



# In Touch

St Margaret's Church, Burnage

Harvest 2019

## Where do all the flowers go?

What happens to your Harvest gifts of food and flowers after the Harvest Festival? At St. Margaret's we have a long tradition of dressing the church with all sorts of wonderful food items and flowers. Back in 1888 in the tenth edition of the Parish magazine, it says: ***'The Harvest Thanksgiving Service was held on Thursday evening, Sept. 27<sup>th</sup>, under very favourable circumstances. The weather had not broken, although as it proved we had reached the end of the spell of sunshine which did so much to revive the spirits of the farmers. Contributions of corn and flowers came in great abundance and these together with the newly finished decorations made the church look more beautiful than ever.'***

These days along with the flowers our food items don't come from the local farmers but from the local shops in various packets and tins. Nothing is wasted. The gifts we receive of fresh food will go to the soup kitchen which is run by Manchester Cathedral. All of the

tinned and packets of food will be taken for distribution from our local Food Bank in Burnage. All of the money that people donate at Harvest will go to the St. Peter's Levenshulme Night Shelter to provide hot evening meals and breakfasts for about ten asylum seekers during the cold winter months.



The flowers which always look so beautiful in church are taken out to people who we know have been bereaved this year. Come and join us this Harvest as we celebrate and bring your gifts as a thanksgiving in the knowledge that your gift will be given to people who really need it.

**St Margaret's Church Website - [www.stmargaretsburnage.org.uk](http://www.stmargaretsburnage.org.uk)**

**Office Tel: 0161-432 4606**

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# The Magic Words

In the polite culture of these Isles, it is instilled into us from a very early age the importance of saying “please” and “thank you”. Harvest is a time for thankfulness. As most of us are detached from the growing process and are used to our foods being available all year round, we can forget the hard work that goes into making all this food available to us. By this time of year, most harvests in Britain are in and farmers are preparing for next year. It is good to stop and be thankful for all we have; to appreciate farmers, processors, transporters and supermarkets and shops for their hard work. Few of us will find ways of saying “thank you” directly to them. People of faith should of course be thankful to the Lord of the Harvest, the God who provides rain and sun and all the conditions to grow our food. Come and join us to thank God at our Harvest

Thanksgiving service on 6th October at 10.30am.

But there is more to this. Being thankful creates in us an attitude of gratitude that

can permeate through us and bless others. It helps us to be positive about life and mindful of how others make life better. Saying “thank you” and being appreciative to someone else can transform them and they can pass this on to others. So make a list of what you are thankful about. Use the magic words “thank you” to all those you can and see the difference in you and others.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Patt'.



## Thank You

### Colossians 3: 14

*‘Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. <sup>15</sup> And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.... And be thankful.’*

# AL-ANON: a life story

By "D" Al-anon Burnage

When I took my husband to his first alcoholics anonymous meeting in the late 80s I was told that I needed to go to Al-anon (a support group for partners of alcoholics): in other words to focus on my own life! At that time, I thought that his drinking was the real problem; I was filled with anger and hate at him and didn't really believe things could ever improve. I was so broken and lost and didn't know who I was. But I took their advice and started to attend 4 or 5 meetings a week, sometimes getting 2 buses as I was so desperate to change and get well. People in the meetings showed me ways in which I could take charge of my own situation. It hadn't occurred to me that I had the choice of changing things as I always laid the blame for the situation on my husband. Eventually I realised that they were right, and they certainly looked a lot happier than me. Slowly, slowly the message started to sink in as Al-anon's gentle process unfolded gradually, one day at a time (sometimes one hour at a time!). I eventually realised that my behaviour was much worse than my husband's in many ways and it was affecting our children and the people around me. The real work began when I started to take responsibility for my own behaviour. This

led me to get help through therapy. Along with the help and support of A l - a n o n

reminding me to be gentle and loving towards myself first,

I finally started to see the light at the end of the tunnel. I think I cried for a whole year at every Al-anon meeting but with a long phone list of loving and supportive members to contact, things started to improve.

Unfortunately, by this time we had lost our family home and divorce was not far behind. I can remember feeling I had lost everything and had nothing to live for. But now I could pick up the phone or go to a meeting or both. By helping me to focus on my life, understanding my limitations and building on my own strengths, Al-anon has given me a life I never thought possible.

There is nothing more healing than sharing my experiences with people who know and understand where I am coming from.

Meetings are at St. Margaret's on Mondays at 12.30pm - 2pm in the parish centre, come along and you will be made most welcome.



# The Lost Sheep

by Ruth Massey

We recently told the story of the Lost Sheep at our Toddler Group, abc. The story is a parable about Jesus bringing people who are 'lost' back into the Kingdom of Heaven. It prompted me to tell my own story about how 37 years ago, I was a 'lost sheep' - although at the time I didn't know it - until a friend brought me to St Margaret's Toddler Group when my second child was about a year old. It is often said these days that abc is the friendliest, most



welcoming toddler group in the area, and I certainly found that then. In those days mothers tended not to work when their children were young, and so people often came for several years until each of their children went into full time education, which meant I was able to get to know people really well. I immediately recognised that the leaders and large group of helpers had a quality about them which I found attractive. You never heard them saying unkind things about anyone and they were always available to offer help where it was needed - very unlike the other groups I had been to. It didn't take me long to find out what it was about these women that made them so different - they were Christians! I had been brought up a Roman Catholic, but had come to the conclusion that a lot of people who went to church acted no differently to anyone else; so what was the point?

The women who ran the toddler group at St Margaret's actually lived out their faith in their day to day lives. Yes, they went to church (a variety of different churches, actually) but their faith wasn't just for Sundays. I wanted to find out more, I wanted what they had, and, as I became closer friends with some of these Christians, they were able to explain to me what their faith meant to them. They talked about Jesus being in their lives - a concept I had never previously understood. I learnt that I was a sinner - not because I was a thief or a murderer, but simply because I put myself at the centre of my life rather than God. I was a lost sheep. But of course the good news is, just as in the story, the shepherd - that's God - found me and changed everything.

I learned the real meaning of the cross.- Jesus died on that cross to take



my punishment and he broke down the barriers I had built up between me and God, by going my own way! I asked Jesus to forgive me and asked him into my life and I have never regretted that day.

Life over those 37 years life has had its ups and downs, probably the lowest down being when our 3 year old grandson was diagnosed with leukaemia. People asked "How can you believe in a God who lets that happen to a child?" I personally don't know how I would have got through it without God and praying friends, who prayed when I couldn't pray myself. I truly believe that happiness - that is being at peace and contented with life and finding joy, comes from having Jesus in my life, and isn't hinged on everything being perfect in your life - which is actually a good thing, because life is rarely perfect!

And that's it - how I was found by the Good Shepherd when I didn't even know I was lost. As you read this, some of you may be feeling lost or not! Whatever - if you ever want to find out about how you can let the Good Shepherd find you contact us at St. Margaret's. We'd love to tell you!

(The story of the Lost Sheep can be found in the New Testament part of the Bible in Matthew chapter 18 verses 12-14 and Luke chapter 15 verses 3-7)



## Open Church



Do you ever feel like it would be good to have a place you can escape to for a few moments?

A place of peace and quiet, to be alone with your thoughts, or even to bring those thoughts to God?

St Margaret's Church will be open for everyone on the 4th Tuesday of the month, from 2 p.m. for about an hour, during term time.

There will be folk around to make you a brew, and chat if you want to talk.

Come and find sanctuary - our first Open Church will be on Tuesday 24th September at 2 p.m.

There will be a board out on Burnage Lane to indicate that we are open.

# Something Strange in the Neighbourhood



From mid-May this year, strange figures started to appear in and around Burnage. In one garden, an old man drinking tea and surveying his plants; in another a hiker, and in another a colourful lady with a stripey jumper and pink floppy hat. A figure



with a face made of green privets and a carrot nose sat on a balcony at Hodgson Court; on the building site near the Victoria pub, a patchwork figure with a blue bow tie and sunflower and blocks of wood for arms; in the Rectory garden, a vicar praying; at Burnage URC Bonnie the Brownie could be seen; in the hairdresser's a girl with pink hair and false eyelashes, cheery figures outside the schools and nurseries.....what on earth was going on? Well, of course, it was the 'Love Burnage' scarecrow trail, the brainchild of the Fun Day planning group, which engaged lots of people and groups in our community in making their own scarecrow. The scarecrows were judged on the Fun Day itself



on 15 June and the winners are shown in the photos, but we at St Margaret's were amazed and excited that so many people in our community had a go at making one and displaying it in their gardens, businesses or



schools. And of course, our 'Love Burnage' fun day took place (despite the rain), with amongst other things mini pancakes from the guiding groups, a bouncy assault course, school choirs, free barbecue and fascinating birds of prey display. Our aim, as always, was to welcome everyone in the community into the church and church grounds, to remind everyone that the God we believe in loves Burnage and welcomes and cares for all.

# One Holiday in Abersoch

by Ruth Miller

This summer, my husband Peter and I went to the Llyn Peninsula for a few days to celebrate our wedding anniversary. Whilst we were there we visited Abersoch, or more precisely the beautiful stretch of sand from the town of Abersoch towards the 'headland', beyond which lies the beach and village of Llanbedrog. Many readers will know this area from their own holidays in the area, in fact we even bumped into a couple of Burnage folks during our visit!

Abersoch holds a very special place in my heart because it was there that my family used to go in August when I was a girl to attend the beach mission (or CSSM) on the 'Warren' beach, and visiting the place again brought back many happy memories. I had been brought up as a Christian and went to church every week, fully involved with all the activities taking place for



a nine year old girl. But it was at the beach mission that I first realised that this was something for me personally, that I needed to ask Jesus Christ into my life for myself and not simply be 'covered' by my Christian family. At the mission, one of the things we did was to meet up early in the morning when everything was quiet in one of those spaces up in the sand dunes, to read the Bible and pray together in small groups. It was called 'Secret Service' and was to establish a habit of early morning prayer and Bible reading which is still important to me. It was after one of these morning meetings that I sat on the quiet beach on my own, knew that I believed in Jesus and decided for myself that I would always belong to Him. This year's visit to Abersoch turned out to be very special for me: it also reminded me of those wonderful beach missions that go on every summer all over the country and made me very thankful for everything that God has done in my life.

## Prayer for the streets of Burnage

Prayer is vital and every year we pray for every street in Burnage.

You can see when we will be praying for your street on our church website:

**[www.stmargaretsburnage.org.uk](http://www.stmargaretsburnage.org.uk)**

## Come unto Me...

Jesus said,

***'Come unto me all you who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest.'***



On Sunday 29th September at 3.00pm we will be having a special Healing Service open for all who wish to receive Christ's healing touch of peace and rest. Come and join us.

## New Arrival

St Margaret's welcomes a new arrival to the team. Duke O'Baku Torto will be joining us for the next two or three years during his ordination training. He will be on placement here for three days each week including Sundays. He will be training at St. Mellitus college in Liverpool on Mondays. We will give more details about Duke in the Christmas edition of In Touch.

## Burnage Holiday Special for Older People

This annual event was held for a week at the end of July with the theme "Summertime" with various activities, interesting talks, lots of chatting and good food. Whatever your taste there was something to enjoy. The day trip to Llandudno was a great success too. About 60/70 people came each day. We will be holding a similar event next year, so why not give it a try!

## Prayer Requests



**Prayer Request Slip -**  
**Would you like us to pray for you?**  
**Write your prayer below and drop it into our**  
**prayer box outside St. Margaret's**  
**on Burnage Lane.**



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