

Web address: <http://stjameswoolton.org>

MINISTER: Revd. Peter Hughes peter.hughes@methodist.org.uk
0151 364 0134

Peter's day off is Friday - messages and emails left on Fridays will not be received by him until Saturday.



NEWSLETTER – 9th January 2022

This Week's Collect

God our Redeemer, through Jesus Christ you have assured your children of eternal life and in Baptism have made us one in him. Deliver us from the death of sin and raise us to new life in Christ; for he is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**



First Sunday in Ordinary Time

Eternal Father, at the Baptism of Jesus you revealed him to be your Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit. Keep all who are born of water and the Spirit faithful to their calling as your people; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

UPCOMING PREACHERS

Sunday January 9th Steve Elliott (St James') Clive Rigby (phone)

PROGRAMMES YOU MAY ENJOY – Sunday 9th January

6:00 – 9:30 a.m. Radio Merseyside: Daybreak

Helen Jones brings you the Sunday magazine reflecting Merseyside's worlds of faith.

8.10 a.m. Radio 4: Sunday Worship. Wonder

As the new year unfolds the Rev Canon Ann Easter reflects on the theme of Wonder. Preacher: Dr Amy Orr-Ewing. Hymns and readings for the season of Epiphany. Producer: Jessie Bland

13.30 BBC 1 Songs of Praise: Jesus's Baptism

Sean Fletcher is in Liverpool to discover why baptism is so important to Christians and how Jesus's baptism is celebrated by different denominations at this time of year.

Minister's Message

A Happy New Year to you all. I hope that you had a Happy Christmas, although we are aware that for some this has been a time of illness and loss. We hope that those of you going through a difficult time will know the comfort and love of Jesus close to you. We pray for a more positive year in 2022 as we thank God for the ongoing efforts of the NHS staff working so hard to get us safely through winter. **God Bless Peter**

Pictures from Peter

Before Christmas I finished off telling you about my Sabbatical Adventures.

This week I took advantage of a sunny day to walk on the Leigh Branch of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. This runs from Wigan to Leigh where it connects with the Leigh Branch of the Bridgewater Canal.

The area used to be busy with mining but in recent years the former mines have led to subsidence, creating some lovely lakes known as "flashes". The most famous of these is Pennington Flash.

On one of the pictures, you can see Scotsman's Flash to the Left of the Canal. It was lovely to experience the quiet of this walk after the busy Christmas period. Even the cyclists were on their best behaviour, ringing their bells and slowing down as they passed me. I only saw one boat on the move.



WORSHIP AT ST. JAMES'

There are now 3 ways in which you can enjoy our Sunday morning services.

- By booking a place and attending St James'
- Via telephone
- Via Zoom

All details and information are below.

Please use the Zoom link below

Joining from 10.15 for a 10.30 am start – Steve Elliott

Either click on this link:

<https://zoom.us/j/5913455610?pwd=aVdZcFpaZVVaMDdsZ1BiR3lhRE1yQT09>

Meeting ID: 591 345 5610

Passcode: 12466

We hope to see you there.

If you want to listen in to the Service on Sunday, dial the above number, then PIN and listen in. You can chat up to 10.30, but when the service starts everyone will be “muted” to avoid feedback/noise.

**Also from St. James Church: - Invitation to Telephone Worship
(And every Sunday until the end of November)**

This Sunday our preacher will be Revd. Peter Hughes

To join us for a short (15-20 minutes) Act of Worship:

Between 2.20pm and 2.30pm on Sunday:

From your normal “landline” telephone: Dial: 0333-006-7775

On being asked, enter the following number, or “Pin”: 08 39 09 01

You will be able to chat with everyone else who joins until the service starts.

This Sunday’s Act of Worship, or short service, will comprise:

The Host for this service is Clive Rigby

Order of Worship:

- **Welcome and notices:**
- **Opening prayer (Host)**
- **Bible reading** (Kate Cook: Matthew 2 vs1-12)
- **Lord’s Prayer** (Host)
- **Talk or “mini-sermon”** (Clive Rigby)
- **Prayers** (Liz Hudson)
- **Grace and dismissal.** (Host)

COST: - The above number costs the same to dial as ordinary UK numbers – if you have “free minutes” from your telephone supplier then there will be no cost.

God Bless Graham Martin

Communications officer (and local preacher) St. James Church

[Call me on 0151-222-5832 or 07712-525239 if you have any questions.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Monday Fellowship - change of date

Dear All

With the Omicron version of Covid spreading so quickly at present and people being advised to work from home I suggest that it would be wise to postpone the Monday Fellowship to the end of the month, when hopefully things will be a bit better. I suggest that we meet on Monday 31st January at 2.30pm in Church.

Many Thanks Peter

PRAYERS

Dear Lord, it is my will to surrender to you everything that I am and everything that I'm striving to be.

I open the deepest recesses of my heart and invite Your Holy Spirit to dwell inside of me.

I offer you my life, heart, mind, body, soul, and spirit.

I surrender to you my past, present, and future problems.

I ask You to take hold over every aspect of my life.

I surrender to You all my hurt, pain, worry, doubt, fear, and anxiety, and I ask You to wash me clean.

I release everything into Your compassionate care.

Please speak to me clearly, Lord.

Open my ears to hear Your voice.

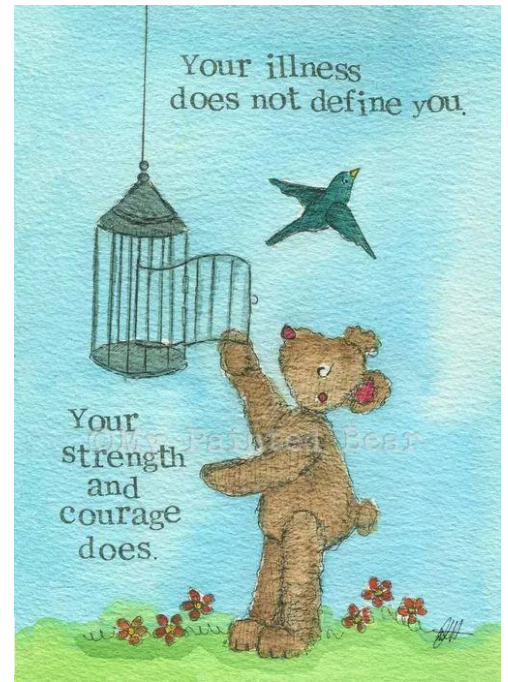
Open my heart to commune with You more deeply.

I want to feel Your loving embrace.

Open the doors that need to be opened and close the doors that need to be closed.

Please set my feet upon the straight and narrow road that leads to everlasting life.

Amen.



We continue to pray for Christine Salmon and her family, Margaret Peacop and her family Ken Kitchen, John and Sylvia Pagan, Pat Fagan and Arthur Evans.

We continue to pray for those who need our prayers at this time due to ill health, struggling with mental health and all difficult situations.

Eric Peacop and Gordon Salmon

Dear Friends

I am sorry to announce that both Eric Peacop and Gordon Salmon have both sadly passed away.

Gordon was a much loved and longstanding member of St James Church, who died peacefully after a long illness - during which he was lovingly cared for by his wife, Christine. There will be a quiet family Committal Service, which will be followed by a Thanksgiving Service at St James on a date to be announced. We hold Christine and her family in our thoughts and prayers at this sad time.

Eric was a man of deep Christian faith and we know that he rests in the arms of the Lord Jesus. We hold Margaret and all the family in our thoughts and prayers. A Thanksgiving Service at St James' will take place, on a date to be announced.

God bless Peter

Opening Prayer

Eternal One, we gather to worship trusting in your mercy and grace and believing that it is you who have called us here. May your name be blessed in all the world.

Hymn: STF17 With gladness we worship

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words

With gladness we worship, rejoice as we sing,
free hearts and free voices how blessed to bring.
the old, thankful story shall scale thine abode,
thou King of all glory, most bountiful God.

Thy right would we give thee -- true homage thy due,
and honour eternal, the universe through,
with all thy creation, earth, heaven and sea,
in one acclamation we celebrate thee.

Renewed by thy Spirit, redeemed by thy Son,
thy children revere thee for all thou hast done.
O Father! Returning to love and to light,
thy children are yearning to praise thee aright.

We join with the angels, and so there is given
from earth alleluia, in answer to heaven.
Amen! Be thou glorious below and above,
redeeming, victorious, and infinite Love!
George Rawson (1807-1889)

Let us pray together.

Living One, you are so much more than we can ever imagine. Your goodness, holiness, mercy and loving kindness are greater than we can comprehend. We kneel before your majesty and bow our heads in worship. As we seek to walk in your way and follow in the steps of Jesus, fill us with your Spirit and keep our hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of your Son that we may truly honour him in our lives and bring glory to your name. Amen.

Today's Gospel Reading: Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

Time to Reflect

In a world where even elected governments cling to power with an arrogance that is sometimes breath-taking, our reading today shows both John and Jesus modelling a humility that challenges all our assumptions.

John's ministry has reached out across the land. Everyone from the labourer in the field to King Herod has been affected. His message didn't pull any punches and it brought many people to the Jordan in search of baptism ... in search of cleansing and a new beginning. The whole experience filled them with expectation and hope. Who is this man? Could he ... is it possible ... could he actually be the Messiah?

John could have let them go on speculating and quietly basked in the glory, but instead he replies, 'not I ... I'm not worthy to untie the thong on his sandals ... but he is coming and you need to be ready.'

And so, in the closing days of John's ministry, Jesus comes to the Jordan asking to be baptised. He, who was so much greater and holier than John in John's eyes, submitted himself to John's ministry and accepted the baptism of repentance and cleansing.

Humility is something that we often get wrong. It's not thinking of yourself as the lowest of the low or assuming that everyone is better than you. We're all called by God and humility is about having

a right sense of yourself and of your calling. It's about knowing when God is calling you to submit and when God is calling you to stand your ground ... when to speak and when to be silent ... even when that makes you vulnerable. Neither John nor Jesus was afraid to speak up and be heard when their ministry required it, but neither of them was willing to step outside of their calling and promote themselves in the eyes of the people.

'Blessed are the poor in Spirit,' Jesus taught us ... or as one edition of the New English Bible puts it, 'How blest are those who know their need of God; the kingdom of Heaven is theirs.' (Mt 5:1)

Take a time to sit quietly

A time of prayer

Loving One, you have called us to pray for our troubled world. So today we hold before you those places where the effects of climate change are not just a theory but an everyday reality of life. We pray for those places where the land is rapidly disappearing into the sea, where wildfires and flooding are becoming annual events, where animals and people are dying because they are not adapted to the heat of summer. Help us all - leaders, businesses and ordinary people - to see and understand what changes we need to make and to have the will to make them.

We hold before you today those places where people suffer because of the actions of others ... through war, oppression, injustice, hatred, prejudice and neglect. (Choose a place that is on your heart and hold it cupped in your hands before God) May they know that they are not forgotten. Help us to recognize and enable those who have the voice and the strength to bring change to these places.

We hold before you today those who are struggling with life because of ill health, whether that be physical, mental or spiritual. We name those who are known to us and we pray for your strength to uphold them, your peace within them, your love surrounding them and your healing touch on their lives. May those who have the care of them have the wisdom, knowledge and compassion they need to be effective.

We bring all these our prayers in Jesus' name and we draw all our prayers for this day together in the Lord's Prayer.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father

Hymn: Listen to "I give you all the honour" by Carl Tuttle.

I Give You All the Honour – YouTube or sing a verse of a hymn that comes to mind

A prayer of blessing

Wherever you are today and whatever is happening in your life, as you turn to the Eternal One in worship and prayer may God bless you and keep you; may God look on you with grace and mercy; may God acknowledge you and give you peace. **Amen.**

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, 'I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire'

Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'



THIS WEEK'S CROSSWORD

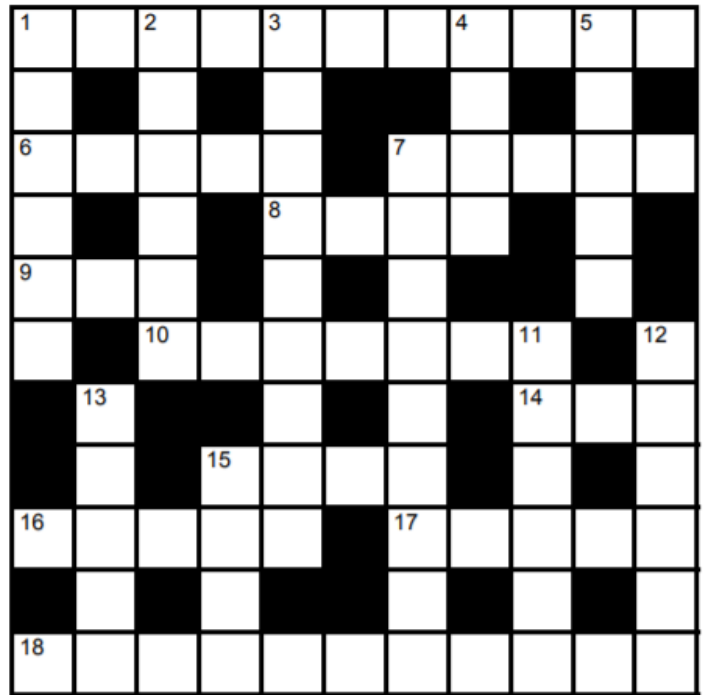
Across

- 1 Maybe bug in shrub, eating nothing initially, was not consumable? (7,4)
- 6 Meat found in Troas thrown away (5)
- 7 Quiet peer is a jewel (5)
- 8 King in rough sea they hear? (4)
- 9 Woman is envied, oddly (3)
- 10 Bank excluding Italian editor is forced out (7)
- 14 Lie disturbed old priest (3)
- 15 Caught seven dropping off five (4)
- 16 Praise officer after axe is returned (5)

- 17 Pick out God's chosen (5)
- 18 Sunday Devil working in a foolish way (11)

Down

- 1 Endlessly bore the German neighbour (6)
- 2 Primate wearing red gathered crops (6)
- 3 Make sense of alien going after injured printer (9)
- 4 Bishop with experience brought back creatures (4)
- 5 Asian Republic airways became lost overlooking Washington (5)



by Philologus

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- 7 Prince is one starting to release several hostages (9)

- 12 Unclean partly fulfil thyself (6)

- 13 Grown old and pale (5)

- 11 Support for champion (6)

- 15 Second cover moved sideways (4)

NEWSLETTER NOTICES NEXT WEEK



If you would like to share anything with your Church family in this newsletter including any birthdays, celebrations, or anyone to include in our prayers, please let me know.

Please send any messages to Jayne McLaren at

jayniemac@hotmail.co.uk

The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and he helps me. My heart leaps for joy, and with my song I praise him.

Psalm 28:7

