds and small mammals.



The group planting wildflowers in the Churchyard grounds.

Interestingly we have seen several wildflowers coming up where we have left the grass to grow – they have been there all the time but never given the chance to flourish.

As well as wildflowers, the support from UCPC paid for two bird boxes to go up in the churchyard. They have not been used as yet but we had swallows in the porch which was great.

As the mowing year drew towards a close we had a tidy-up day on September 30th when a group of volunteers from the church and village braved the miserable weather to tidy graves, weed the path, trim and prune unruly plants. Our thanks to Peter Copland, Les Atkinson, Nick Parker, Bill Spiegelberg, Valerie and Alan Hague for their sterling work and to Marian Atkinson for providing a wonderful cake to go with our welcome hot drinks. Our thanks also to Josh Quinn and James Thomas, our grass cutters, for working with us on the new regime.

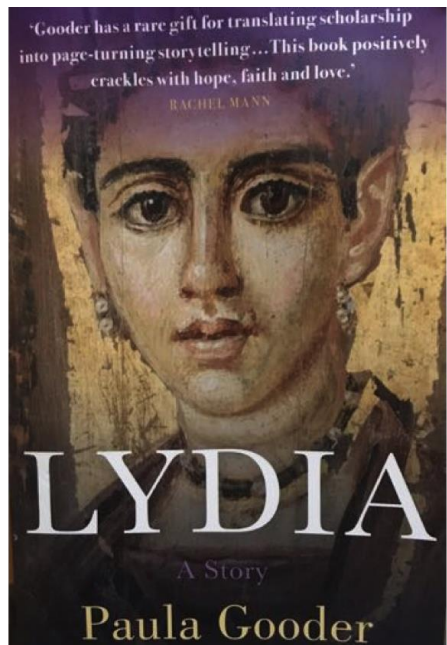
Walter Gibson

Walter has also reviewed

'Lydia' by Paula Gooder

I don't know about you but I often choose a bottle of wine by its label. This method doesn't usually apply to books but in this case I was drawn to it by the cover: the portrait of an unnamed young woman, dating from around 120 - 140AD. There is something about her gaze coming to us across the centuries that made me curious.

(Continued Overleaf)



The book itself is a portrait of a different woman called Lydia who lived in Philippi in North-Eastern Greece during the early days of the spread of Christianity. She is mentioned in Acts 16:11-15 as a dealer in purple cloth who is converted through meeting Paul, and who invites him to stay at her house. That is all the Bible has to tell us about her. Paula Gooder, who is one of today's foremost New Testament scholars and writers, takes us back to a time ten years after Lydia's conversion (early 60s AD) to pick up the story in the Roman colony of Philippi.

Through her imagination and scholarship, she brings together a cast of characters whose lives may well have been intertwined with Lydia's: these include her household slaves, her chief dyer, a slave girl she rescued, a jail-keeper, and the centurion who crucified Christ. We read about their struggles with faith, the perils and hostility facing early Christians, and how Paul, even though he was in prison in Rome, was able to help them because of his own journey and what he had learnt. She sets the context for his Letter to the Philippians and helps us understand the impact it must have had on those first readers.

Purple, by the way, signified wealth and status, and was in huge demand by the Roman elite of the day. But as you will see, it did not guarantee an easy life for Lydia. In some ways, it seems a miracle that the early church survived and grew, if Philippi is anything to go by: local hostility, threats of violence, many questions about what they believed and no one to ask or New Testament to consult. Yet survive it did through the witness of people like Lydia and her friends in Philippi: ordinary people trying to follow in 'The Way', trying to make the story of Jesus their story.

Walter Gibson

Register:- We congratulate and pray for those recently married:

Thomas Williams and Lois Cadwallader

We commend to God and pray for those who mourn:

Barry James



Finally: As we start out again on a new 584 million mile annual journey around the Sun this year, here are some pictures capturing events in our Parish in 2023.

On the 12th February we met in St Helen's for our first Café Church.

Pews had been turned (but not as in the Temple: Matthew c21-v11-13), tables had appeared.

We fetched our coffees and croissants, sat around the tables, read the newspapers provided and we talked!



As we ate our croissants and drank our coffee we discussed:-

How love is reflected, experienced and demonstrated in our world. In, by and for God, ourselves (me), and others. Having deliberated; we noted key thoughts on *Post It* notes displayed them (appropriately) on the columns supporting St Helen's.

May 2023 Along with hundreds of other communities in the UK and around the World Tarporley Parish joined in with the celebrations, special services and party spirit as King Charles III was crowned our monarch at the beginning of May 2023.



The Coronation street party on Tarporley High Street by St Helen's Church

Warm Space.

The 'Warm Space' gatherings are held on Wednesday mornings St Helen's at 10.30am continue. At one of the meetings magistrate Andy Emmerson gave an interesting talk to the small but engaged group.



St Thomas' Day

In July we celebrated St Thomas' Day at The Drays in Eaton.



All Souls Day

And then, in November, at the All Souls Service we remembered the loved ones who formed such a large part of our lives but who are no longer physically with us.

Each lighted candle and inscribed small pebble representing very special and personal memory.

Tarporley War Memorial Hospital

A quick reminder of the new services to be offered from Tarporley War Memorial Hospital (Phase 1.) (Late Summer /Autumn2022)

The hospital will become a rural hub for the following:-

- Rapid Response Team enabling people to receive care and rehabilitation in their own homes.
- REACT Hospital at Home Team enabling improved access to patients in crisis who might otherwise need to go to hospital to receive treatment in their home.

For further information or queries please email
fundraising@tarporleyhospital.co.uk

Tarporley Flower Club

*Members of the Tarporley Flower Club
invite you to join them at their monthly*

meeting which is held at the

***Tarporley Community Centre between
1.30 p.m. and 3.30 p.m.***

***on the first Tuesday of each month
(except in January when the meeting is held
on the second Tuesday.***

There is no meeting in August).

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Volunteer to help older people in Tarporley!.

Working to reduce loneliness and isolation, Tarporley OPAL Club runs every Thursday with a hot lunch, entertainment and fun activities. We are looking for new volunteers to join our friendly team in a range of roles, from chatting and helping with activities, to driving or running errands.

No experience is necessary, we care a lot more about a smile and a desire to help others. To find out more, contact janet.handley@opalservices.org.uk

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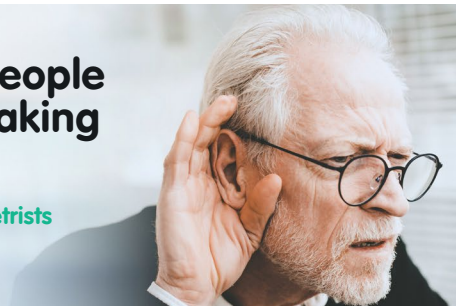
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