

ST PETER'S PRESTBURY NEWS

St Peter's & St John's September Newsletter

It's suddenly September and the time when children go back to school and young people start or return to University. The rain is returning and but hopefully won't put a damper on our last Wild Church of the season in celebration of the the Season of Creation.

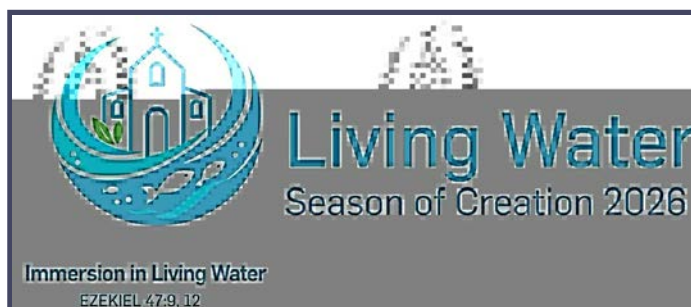
In Church life too we welcome a new term with all the many things beginning that make being part of St Peter's and St John's so good! There will be new opportunities to explore faith: on Monday evenings we will be Exploring again alongside our new group for those wanting to find out more about what it means to be confirmed. There will also be a new opportunity for young people to explore Confirmation on a Sunday morning too. In the warmth of Church life, with much to celebrate, new opportunities and good things happening it's important to remember that our faith doesn't protect us from the cold winds of life, but gives us strength, hope and a community to lean on as we journey through them.

Further afield, in the wider world it seems there is little new that is good and there are many things that are bad that seem to go on, and on. It reminds me of the perpetual winter described by C.S Lewis in the Narnia Chronicles. Lewis, a committed Christian, was describing in story-form some key theological truths. Narnia is in winter because Aslan is absent and the White Witch is in charge. The world is not as it should be, because people prefer to welcome evil (in all its multiple varieties) and to exclude God.

In our equivalent 'cold world', we as Church are the community where God in his love and purpose is present and there is some shelter from the cold wind. A good picture of church might be of an extended family gathered together in a room with a blazing fire in the hearth pouring light and warmth into the whole room. The room is a timeless place where no one is looking at their phones but old and young are sharing conversations, stories and food. For those strangers in the cold and night outside, looking in, the invitation to come in is always there. The door, when knocked, will always open, the welcome is always warm and the snow covered coat may be simply left, outside.

In this month's newsletter

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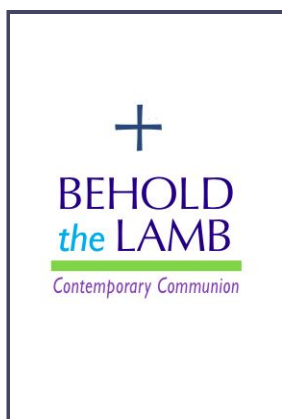


Church News Worship Patterns

Many people describe times when, during services at St Peter's and St John's, they have encountered the living God - in different ways, using different words and across different styles of worship. We are blessed to be able to offer many different worship opportunities to grow and deepen our faith whilst worshipping in this rich variety of ways. There will be some new opportunities to worship beginning in this season and some older favourites returning.

Following the different worship pattern during our August break, in September our services at 8.30am and 4.30pm at St Peter's, and 11.00am at St John's restart. Celtic Prayer, our evening gentle service in the Norman Chapel, also returns.

We all love the Behold the Lamb Service! One of the new things ahead is that once a month there will be an additional Behold the Lamb Communion Service at St John's led by Avril with Andrew and some of the music group there to provide the musical support. This is an opportunity perhaps for some folks from St Peter's to join with the St John's congregation and build new



relationships. On this Sunday, there will be a new more contemporary-shaped Holy Communion service at 10.30am at St Peter's.

Across other Sundays our monthly *Come and Sing Choir* service continues, and Young Church will still be happening but the week of the month will vary. Check in the monthly newsletter, weekly email, the Facebook page or ring the Office if you are unsure what's happening.

Across all our services Encountering God and Worshipping Together is at the centre, but this is not limited to certain musical styles or liturgical shapes. The beauty of Choral Evensong can be a doorway into divine encounter in the same way as the creativity of Breakfast Church or the gentleness of our Behold the Lamb services.

After the sad loss of two of our key choristers this summer, ensuring that Evensong remains an option is why we are looking to recruit new Evensong Choristers and so on 4 October there will be an opportunity for 'all and everyone' to come and sing Evensong to taste and see what it is like!

Exploring Jesus and Exploring Confirmation and Baptism

This term our Monday evening sessions begin again! Monday evenings are an opportunity to explore parts of Christian faith creatively and thoughtfully - often resourced by cake, worship and prayer. There is always something new to discover, something to take home and someone new to get to know. This term our Exploring Journey takes a new shape and *Exploring Jesus* and our *Exploring Confirmation* will run at the same time. We begin at 7.15pm for refreshments ahead of a 7.30pm start and will spend some time in common activity before moving to our different groups. The evening will close with worship together before we end by 9.15pm.

Exploring, learning and growing on a Monday evening is open to everyone - whether you have been a worshipper for a long time or feel like you are just beginning on your journey, our exploring together sessions are designed to help you grow in faith and encounter the living God, wherever you are.

If you would like to find out more about Preparing for Confirmation or Exploring Jesus: through the eyes of those who met him, ask Beverley or Patrick.

Monday 14 September 2.00pm Monday Fellowship Group 'Patrick's Sabbatical Story'

Everyone is very welcome to come and hear Patrick tell us about his sabbatical - where he went, what he saw and what God has been saying to him.

Is he glad to be back? Come and ask him!

The Monday Fellowship Group warmly welcomes people from any church, or from outside the church community. As our kitchen is being refurbished the meeting will be in church. Refreshments will still be served!

Next meeting: Monday 9 November - Christmas Crafts with Jean Harter in St Peter's Rooms.



Saturday 5 September 10.30am-4.00pm Norman Chapel Open Day



The Norman Chapel will be open to visitors this coming Saturday.

This will be the last of our Summer Saturday Open Days.

We are delighted that so many people, both friends from Prestbury and visitors from further afield have taken advantage of the five open days this summer to enjoy our lovely space, to pray, talk, or just absorb the chapel's peaceful atmosphere.

We will continue to hold a service of Celtic Prayer one evening a month in the Norman Chapel unless it gets too cold. Keep an eye out for the dates of these.

Watch out too for special events in the Norman Chapel in the run up to Christmas.

Christian Aid Week 2026

Thank you to everyone who donated, delivered envelopes, quizzed, bought raffle tickets, or helped in any other way: we raised £1870 this year, slightly down on last year but still a very good amount. 38% of that amount, just over £700, was raised at the quiz night which reflects a general trend across the country towards events and away from house to house collection as a major source of funds.

In recent months, Christian Aid has been doing valuable work in the Democratic Republic of Congo, helping to share public health messaging on Ebola and providing health centres with essential supplies. In the aftermath of the Venezuela earthquake, Christian Aid's partners there have been providing essential humanitarian supplies and psychosocial support to survivors. We can be sure that our donations will be put to good use.

Season of Creation

The ecumenical, worldwide *Season of Creation* runs from 1 September to 4 October; this is a special season when churches and congregations are called to pay special attention to the responsibility of humanity for the Earth and for all that lives upon it. In the Macclesfield area we are blessed with a committed team who put together a whole month of special events: services, walks, talks, bible study, meals, etc. There are calendars at the back of church, and the online version can be found [here](#). This year's theme is 'Living Water', very apt after a summer such as we have had! I would like to highlight a few events at our church and elsewhere:

- Saturday 5 September: regular monthly litter pick in Prestbury meeting at church
- Tuesday 8 September: "Hidden water" – a guided walk around Danes Moss
- Sunday 13 September: our own "Wild Church" service – come and find out more about Living Water
- Saturday 19 September: our parish walk to St John's, Adlington, where their café will be open!
- Also on 19 September, if you have energy after the walk, there is a River Bollin clean up in Riverside Park

All times and further details are on the calendar – let's all make the most of this special season to celebrate Creation and thank God for his gifts, pray for our environment and those suffering from climate injustice, and take practical action to protect nature close to home.

Hope in North East Cheshire

Many of you will be familiar with Hope in North East Cheshire which brings together 39 churches in the area, including St Peter's, encourages shared initiatives in mission and service and organises joint gatherings for worship and prayer. More information is available [on their website here](#). In June they organised a supporters' evening when we heard from a number of local initiatives, including Season of Creation (see above), Silklife Food Bank, Amplified Worship for young people, and Open The Book.

Open The Book is an exciting storytelling project where Bible stories are shared with children in a way that is fun, interactive and memorable. Volunteers go into local primary schools, and it sounds like a lot of fun for the volunteers as well as the children! They do need more volunteers and, if you are interested, there is an open morning on Thursday 17 September 9.30-12.30 at All Saints Church, Macclesfield SK11 8EL. If you wish to attend, please book via Dot or Cynthia at dotphillips@outlook.com or cynthia.crewe@virginmedia.com.

As we approach **Harvest**, it is also worth highlighting the difference in purpose between Silklife Food Bank and the **CORE Food Pantry** in Upton Priory. We will be supporting both with our harvest gifts at the end of September. Silklife Food Bank provides emergency food support for families and individuals at no charge but by referral only (e.g. from a GP, social worker or Citizens Advice). The Pantry does not require referral but people can apply to be members, and then they buy groceries for a small charge each week. The two projects work alongside one another to respond to different needs, and will welcome the contributions we make at Harvest.

Worship for families

There are many opportunities to worship as a family at St Peter's! There are times when we all worship together and times when we do things differently but all ages are welcome. 13 September will be our last Wild Church of the year and this is an opportunity for all ages to worship together outside in our beautiful Monastic Garden space. This means that Breakfast Church (our Service especially for families with children) will not return this month but breakfast will be back as usual in October! See October's Newsletter for more information or watch our usual posts on Social Media. There will also be Young Church on 20 September and our Harvest Festival will be on the 27th.

Thinking about a Creche?

One of the difficult questions in Church life is often how best we can support parents with the smallest children (those below Young Church age). Helping parents and children feel welcome at Church is a vital part of demonstrating God's love for them but often words of welcome on their own are not enough. I am reminded of the passage in James where our faith must be expressed in action. At the present time we are blessed with a good and growing number of small children in Church life and ensuring we meet their and their parents needs is now a priority. If you have ideas and suggestions or feel God might be calling you to be involved in this area of Church life, come and chat to me. Patrick.

This Month's Worship St Peter's, Sunday Worship

	8.30am	10.30 am	4.30pm
Sunday September 6th	Holy Communion	Holy Communion <i>Behold the lamb</i>	Cathedral Evensong
Sunday September 13th	Holy Communion	Wild Church	Cathedral Evensong
Sunday September 20th	Holy Communion	Contemporary Communion Young Church	Cathedral Evensong
Sunday September 27th	Holy Communion	Harvest Festival Come and sing Choir	Celtic Prayer

St John's, Sunday Worship

	11.00am
Sunday 6th	Morning Worship
Sunday 13th	Holy Communion
Sunday 20th	Holy Communion <i>Behold the lamb</i>
Sunday 27th	Morning Worship

Weekday Worship

Day and Time	Activity	Place
Monday 9.00am	Morning Prayer	St Peter's Rooms
Wednesday 10.30am	Holy Communion	St Peter's
Thursday 9.30am	Morning Prayer	St John's
2nd & 4th Thursday (in term time) 10.15am	Pram Service	St Peter's

Community News

Prestbury Bellringers' Annual Weekend Away 2026

In early July, a group of Prestbury Bellringers and Friends set out for a weekend in St Albans. The events started on Friday night as we gathered to ring at St Stephen's Church, N° 1 Watling Street in St Albans.

This was then followed by the customary curry at Amrit Indian Restaurant where we were joined by a local former ringer, friend of one of the party. When booking the hotel we had not realised we were so close to Knebworth and that the hotel would be full of Heavy Metal fans in Iron Maiden t-shirts.

On Saturday morning we gathered to start our tour of the area's churches starting at St Etheldreda church, Hatfield which is next to Hatfield House. This was a heavy ring of 10 to ease us in gently to the 7 towers of the day! We continued on to Essendon to a church with bells similar to our home tower of Prestbury. Then we ventured to Old Welwyn for lunch at a busy coaching inn. One of our ringers ended up as a garden feature when the pub furniture gave way and tipped him into the flower bed!

Next we went over to Hitchin to St Paul's Walden, whose church was confusingly dedicated to All Saints not St Paul. The church is where the late Queen Mother was baptised and is full of memorials to the Bowes Lyon family, who live nearby. The most challenging ring of the day was undoubtedly Wheathampstead where the bells are rung from the crossing in the middle of the church and the ropes are about 37 feet from ceiling to floor making them very difficult to ring well. Even our very youngest ringer managed to have a go with a little help. We did our very best and then retired for a well earned ice cream in the pretty village of Wheathampstead.

Fully refreshed we headed to St Leonard, Flamstead to ring at the lovely scenic village church. By now we were getting ready for our dinner but not before another lovely ring of bells at St Mary's Church, Redbourn, where we rang our method of the day Hertfordshire Doubles.

We had our evening meal at a family run Italian Restaurant in St Albans and discussed our most and least favourite towers of the day.

On Sunday morning there were two St Albans towers ringing. The first, St Peter's, was earlier and a short walk from the cathedral. The cathedral ringers meet at the base of the tower under the Rose Window to be escorted up the 160 steps to the ringing room. We then joined the cathedral congregation for a moving Eucharist service marking the end of the cathedral choir year and awarding medals for those who were moving up to the adult choir. It was also a poignant service as many of the lay clerks were departing the choir (however they were leaving with French flair as the music was from Vierne, Dupré and Widor).

Thanks to Nick, Richard and Graham for organising the tour and choosing a beautiful part of the country to tour around for our outing.



New Beginnings at The Hope Centre Macclesfield

In July we celebrated the 15th Anniversary of the Hope Centre. During this period the Team of Volunteers, Management and Trustees have worked, seeking to make a positive difference, living, loving and sharing within our community. Many individuals with diverse needs have received training in the Hope Centre and gone on to achieve employment. Most importantly for many their self-esteem, family lives and relationships have been restored. Supporters who were at the Thanksgiving Service, were moved by those who stood up and shared their testimonies with us all. For some months now the Trustees have been spending much time in discussion and prayer considering the future, feeling strongly that God was challenging us to stand at the crossroads and be guided by Him to choose the right way forward. There has also been a regular Sunday afternoon 'Call to Prayer' attended by people from as many as five different denominations. One person who felt called to attend these meetings with his family was Dan Blackman, who himself was seeking where God was calling him.

I am very pleased to announce that as a first step Dan Blackman will be taking on the role of Director, as of 8 September, working closely with Ruth and the Trustees as we develop a detailed plan, at this stage in its embryonic state. As many of you will know Dan has significant experience working in the community, notably successfully developing the Silklife Food Bank. This is an exciting fresh start, building on 15 years of the Hope Centre serving others in our community. The Hope Centre in North-East Cheshire will remain an independent charity but will be renamed '**THE BEACON**' which we believe will more clearly reflect our Mission & Purpose. As we enter this period of transition, developing the vision and preparing for the revelation of God's plan, prayer and financial support are vital. Please pray that God will continue to be our guide. The prayer times will continue Sunday afternoon (4-5pm) and Tuesday morning (10-11am). Please come and be part of the Team. Everyone is welcome. Bob Boland (Chair) On behalf of the Trustees.

Prayer Resources

How do you pray and how do you know what to pray for?

Parish Prayer Diary

First question: *What is the Parish Prayer Diary?* One way to describe it is a 'peach-coloured piece of A5 card that sits on the back shelf at Church'. The more important description is it is a diary that on each day of the month gives two things to pray for. One thing within the life of the Church and the other within our local community. We all have our own prayer lists, prayer apps, interests, ministries and concerns but as we pray together as Church for the same things on the prayer diary it means that as a church we are sharing in common prayer as well as individual prayer.

Second question: *Have you got a Parish prayer diary?*

Praying using the Newsletter

Our Prayer topics and resources in each monthly newsletter are additional to the Prayer Diary and these reflect what is happening in the world, the liturgical year or new developments in Church life.

Weekly Prayer topics

This month our prayer focus is on the world with four nations to pray for. Media reports rarely cover what is happening to Christians or the church in a particular nation so its difficult to know what to pray for other than a general petition for God to bless, support, protect etc. A very helpful App which gives information and specific prayer pointers as well as some stats about Christianity in the country as well more general information, is the *Operation World* App. Why not have a look at the app and follow this month's prayer for the countries below?

Week starting.... Sept 6th We pray for Morocco.

Sept 13th We pray for Nepal.

Sept 20th We pray for Nigeria.

Sept 27th We pray for Pakistan.

Praying for those who are sick

Michael Gandy

Steve Murphy

Les Manchester

Praying for those whose ashes are being interred

Jillian Priestley

Praying for those who have died

Audrey Bradley

Bill Warburton

Closing Thoughts

The Screwtape letters was another of CS Lewis's most famous books. In the book Lewis creates 31 letters to a 'young tempter' from a more 'senior evil entity' and through these letters Lewis reminds us as Christian disciples that we live in a spiritual battle and the temptations we face are not always obvious but may be subtle and devious. There is a 'temptation' in today's Church world to think it is only Conservative or Evangelical Churches that need to be concerned about such things. In our closing thoughts, Keith's poems remind us that the battle between good and evil is very real and that all Christians across the wide spectrum of traditions are equally engaged in the battle. In the first we hear evil's activity and in the second God's response.

Perfection dies

You have created Perfection.
I have rendered it imperfect
You saw that it was good
I made sure that it was bad

You created out of love
I uncreated out of malice

You look at your world and see tragedy
I look at my world and see triumph

Your power gave life to all things
My power has brought death to all peoples

You strove to cast me out of your creation
So I have cast destruction upon all that you created

I have undone each act that you have done
And I am by no means done with doing that

Perfection reborn

Silence! begone! you father of all lies
Your damned words shall soon be overcome

By my eternal Word
The story of Salvation has begun

When human loss shall be redeemed
And all my love shall be revealed

And all my people rise in bliss as one

Keith Ravenscroft

Newsletter Information

Church or community news to be included in the newsletter needs to be sent to the Parish Office or Vicarage by the last Tuesday of the month.