



*We can't bring you GRAPEVINE but we
can bring you an Offshoot*

Welcome

March - April 2023



Poynton Parish Church

Dear Friends,

We've been moving through a journey from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday over the last weeks. A journey that begins with self-examination, remembering Jesus' temptation and will sing forth in loud alleluias on Easter morning with the good news of victory over sin and death.

This year our focus in sermons on Wednesdays and Sundays has been on 'Worship in the Wilderness', based on resources from Engage Worship. It has provided an opportunity for us to think about themes like solitude, simplicity, sorrow and lament – reminding ourselves that even in life's hard times God promises to be with us. The other significant thing that has been happening at St George's in the past few weeks is The Bible Course – over 100 people have been journeying together through the whole story of the Bible. Each week there have been videos to watch, questions to discuss, opportunities for quiet reflection and Bible readings for each day in-between sessions. The challenge is set to us to be those who are constantly being shaped by God's word, being guided in our words, thoughts and actions.

One of the opening, or 'gathering' prayers from 'Worship in the Wilderness' says this:

God, we may come to you dry, discouraged,
feeling frail or powerless.
But we come believing that you have
the words of eternal life.
Speak to our dry bones,
may your Word and your Spirit give us life,
and empower us to speak truth
into this world you love. Amen.

It is my prayer that whatever you are facing this year you would know the life giving power of God's word, the Bible, and his Holy Spirit at work in your life. And I invite you, if you are able, to join in with our worship over this Easter season – declaring the good news of a risen and reigning Saviour!

Wishing you a very happy Easter,

Yours in Christ,

Matthew

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

These who have recently received baptised:

- 19/02/23 Ronnie Dobbin
- 26/02/23 Carter Edward Stuckey
- 26/03/23 Olivia Anna Moore



These who have recently been married :

- 31/12/22 Thomas Crank and Hollie Maddocks

The family and friends of those who have recently died:

- 23/11/22 Betty Waterhouse aged 95
- 12/01/23 Nancy Josephine Hallworth aged 92
- 10/02/23 Clifford Herbert Pooley aged 95
- 16/01/23 Nola North aged 84
- 27/01/23 Jillian Martin aged 81



Annual Choir Christmas meal

If it's February then it probably is time for St. George's church choir to celebrate Christmas! We are all so busy over the actual Christmas season that it is nearly always February before we can find a date when we are all available. This year was no exception and so on Thursday 9th February we gathered at Hazel Grove Golf Club.

This was a new venue for many of us and we had to trust our satnavs as we wound our way up a long dark narrow lane leading off the A6. It was worth the journey and we all enjoyed a lovely meal and fellowship. It is traditional for members to give a bit of a "turn" and we all enjoyed amusing poetry readings from various sources then folk singing led by Carol Ball and her guitar. The choir thanked Maureen for organising the evening and she was presented with flowers on behalf of everyone by Ann Pape. Don't forget, if you enjoy singing and Christian fellowship come and join us at a Thursday choir practice, Catherine would love to see you and you would be welcomed by everyone.

Elaine Sanderson

Ladies night

If it was a bit noisy outside the Social Trattoria in Park Lane on Friday night, apologies from the ladies of St. George's! approximately 20 of us were "on the town" enjoying a lovely meal and catching up on all the parish news. Thank you Kate, Alison, Val and the team for organising this enjoyable evening of Fellowship and Christian friendship.



Elaine Sanderson



Living Well

Living Well is our group which welcomes people living with dementia and their carers, as well as some older folk, living on their own, who enjoy coming for the company. We meet once a fortnight on a Tuesday afternoon from 2.15 to 4.15 in the church hall, offering friendship and fun through various activities.

We always begin with a sing-song, facilitated by our excellent pianist, Sylvia, and led by our resident choir, principally Catherine and Jeannette and accompanied by members on percussion. Dave is our M.C. and regular quiz master and bingo caller and we generally have a craft activity (sometimes involving cake), table games and occasionally more physical games among which the parachute is the most popular. Each session ends with a “ thought for the day” led by Colin.

We have 23 regular attendees and a wonderful team of 12, who set up the hall, serve refreshments, lead activities and, most importantly, chat to and befriend those who come.

Stephanie Rookwood

Living Well takes place on alternate Tuesdays to complement other memory loss groups in the area.

11th and 25th April

9th and 23rd May

6th and 20th June.....

and every other Tuesday thereafter.

St. George’s Church Hall, Poynton, 2:15-4:15pm

Women’s Breakfast - Saturday 15th April 2023



"We shall be having the next Women's Breakfast on Saturday 15th April, where we are excited to welcome Laura Sanlon as our guest speaker. Laura is a missionary, recently "adopted" for support by our church family.

Laura served as a missionary in Spain for 27 years in local churches and nationally for the Federation of Independent Evangelical Churches. She developed the National Youth Ministry, led

overseas mission trips for Spaniards and became Director of ‘Misión Posible’, a Bi- annual mission’s Congress.

In 2016 the Lord guided her to serve in Nairobi, Kenya, training Kenyans for cross cultural mission. She was there until Covid and its impact meant the ministry was no longer viable. Laura is now based at home in N.Ireland and serves with Latin Link and Lausanne Europe carrying out research in both the UK and Europe. She is also a volunteer chaplain serving in a hospital and hospice."

Kate Swires-Hennessy

Who Does what?

Jenny Cooke meets Brian Clarke - Groundsman and Verger

So often it's Brian who's the first welcoming face people see when they come to St George's, perhaps for a wedding or a funeral. "I make sure the church is prepared and tidied," says Brian, "and am present as people arrive and leave. If I can, I'll smooth their way especially if they aren't used to coming into Church."

Brian works each morning, largely on maintenance in the churchyard and grounds, Indeed this interview began at the back of the car park amongst the loppers, secateurs, ladder and a pile of branches which were all safely cordoned off, whilst Brian and a volunteer were busy cutting the back hedge.



"There's always something to do," says Brian, "and I'm grateful to the volunteers." Many of us will have spotted Jake who helps Brian on Monday mornings, while Bob looks after the Garden of Remembrance. Grass is kept tidy round the graves and Brian uses a strimmer where possible. "In Spring and Summer grass cutting is like the Forth Bridge," Brian says. "I just do my best in the time available." When walkways are wet, icy or covered with leaves he keeps the main paths and entrances as clear as he can, and especially the steps.

Brian sees quite a lot of wildlife whilst he's working: foxes, badgers, squirrels, but not many birds, apart from blackbirds, rooks and crows. There is the daily roost of the hundreds of jackdaws/rooks into the top of the trees. This is quite a sight and sound with all their calls as they settle for the night. Brian has noticed ladybirds too which hibernate in the tower and on the grave stones. He tends to leave them alone, especially if they and their larvae are nestled in the ivy.

Yet Brian has a job to do inside the Hall as well. He's rescued the washing-up rota team before now in the kitchen when the water's gone cold or the washing-up liquid disappeared! He regularly checks the heating and the floors near the entrance, although the cleaners do come in on Thursdays and our volunteer team cleans on Mondays. He's on the list as a key holder and very occasionally has been called out at night when the alarm's gone off. Brian also checks the fire alarm system. "And," he says, "I share the job of winding the church tower clock with the bell ringers, climbing up those stairs to the clock-winding room which is just above the bell-ringing room."

Brian and Chris are both volunteers. While Chris helps at Bright Stars toddler group, Brian is on hand to help clear up toys afterwards. He takes a turn volunteering at Living Well and enjoys playing Bingo with those who come. As for hobbies he and Chris go walking as a family when they can. They love music of all types and spending time with the wider family. Brian also

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enjoys coming to the Wine Society.

“I really like the variety and flexibility in my job,” says Brian. “I can plan my own week and no day is the same. It’s great to meet people in the grounds and the work keeps me fit. During Covid I retired from my afternoon job at the Orthodontics Laboratory so now I can concentrate on the morning job here.” Brian first heard about the job when Rob McLaren arrived as vicar in 2005. He and Chris had started coming to services with Emma who was getting married in church. “I always went to church when I was a lad,” he says. “Then when Rob came I got confirmed and we’ve stayed ever since. “And,” he adds, “I do enjoy attending my Home Group. ‘It’s such a help to meet, read and pray together in a small group.”

But what about when it’s really frosty, cold, snowing, lashing with rain or indeed, boiling hot? Brian laughs. “It is a very weather dependent job,” he says, “but I can always find something to do inside. And at least if it’s raining I can see if a gutter needs cleaning!” On the serious side Brian has realised that no one person can keep on top of things all the time. “I’ve learned not to worry about it but to simply to look out for what needs doing and then get on with it,” he says.

People say that Brian and his welcoming smile are the face of the church to regulars and visitors alike. “It’s a great job,” he says, “and I really enjoy it. There’s a wonderful staff team in the office too and the church is a very good employer.” It works two ways though: we at St George’s are so blessed to have such a cheerful and hard-working groundsman and verger. Thank you, Brian, for all you do. We really do appreciate it.

Brian can be contacted through the Office: 01625 879277

Jenny Cooke



Snow at Morning

The flutter of snowflakes
Fall soft, like down feathers,
On hard urban pavements.
Smudge over the harsh lines
Of wallscapes and kerbside
With winter's white paintbrush.



Snow's comforting blanket
Enfolds all earth's noises
In breath holding stillness.
The pulse of the city
Is stalled for a heartbeat
Till morning awakens.



A scatter of crystals
Bejewel the roof slopes
And skeleton branches,
Transforming each surface
With wedding cake frosting,
Confection of bride dreams.



Then, freed from the confines
Of dressing and breakfast,
The children come, shouting,
In rainbow bright woollens,
To mark with their footprints
God's gift of creation.
Audrey Lowe

The Magic of being a 1ST Poynton Brownie

1st Poynton (St. George's) Brownies have been enjoying some really entertaining, interesting and fun-filled meetings.

During the last few months, they have made very creative crafts, held a sponsored silence with the £342 raised being split between Cancer Research and JDRF. They sang in Church at one of the Carol Services, and enjoyed a fabulous time at their professional disco held in the Hall. Apart from the disco, the girls joined in dancing competitions, played games, including limbo dancing and had lots of fun with the snow machine. Santa visited armed with gifts for everyone.

The New Year started off with an easy sewing challenge and then a whole evening dedicated to the Chinese New Year. They heard about the Chinese Zodiac Story, and which Chinese zodiac sign they were born under, made a Year of the Rabbit craft, played three games which Chinese Brownies play, and tried to scoop up sweets with a pair of chop sticks!

During the rest of the term, the girls will be having fun with Fajitas, making milk masterpieces, learning lots of skills to enable them to complete the "Skills for my Future" theme award. An evening will be spent on hearing about people's jobs, they will be "beating the robot", learning how mobile calls and texts are sent around the world and decide on items they need or want. Hopefully a number of Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards will be completed during the forthcoming term. All this plus lots of games and fun, with some singing thrown in.

If you would like more information about joining Brownies, please contact firstpoyntonbrownies@btinternet.com

Alyson Jarvis.