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St John's and St Luke's Together

St John's Church



OCTOBER

2026

60 pence

St Luke's Church

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Dear Friends,

We're currently in 'Creationtide' and will celebrate Harvest at both churches on Sunday 11th October. After a disconcerting summer of heatwaves, it's a chance to take stock and think of farmers and all those impacted by uncertain times.



Harvest, like Christmas and Easter, is one of those festival moments when the secular and sacred calendars still more or less coincide – perhaps slightly less so these days for Harvest, but nevertheless it's an opportunity for all of us to affirm our outward facing commitment to connect with our communities, which is both a duty and an honour.

As well as our Sunday services on October 11th – with the Green Team helping lead at St John's, and Café Church at St Luke's – please may I take this opportunity to commend to you the Harvest Supper and Ceilidh *open to all* at St John's on Saturday 3rd October (6pm) and also that weekend, Monday First's Harvest celebration on Sunday 4th October (2pm) at Dene Park Community Centre, again I'm sure all welcome.

You might recall me having used the language of 'sustainability' before; I guess it's something more associated with the environmental movement that I've borrowed and applied to my own thinking about churches, particularly with regard to volunteer capacity and finances. On the latter note, and again somewhat borrowing the terminology of ecology, we're having what would traditionally be termed a stewardship campaign this month, particularly focussing on *increasing our unrestricted regular giving*, so please do look out for that. We'll be having a Generosity Sunday on the 18th, and I do hope that it will flow on quite naturally from Harvest – reflecting on what God has given to us, and what we give in return. But just like the issues facing agriculture, our current context is complicated – while we're facing significant financial challenges as a parish and we do need your help, please don't read the material as putting you under pressure; the wider macroeconomic reality of geopolitical turmoil and the cost of living crisis has made life much more difficult for most people, churches

included, and we're not unaware of that.

Which in a roundabout kind of way, brings me on to a note of caution about those three times in our church calendar where we're grateful for wider interest and engagement, but perhaps lapse into rather 'same old, same old' traditional territory. As a church it's important to make the most what I think would be termed 'crossover' connections, but equally if we're simply repeating the greatest hits of the 1950's (or even the Victorian period!) in business-as-usual mode, then perhaps we're missing the point.

Harvest, and indeed Christmas and Easter, will always be about old favourites, and that's okay, but how we frame the wider conversations around some of these festivals can I think subtly change or at least be open to challenge internally for us as regular churchgoers – not to spoil anything, especially for those who might only come to church occasionally, but more to stretch our grey matter spiritually; for example we might ask what it means to show solidarity for those who produce our food in times of uncertainty. Is it enough to simply say thank-you once a year or do our more regular choices carry as much if not more weight? Likewise, and we're not quite there yet (thankfully!), how do we pivot Christmas away from commercialism and consumerism – reclaim it without being a Scrooge or shooting ourselves in the festive foot or looking like seasonal snobs? It might just be me, but I do sometimes think we let the Christmas story in particular be coopted into something it was never meant to be. Perhaps not such an issue at Easter, but the potential is still there with eggs available ages in advance! Somehow there's a detachment from the core values of what these moments meant and originally stood for, as well as a lack of engagement with today's reality, or a sort of escapism which while comforting is perhaps not fully true to the ongoing applicability of the Gospel – without being party poopers, we can push back on a kind of sentimental Christianity as mere observance/obligation, seasonal window-dressing; because there's much more to the conversation than that.

As Christians, and perhaps especially as Anglicans, we're

cultural custodians of these precious and important traditions which play an ongoing role in our local life. But as regular churchgoers (even if only internally, in parallel to being welcoming to everyone) it is also our responsibility to look afresh at these and gently ask where the connections actually are with contemporary life. What does it mean for the Kingdom to 'speak into' these moments with kindness and compassion, but also potentially prophetic critique? It's a tricky balance!

Anyway, that's quite enough occupational angsting on my part filling up the word count...

On the same day as Generosity Sunday, and appropriately enough on what's St Luke's Day, we'll be trialling a new worship format on the afternoon at St Luke's (4pm, October 18th). 'Audite' is a music-led experiment, open to all, very deliberately a different and reflective end to the weekend/start to the week. To stretch a seasonal analogy, I'm really encouraged by the organic growth evident in the idea and the collaborative way it's been discerned and explored. *Please do support if you can.* And perhaps outside the box initiatives internally are the more appropriate forum in which to push the boat out rather than worrying too much about being radical during 'shop window' occasions, however conceptually appealing that might be – it has struck me a lot recently that continuity and change are a powerful combination, and a paradox that speaks to both our lives as Christians (personally and corporately) and also is inherent to the environment of which we are intrinsically a part.

Anyway, take care and keep thinking – answers on a postcard (or email etc). The great thing about being a church community is that we can legitimately positively, proactively ponder... Even if the answer is sometimes sensibly 'if it ain't broke don't fix it'!

Also, please do hold in your prayers those who may be considering applying for the Team Vicar/MDO post and all who will be involved in the recruitment process next month.

Best wishes,

Matthew

QUESTION CORNER

Question.

Is it right to mix politics and religion?



Answer

Many people think it's wrong. So it's slightly ironic that politics and religion are bracketed together as the two subjects to be avoided on polite social occasions! But they are linked in this way because, basically, they are both concerned with important, and sometimes controversial, issues which affect our lives—and these issues overlap, Jesus said 'Love your neighbour'. That includes caring about people's health, housing conditions, education, welfare, and the belief that all people should be treated fairly. Politicians are concerned with these issues, but there are religious matters too. So if, on occasions, the government seems to be treating some people unfairly, Christians should protest about it - as long as they get their facts straight first! This is not about 'party politics'. The Church does not support any one political party, and most congregations include a mixture of opinions. And the church pulpit should not be used as a party political platform!

Our new Prime Minister, Andy Burnham, is a Roman

Catholic. He has said “Faith and politics are all part of the same thing. How do you live your life? How do you treat others? Do you have care for people at the heart of everything you do? If so, I think you’re going to be on the right lines’. Obviously we all wait to see to what extent those words will be put into good political practice. But, whatever our political colour, as Christians we should surely agree with his basic statement. Is it too much to hope that more politicians might do the same, to help oppose the extremists whose ideas give rise to racism, intolerance, and hatred in this country?

David

EDITORS DISCLAIMER

The Editors of Focus magazine take every reasonable care to avoid errors in the advertisements and articles contained in this magazine. However, the inclusion of an article or advertisement in Focus does not imply either endorsement or liability for the opinions expressed or of goods or services advertised, whether by the Editor, St John’s and St Luke’s PCC or St John’s and St Luke’s churches.

The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the editor or the Clergy and whilst every care is taken not to change the original meaning, the editor and Clergy reserve the right to cut or alter articles submitted, as they deem necessary.



Lego Sessions

Our Lego sessions are 10.00 am – 12.00 noon,
on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of each month.

5yrs to adult, Primary age children must be
accompanied by an adult.

It's FREE and no booking is necessary,
just turn up and have fun!

Bilton & Woodfield Community Library, Woodfield Road, HG1 4HZ
(former school site)

Follow us on facebook: [bilton and woodfield community library](#)

Email: info@biltonandwoodfield.org.uk

Phone: 01423 564630



September Coffee Morning

It was a real pleasure to welcome Madeline and our lovely Green Team on Saturday 12 September and I am delighted to report that we raised £670 for them. They intend using the money to fund planters and raised beds in the churchyard in order to grow flowers for the flower team to use decorating our church. This will of course save the church a considerable amount of money and also have the benefit of being able to grow exactly the kind of flowers required plus the satisfaction of having grown them ourselves!

As always I was in awe of the generosity of all our donors; a huge thank you to everyone who contributed. Thank you also to our lovely volunteers who bring so much joy to the morning and a special thank you to all our loyal visitors: it is such a pleasure to welcome you each month.

Coffee Morning: Saturday 10 October: Girl Guiding

October's coffee morning is to raise funds for Girl Guiding. Our local group are looking to raise the funds to help finish the building renovation at Birk Crag as residential holiday accommodation. It will be somewhere the youngsters can extend and add to the skills they are acquiring in Girl Guides; maybe make new friends and have a lot of fun too!

The coffee morning team look forward to welcoming all our regular visitors and encourage you (if you don't normally attend this lovely monthly event) to pop along and enjoy a warm welcome, coffee and biscuits, toasted teacakes and good conversation!

Anne
(Coffee Morning Team)

St John's
Church,
BILTON

St John's & St Luke's

SOCIAL GROUP

invites you to

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at ST JOHN'S CHURCH, BILTON



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ALL AGES
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AND COMMUNITY.



PLEASE BRING
YOUR OWN
DRINKS.



SATURDAY
3RD
OCTOBER



6:00PM

Please arrive
promptly at 6pm



Meal served
at 6:15pm



£6
ADULTS

UNDER 12s
FREE

★ **TICKETS ON SALE NOW!** ★

SIGN UP AT CHURCH AND CONTACT:

St John's:
Juliet, Liz & Naomi



St Luke's:
Dan & Jonny



BOOK ONLINE VIA EVENTBRITE



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TO BOOK



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➤ ♥ **TICKETS ON SALE NOW - DON'T MISS OUT!** ♥ ➤

An evening of good food, great music, dancing and laughter!

➤ **ALL ARE WELCOME!** ➤

CHURCH GROUNDS WORKING PARTY

A huge thank you to everyone who helped with the church grounds working party on Saturday 5th September. The sun shone whilst 16 of us strimmed, chopped and raked up the long grass where the wildflowers had died down in the churchyard. Some of the grass was surprisingly long and tough despite the very dry summer so took several attempts to cut it. The edges were cut, flower beds were weeded and the paths were swept. The church grounds now look very neat and tidy and ready for winter. Thank you also to Jane for providing the very welcome bacon butties and cups of tea.





Dear Friends,

I hope you have all had a wonderful summer and are ready for the Autumn Term. There are lots of exciting ELM learning opportunities across the Harrogate Deanery this Autumn.

You can find all the upcoming events at: <https://www.harrogatedeanery.org/elm-events.html>

On the 17th of October at St Mark's Church in Harrogate, from 9.30am to 12.30pm, the **Leeds Diocese Children and Youth Team** are offering a Neurodiversity and Children's Ministry training session. Further information can be found on <https://www.leeds.anglican.org/calendar/103>

Please encourage people to book their place by emailing: childrenyouth@leeds.anglican.org

Gayle Bryon

Encouraging Lay Ministry Coordinator
Harrogate Deanery

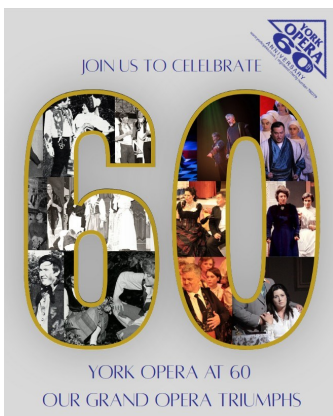
The chorus and principal singers of **YORK OPERA** are returning to St John's after their successful concert in March. As they continue to mark their 60th anniversary, the concert will feature famous excerpts from their grand opera triumphs over the years, including Puccini, Verdi, Bizet and Mozart. Highlights include the Hebrew Slaves chorus from Nabucco, the Habanera from Carmen, Dido's Lament from Dido and Aeneas, 'O mio babbino caro' from Gianni Schicchi and the glorious Easter Hymn from Cavalleria Rusticana. Join us for

an evening of musical magnificence - a perfect introduction to opera –
on **Saturday 10th October at 7.30pm.**

Tickets are available from:

<https://tickets.yorkopera.co.uk/events/yorkopera/2256203>

or scan the QR code





 **Girlguiding**
Birk Crag Centre

Coffee Morning

St John's Church, Bilton

**Raising money for the
Girlguiding Birk Crag Centre**

**Saturday 10th October
10am – 12noon**

Entry £1

**Tea, Coffee & Cake
Tombola & Raffle**





'MONDAY FIRST' HARVEST FESTIVAL



Sunday 4th of October
2pm – 3pm



Dene Park
community centre



If able please bring
a non-perishable
donation for the
Harrogate food bank.





ST JOHN'S & ST LUKE'S

CHRISTMAS FAIR

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28 NOVEMBER 10.30 TO 1.00

St Luke's Church ~ Franklin Sq. Harrogate

Tombola ~ Books ~ Cakes ~ Jams ~ Jewellery
Raffle ~ Plants ~ Preserves ~ Jigsaws ~ Traidcraft
Gifts ~ Light Refreshments
Admission £3.00 which includes coffee and cake
(accompanied children free)

WEBSITE
www.stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk

POETRY PLEASE

If your soul is feeling battered, bruised or even crushed with the turmoil and heartbreak in our global world today I would like to recommend a beautiful salve to you.

I discovered Mary Oliver, the American (Pulitzer Prize winning) nature poet several months ago and her work has been for me like palliative care for my soul. She writes in the prose poetry style and her connection to nature is so deep that one feels there with her in the woods, on the lake shores, etc.

I have her anthology 'Devotions' a collection from all her publications over the years (chosen by Mary Oliver herself). However you can find her work online to give yourself a taster and there is a video of her reading 'Wild Geese' on the site themarginalian.org. For all the dog lovers in our church family her chosen poems from Dog Songs will tug at your heart strings, make you smile and equally break your heart.

The following is an extract from the website mentioned above: **Mary Oliver** (September 10, 1935–January 17, 2019) is among the most beloved and most prolific poets of the past century — a devoted craftswoman of **exquisite poems** and a sage of **the secrets of the craft itself**

Another website englewoodreview.org has a video of her reading her best known poem 'A Summer Day' plus others, together with advice as to where to source more of her poems online.

I don't know how I hadn't come across her before as she is so well known; hence my article today just in case any other poetry lovers among us have also missed knowing this exquisite collection.

Anne



Award
winning care
homes

Harcourt Gardens care home, Harrogate

Wills and Power of Attorney

Thursday 29th October, 2pm - 4pm

Listen to legal expert Elaine Lightfoot, from McCormick Solicitors, explain the importance of wills and having a Power of Attorney in place for your loved one.

Community cinema

Third Tuesday of every month, 10am - 12 noon

Enjoy classic 'feel good' films and old favourites in our comfy cinema, with a coffee and home-baked treats.

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**PLEASE POP IN TO ONE OF OUR COMMUNITY
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COMMUNITY GROCERIES - LOCATIONS & OPENING TIMES

ADDRESS	New Park Community Hub New Park Primary Academy Corner of West St (through the blue gates) Harrogate HG1 3HF	Gracious St Methodist Church Chapel Street Knaresborough HG5 8AN
OPENING HOURS	Every Tuesday 12.30pm – 2.30pm (last entry 2.15pm) Every Tuesday 6pm – 7pm (last entry 6.45pm) Every Thursday 9.30am – 12pm (Last entry 11.45am)	Every Friday 8.00 - 2.00pm Last Entry 1.45pm
CONTACT	Simon - 07434 639911	

www.resurrectedbites.co.uk

Befriending service



Check in and Chat



Age UK North Yorkshire & Darlington are now providing a Check In & Chat Service. Do you or a loved one need a friendly voice to check in and brighten your day?

Our Check in and Chat Service provides caring volunteer callers who will reach out with a friendly conversation and a wellness check, ensuring you're not alone.

Let's Connect

Welfare Check Service

Do you live alone or worry about what would happen if you were unresponsive? Do you have pets or responsibilities that need attention if something goes wrong?

Let's Connect provides a simple, caring service- Our staff and volunteers will check in with you daily via text or phone call to ensure you're okay. If we don't hear from you, we'll reach out to a trusted next of kin, friend or designated contact to make sure you're safe.

Heart and Home Companions



Are you or a loved one looking for a friendly, reliable companion? Heart & Home Companion Service is here to offer warmth, conversation and support through our companionship services.

Our companions can provide Weekly Home Visits, enjoy a friendly chat, a cup of tea in the comfort of your own home.

Whether you need a companion for yourself or a loved one, we're here to make each day brighter.

For more information or if you would like to volunteer for any of these services, please contact us

Email: clare.hardie@ageuknyd.org.uk



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Jazz at St John's

with vocalist Tessa Smith

ECHO 42 BIG BAND ARE BACK AT ST JOHN'S!

Join us for another fantastic evening of live music, featuring a great selection of tunes you'll know and love!

Saturday 17th October

Music from 7.30pm - 9.30pm

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Adults - £10

Concessions & teenagers - £5

Under 13's - free

Proceeds to the church

OCTOBER'S CALENDAR

Thursday 1 st	9-9.30am 9.30-11.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ) Little Fishes (Parent & Child Group) (SL) Harvest Supper & Ceilidh (SJ)
Saturday 3 rd	6.00pm	
Sunday 4th	9.00am 10.30am 10.30am 12.30pm 2-3.00pm 6-7.30pm	Holy Communion (SJ) All Age Parade (SJ) Holy Communion (SL) Baptisms (SJ) Monday First at Dene Park Community Centre Youth Worship Night at Wesley Chapel
Monday 5 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
Tuesday 6 th	9-9.30am 9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ) Bilton Grange School Harvest Service (SJ)
Wednesday 7 th	9-9.30am 10.30am 10.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ) Holy Communion (SJ) Thirst – Coffee at Dene Park Community Centre
Thursday 8 th	1.30-3.30pm 9-9.30am 9.30-11.30am	Wellbeing Café (SL) Morning Prayer (SJ) Little Fishes (Parent & Child Group) (SL)
Friday 9 th	6.30-7.15pm 7-7.45pm	Junior Choir Practice (SJ) Adult Choir Practice (SJ)
Saturday 10 th	10.00am-12noon 7.30pm	Coffee Morning in Church Hall (SJ) York Opera Concert (SJ)
Sunday 11th	9.00am 10.30am 10.30am 6-7.15pm	Holy Communion (SJ) Harvest Holy Communion (SJ) Harvest Café Church (SL) Ignite (Year 7+ Youth Group) (SJ)
Monday 12 th	9-9.30am 1.30pm	Morning Prayer (SJ) Richard Taylor School Harvest Service (SJ)
Tuesday 13 th	9-9.30am 10.00am	Morning Prayer (SJ) Walking Group (SJ)
Wednesday 14 th	9-9.30am 10.30am 10.30am 1.30-3.30pm	Morning Prayer (SJ) Holy Communion (SJ) Thirst – Coffee at Dene Park Community Centre Wellbeing Café (SL)

Thursday 15 th	9-9.30am 9.30-11.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ) Little Fishes (Parent & Child Group) (SL)
Friday 16 th	6.30-7.15pm 7-7.45pm	Junior Choir Practice (SJ) Adult Choir Practice (SJ)
Saturday 17 th	7.30pm	Echo 42 Concert (SJ)
Sunday 18th	9.00am 10.30am 10.30am 6-7.15pm	Holy Communion (SJ) Morning Worship (SJ) Morning Worship (SL) Ignite (Year 7+ Youth Group) (SL)
Monday 19 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
Tuesday 20 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
Wednesday 21 st	9-9.30am 10.30am 10.30am 12.00pm	Morning Prayer (SJ) Holy Communion (SJ) Thirst – Coffee at Dene Park Community Centre Thirst Table at Dene Park Community Centre
Thursday 22 nd	1.30-3.30pm 9-9.30am 9.30-11.30am	Wellbeing Café (SL) Morning Prayer (SJ) Little Fishes (Parent & Child Group) (SL)
Friday 23 rd	6.30-7.15pm 7-7.45pm	Junior Choir Practice (SJ) Adult Choir Practice (SJ)
Sunday 25th	9.00am 10.30am 10.30am	Holy Communion (SJ) All Age Holy Communion (SJ) All Age Worship (SL)
Monday 26 th	9-9.30am 10.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ) Interment of Ashes (SJ)
Tuesday 27 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
Wednesday 28 th	9-9.30am 10.30am 10.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ) Holy Communion (SJ) Thirst – Coffee at Dene Park Community Centre
Thursday 1 st	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
<u>NOVEMBER</u>		
Sunday 1st	9.00am 10.30am 10.30am 12.30pm 3.30pm 6-7.30pm	Holy Communion (SJ) All Age Parade (SJ) Holy Communion (SL) Baptisms (SJ) Memorial Service (SJ) Youth Worship Night at Wesley Chapel
Monday 2 nd	9-9.30am 2-3.00pm	Morning Prayer (SJ) Monday First at Dene Park Community Centre

Tuesday 3 rd	9-9.30am 7.00pm	Morning Prayer (SJ) Deanery Synod (SJ)
Wednesday 4 th	9-9.30am 10.30am 10.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ) Holy Communion (SJ) Thirst – Coffee at Dene Park Community Centre
Thursday 5 th	1.30-3.30pm 9-9.30am 9.30-11.30am	Wellbeing Café (SL) Morning Prayer (SJ) Little Fishes (Parent & Child Group) (SL)
Friday 6 th	6.30-7.15pm 7-7.45pm	Junior Choir Practice (SJ) Adult Choir Practice (SJ)



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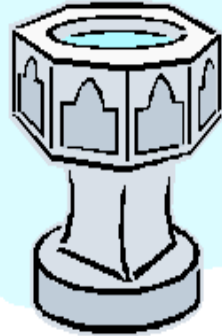


PEOPLE

Baptisms

Nancy Grace Bretherick
Lincoln Peter Evans
Rory Alfred Milnes
Charlotte Rose Elaine O'Donovan
Jude Dylan Towse

We welcome you into the Lord's family.
We are members together of the body of
Christ;
we are children of the same heavenly father;
we are inheritors of the Kingdom of God.
We welcome you.
Amen.



FUNERALS/ MEMORIALS

*We extend our sympathy to the families of those
who have recently died:*

Jean Elms
Victor Collier

SUNDAY 11th October

is Copy Date for

November's FOCUS

Items for inclusion to:

SJSFocus@gmail.com

or Editor, 20 Redhill Close

HG1 3JG

or leave them in the drawer at the
back of St John's Church

St John's & St Luke's

CHURCH OFFICE OPENING HOURS

MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY

9.30am to 1.00pm

TUESDAY 11.30am to 1.00pm

FRIDAY CLOSED

565129 (+ Answerphone)

church@stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk

St John's Church Hall and St Luke's Church

can be hired for single occasions or
for regular events, £20 per hour

Contact the Church Office for more
information.

See page 24 for contact details



Bilton & Woodfield
Community Library



YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY

You can use computers or find out about local events
and information. We run storytimes for pre-school
children and reading groups for all.

**YOU could become a member of our team of
volunteers**

We are open five days a week:

Monday	1.00pm - 5.00pm
Tuesday	9.30am - 5.00pm
Wednesday	CLOSED
Thursday	9.30am - 5.00pm
Friday	9.30am - 1.00pm
Saturday	9.30am - 1.00pm
Sunday	CLOSED

In the grounds of Woodfield School, Woodfield Road
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Email: info@biltonandwoodfield.org.uk
www.biltonandwoodfield.org.uk

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Supporting the local community

ST JOHN'S AND ST LUKE'S TOGETHER WHO'S WHO

Parish Office Phone No: 01423 565129

Parish Office email: church@stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk

Parish Office address: c/o The Vicarage, Bilton Lane, Harrogate, HG1 3DT

For parish information including services and events

visit Parish Websites: www.stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk

www.stlukesharrogate.org.uk

www.facebook.com/groups/stjohnsandstlukes.harrogate

www.facebook.com/stlukesharrogate

The Ministry Team

Matthew Hunter—Team Rector

Tel 07394 239772 / 01423 787575

Matthew.hunter@leeds.anglican.org

**Judith Clark—Children & Young
People's Chaplain**

Tel 07946 492097

youthwork@stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk

Churchwardens

St John's

Mr Nigel Thompson

janeandnige1962@hotmail.co.uk

Mrs Deb Pritchard

biltonconnection@aol.com

St Luke's

Mrs Alethea Fry

Alethea.fry@gmail.com

Editorial Team

Collation: Katie Burke 569563 and team

Editor: Irene 07762 552610

Magazine email: SJSLfOCUS@gmail.com