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St John's and St Luke's Together

St John's Church



January

2024

60 pence

St Luke's Church



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RECTOR'S LETTER

Dear friends

New Year, New Start

It's something of a cliché to talk about a new year offering us the opportunity to have a bit of a re-set, a re-boot, because after all, we are the same people in the new year as we were in the old. And we all know how easy it is to let our New Year Resolutions gently disappear off into the distance, never to be seen again, unless they somehow mysteriously briefly re-appear the following new year!



But here at St John's in 2024 we are going to be having something of a double re-boot, both parts of which I trust and pray are going to have a lasting impact and set us in a new, more hopeful direction. The first thing that is changing is Laura becoming our new team vicar on 25th January (hooray!). The service to license her in this new role will be at St John's and will be taken by our new bishop, Anna, starting at 7pm, and everyone is welcome. In some respects, it may not feel like much will have changed, since we know Laura well, but her starting this new role coincides with a gradual growth in numbers and confidence at St Luke's, and we are confident that she is God's chosen person to take the congregation there forwards into a very exciting future. However it is not just St Luke's but St John's as well that should be delighted at this new start, because the passion and enthusiasm that Laura brings is, I'm sure, going to continue to be contagious across the parish.

So if Laura is the first re-boot, what is the second? – well, as you will know, we spent the autumn hearing about our new **Rhythm of Life initiative** where we are encouraging people to go deeper in their life of discipleship by following a structured approach that asks us to make ongoing commitments in the areas of

- **Transforming**, which is about together seeking to be become more like Jesus in all we do;
- **Treasuring**, which is all about wanting/learning to receive and share the great spiritual treasures God longs to lavish on us;

- **Travelling**, where we recognise the importance of being on a shared, mutually supportive journey;
- **Rhythming**, which is about learning to live lives that are life-giving and life-enhancing – lives based on ‘those ‘unforced rhythms of grace’ that Jesus speaks about in Matthew 11:29 (Message version) which will allow us to live freely and lightly.

Hopefully by now you will be fairly familiar with the whole concept, and on 28th January (Laura’s first Sunday in her new post) we will be formally launching the initiative at both St John’s and St Luke’s. I am aware that some people have already started, which is great, but for those of you who are waiting for the official start date, or maybe are still trying to make up your mind, then wouldn’t it be great to start our journey together? There is a sign-up sheet in both churches, so do let us know if you are planning to get on board.

And just to encourage you to do so, I want to let you know that our homegroups (small groups of up to 10 people which meet on a fortnightly basis in someone’s home in order to learn and grow together as followers of Jesus) have been finding out about the Rhythm of Life and three of the groups have reported back how helpful and indeed transformative the material has been so far – which leads me to suggest another new year action people could take is to find out about joining a homegroup (for more details speak to me or Laura, or indeed to Sarah Shepherd).

Then, as I close, I want to offer a quick reflection on the last almost 4 years for St John’s and St Luke’s since the pandemic struck in March 2020. I don’t think we realised it at the time, but I do think that the worshipping community at St John’s and St Luke’s was adversely affected and we lost impetus and indeed a bit of confidence. I have seen both returning in the last 6 months (it took longer than any of us thought, I’m sure) but the truth of the matter is that we are vibrant worshipping communities and are becoming more so, and it will be interesting to see where God leads us in the coming year - and the best way to do this, as our Rhythm of Life key verse from Matthew 11:28-30 says, is to learn to walk with Jesus and learn from him, learn to live with him freely and easily, based on being in step with His ‘unforced rhythms of grace.’ Let’s do it!!

Simon

AUTUMN LETTER FROM CHRIS AND ANNA HEMBURY, OUR MISSION PARTNERS IN HULL



Dear friends,

You are probably familiar with a quote attributed to St Francis of Assisi, which goes like this: “Preach the gospel at all times. When necessary, use words”. There is some dispute as to whether or not he actually said those words, but they certainly seem in keeping with the way in which he lived out his faith. We are inspired by that deep commitment to authenticity, to “walk the talk”, and we are challenged to let all that we do, both in terms of the way we live and our activities, be an embodiment of the gospel. We sit well with that Franciscan tradition of being a living expression of what following The Way of Jesus might look like. It challenges us to live with integrity (wholeness, our actions undivided from our faith and values), humility (staying grounded) and obedience to God (finding our liberation in submitting to an authority higher than ourselves). Of course, “sitting well with” and meeting the challenge are not the same thing! It’s just as well God’s loving kindness is new every morning!

The walk, however, is not the whole deal. What about the words? “When necessary, use words,” is how it goes, not “no need for words”. So we are challenged to speak the good news too, to tell the story we are living. Social action and evangelism are the two strands of the DNA of Jesus’ ministry. A double helix held together, the integrated whole. Lived expression making sense of propositional truths. Jesus, the Word of God, said “I [who] am the way [how], the truth [what] and the life [why]” (John 14:6). It seems God gave us the whole story to pass on. Our work with children and young people, at Breakfast Club, Youth Club, and in our everyday relationships seeks to do the preaching of the gospel by action and



example. We demonstrate God’s love and care, God’s seeing of those who go unnoticed, God’s celebrating of those who go uncelebrated, God’s concern for people’s welfare, for hungry bellies and need for connection. We do practical things and we let others find their own agency by doing

things for us and for each other. Of course, we use words as well in all that.

But each summer we go off to summer camp together with a bunch of children and young people. Camp is the place where they get to hear the story they



Zip wire

have been experiencing. It's where they get to put words to the good news. It is where we get to name the who and spell out how and the what and the why. Sometimes it's where the penny drops, but the "Aha!" is more often a slow drip of many years of clubs and camps and sense-making and finding answers to questions they didn't know they were asking. And camp is where they get to find other words, other ways of expressing, which in our

Christian traditions we refer to as praise and worship. This year we taught them a song called Say Yes (by Michelle Williams) and it just sort of took off! Knowing the backstory and context of the lives of the children and young people we had brought there, it was profoundly moving to see them belting out "When Jesus say yes, nobody can say no!" at the top of their lungs, with unapologetic joy! The songs we sing at camp, as often in church, give us words that help us tell ourselves our true story; that is to say, our part in "Creator's good story," as the First Nations translation of the New Testament so beautifully puts it. They help us reposition our lives within that narrative, rather than the ones often put on us or those we have imprisoned ourselves within.



Peeling potatoes!

The other day, back serving cereals at Breakfast Club when the new term started after the summer break, Chris was singing the Say Yes song to himself. One of the kids, who had been to camp with us for the first time, asked him: "Are you still singing that song?" "Yeah," Chris replied. "So am I!" he grinned happily. Thank God for all the spaces where these children and young people can get to experience the good news of God's love, and for camp and the spaces where they get to put words to that experience – words they can carry home and live by.

Shalom, Anna & Chris

Chris and Anna work and live in an area of Hull where people are known for their no-nonsense attitude and honest vulnerability, an area suffering from high unemployment, child poverty, addiction, mental and physical health problems, prostitution and increasing racial tension. People feel a crippling lack of self-worth. But it's an area full of buried treasure, untapped potential and dormant creativity.

COFFEE MORNING
ST JOHN'S CHURCH HALL
Saturday 13th January

10-12

£1 includes

drink & biscuit

supporting

our

mission partners

in Hull



cake jigsaws books

greetings cards

raffle

tombola

QUESTION CORNER



Q. What should be our attitude towards those of other religions?

A. To listen to what they are really saying. Years ago I was a vicar in Southend-on-Sea, where there was every kind of religion imaginable. We set up a Religious Education Centre in a church hall with materials donated by various faith groups. Meetings were well-attended. The committee consisted of the Methodist and Baptist ministers, the Roman Catholic priest, a Muslim, a Jewish rabbi, and me. But, as chairman, I was targeted by a group from a somewhat extreme 'Christian' church, kindly informing me that I was going to hell for mixing with non-Christians. I replied that the experience confirmed my own faith, but helped me to be more informed and, hopefully, a more tolerant Christian! Sadly, all religions can be distorted to somehow justify bigotry, hatred, and even violence. However, we can share much which is good in other faiths, especially in those which teach love and respect for all people.



Jesus said 'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life' – the way to the Father. We AFFIRM that. But some religions believe in more than one god, so clearly certain ideas are incompatible with the Christian faith, and let's not pretend otherwise. Still, John Chapter 1 speaks of Jesus as the true light who gives light to EVERYONE. So surely we

can find something of God's light and love in people of different beliefs – and none. (Some kind and caring atheist friends would not thank me for saying that!)

We have a wonderful gospel to proclaim, but should still learn from, and respect, others. And the church is in the market place

David

LAURA'S LICENSING -

Thursday 25th January at St John's Church

Everyone is invited to the service to support Laura as she is licensed by Bishop Anna as Team Vicar of St John's and St Luke's

JOHN SHEEPSHANKS
3RD VICAR OF ST JOHN'S
AND A 'BISHOP IN THE ROUGH'

Bilton Historical Society Evening Talk
Wednesday 7th February 2024 7.30 pm

Bilton Community Centre

This talk by Alan Gould presents the findings of our research into John Sheepshanks (1834-1912), an austere High Church Anglican and the third Vicar of St John's, Bilton.

John Sheepshanks was a pioneering missionary during the Canadian Cariboo Gold Rush and made several epic journeys across North America, the Pacific and Asia.

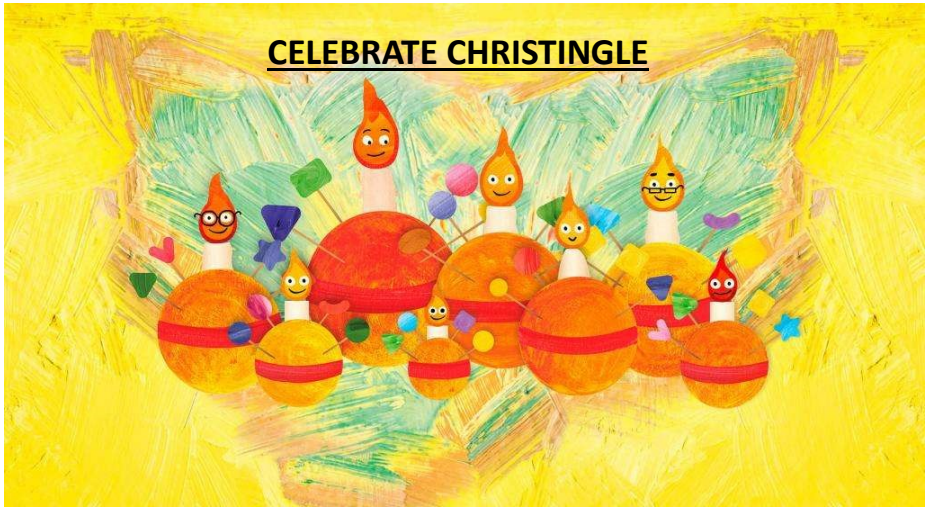
He married whilst in Bilton and started a family before moving to Anfield, Liverpool as the incumbent of St Margaret's, where he founded a school. He had seventeen children, wrote several books and was noted for his pastoral work and attention to his clergy. He finally became Bishop of Norwich.

Alan Gould is a member of the society and currently its secretary and treasurer. He was born and bred in Bilton, went to Bilton Endowed School and Ashville College before studying chemistry and engineering at Nottingham University. He has recently retired and returned to Harrogate after a world-wide career in the chemical industry.

*Admission, which includes refreshments and a raffle
£3 (members), £5 (non-members)*

If you pay annually for your magazine, your subscription of £7.20 is now due. You can give it to your distributor or deliver it to the church office or the Vicarage.

Thank you for your support



The Christingle Services were, as always, exciting, magical, beautiful, and challenging. It was wonderful to see so many families sharing in the joy of singing some familiar, some new songs and carols, hearing the story behind the Christingles, and being moved and humbled when the Christingles were all lit, and we sang 'Silent Night'.

The short video reminded us how our contributions will enable the Children's Society to support young people in need of some loving, listening care.

*'As the nights draw in, children across the country will be waiting to see their loved ones, waiting for the joy of opening a stocking.
But many of those who are suffering with anxiety or depression are simply waiting to be seen and heard. They're waiting for help.*

Your support will help provide a lifeline for young people by giving them access to our services and help us campaign for a society where no child is left to suffer alone. '
(from www.childrenssociety.org.uk)

At the **Christingle Coffee Morning** we were so pleased to be able to make Christingles again, and the regular customers welcomed those who came to juggle with cocktail sticks, jelly tots, red ribbon, and of course oranges.

The Coffee Morning raised about £550, which will go with the Christingle money to the Children's Society. Look out next month for an update on the total we raised.



Kidz Klub's vision is to see lasting transformation through the love of God for the most marginalised and vulnerable children, families and communities of Leeds.

Kidz Klub Leeds provides fun and safe activities that help children discover positive aspirations for themselves and their communities. Kidz Klub is about being part of communities and meeting people where they are at. Our work creates strong relationships that nurture children's self-belief, social skills and sense of boundaries. A large part of what we do is passing on a passionate, living and empowering Christian message that includes having respect for others, love for our communities and action to transform our inner city neighbourhoods. Everything we do is motivated by God's love for our city and our belief that every child is precious.



50+ very full 'hampers' all lined up and ready to be handed over to Kidz Klub

'The helpers at Kidz Klub couldn't believe how many 'hampers' we had brought', said Caroline.

Thank you so much, people of Bilton, for your generosity.

ARE YOU LOOKING TO GET MORE INVOLVED IN CHURCH ACTIVITY?

If you're comfortable with a little technology, how about helping with the sound desk at St John's? Training and guidance available.

Or could you join a small team serving refreshments once a month after the 10.30 service at St John's?

Lots of other opportunities - ask Gill in the office

CHRISTMAS FAIR



Thank you to everyone who came along to the parish Christmas Fair at St Luke's last Saturday. It was busy from start to finish, and a truly magnificent £1450 was raised for church funds.

An especially big thank you needs to go to all those who gave up their morning, and more, to set up and man the stalls and make the fair such a success.

SHARING CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS

Thank you to those who have returned their plate containing the cost of a meal.

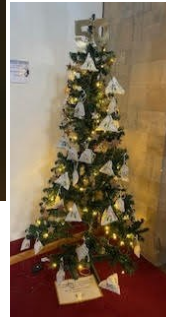
All donations received by the end of this month will go to Harrogate Homeless Project to support their work to rehabilitate and rehome some of those who are homeless.

The project is also seeking volunteers to help at the day centre in Wesley Chapel.



www.harrogate-homeless-project.org.uk

CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL OF TREES AND LIGHT



Our second Christmas Tree Festival was even more inspiring than the first. The trees all reflect the creativity, artistry and inspiration of the contributors. To vote for the best one was a real challenge. Look out next month for the results!



The simple backlit nativity scene was designed by Helen and produced by Bright Sparks. Very effective!



PEOPLE

BAPTISMS / BLESSINGS

*Rory Thomas Kenneth Ward
Annabelle Frances Ward
Penelope Alice Ward*



FUNERALS/ MEMORIALS

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

Eileen Elsworth Elfriede Nokes Laurie Burns

VOLUNTEER EVENT

Are you one of the many people who give time and talents to our church family?

You are invited to St Luke's on Sunday 28th January at 6.30 for an event hosted by the clergy team to say Thank you!

If you are planning to come, please let the office know so we can cater for the right numbers.



SUNDAY 14TH JANUARY

is Copy Date for

FEBRUARY 2024 Focus

Items for inclusion to:

SJSLFocus@gmail.com

or Editor, 6 Old Trough Way,

HG1 3DE

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

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JANUARY'S CALENDAR

Tuesday 2 nd	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
Wednesday 3 rd	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
	10.30am	Holy Communion (SJ)
Thursday 4 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
Sunday 7th	9.00am	Holy Communion (SJ)
	10.30am	All Age Service (SJ)
	10.30am	Holy Communion (SL)
Monday 8 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
	7.30pm	Confirmation Group (SJ)
Tuesday 9 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
	10.00am	Walking Group (SJ)
	2-3.30pm	Comfort Café (SJ)
Wednesday 10 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
	10.30am	Holy Communion (SJ)
	10.30am	Thirst - Coffee at Dene Park Community Centre
	12.15pm	Community Lunch at Bilton Community Centre
	7.30pm	PCC Meeting (SJ)
Thursday 11 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
	9.30-11.30am	Little Fishes (Parent & Toddler Group) (SL)
	6.30-7.15pm	Evening Surgery in Church (SJ)
Friday 12 th	1-3.00pm	Wellbeing Café (SL)
	6.30-7.15pm	Junior Choir Practice (SJ)
	7-7.45pm	Adult Choir Practice (SJ)
Saturday 13 th	10.00am-12noon	Coffee Morning (SJ Hall)
Sunday 14th	9.00am	Holy Communion (SJ)
	10.30am	Holy Communion (SJ)
	10.30am	Parade Service (SL)
	12.30om	Baptisms (SJ)
	6-7.15pm	Ignite (Year 7+ Youth Group) (SJ)
Monday 15 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
Tuesday 16 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
	4-5.00pm	4twelve (Year 7+ Youth Group) (SL)
Wednesday 17 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
	10.30am	Holy Communion (SJ)
	10.30am	Thirst - Coffee at Dene Park Community Centre
	12.00noon	Thirst Table at Dene Park Community Centre

Thursday 18 th	9-9.30am 9.30-11.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ) Little Fishes (Parent & Toddler Group) (SL)
Friday 19 th	1-3.00pm 6.30-7.5pm 7-7.45pm	Wellbeing Café (SL) Junior Choir Practice (SJ) Adult Choir Practice (SJ)
Saturday 20 th	10.00am	Confirmation Service Rehearsal (SJ)
Sunday 21st	9.00am 10.30am	Holy Communion (SJ) Joint Confirmation Service with Holy Communion (SJ)
Monday 22 nd	6-7.15pm 9-9.30am 7.30pm	Ignite (Year 7+ Youth Group) (SL) Morning Prayer (SJ) Finance & Buildings Committee Meeting (SJ)
Tuesday 23 rd	9-9.30am 4-5.00pm	Morning Prayer (SJ) 4twelve (Year 7+ Youth Group) (SL)
Wednesday 24 th	9-9.30am 10.30am 10.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ) Holy Communion (SJ) Thirst - Coffee at Dene Park Community Centre
Thursday 25 th	9-9.30am 9.30-11.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ) Little Fishes (Parent & Toddler Group) (SL)
Friday 26 th	7.00pm 1-3.00pm 6.30-7.15pm 7-7.45pm	Laura Martin's Licensing Service (SJ) Wellbeing Café (SL) Junior Choir Practice (SJ) Adult Choir Practice (SJ)
Sunday 28th	9.00am 10.30am 10.30am 5-6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Communion (SJ) Holy Communion (SJ) All Age Morning Worship (SL) Ignite (Year 7+ Youth Group) (SL) Volunteers Thank You Event (SL)
Monday 29 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
Tuesday 30 th	9-9.30am 4-5.00pm	Morning Prayer (SJ) 4twelve (Year 7+ Youth Group) (SL)
Wednesday 31 st	9-9.30am 10.30am 10.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ) Holy Communion (SJ) Thirst - Coffee at Dene Park Community Centre
<u>FEBRUARY</u>		
Thursday 1 st	9-9.30am 9.30-11.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ) Little Fishes (Parent & Toddler Group) (SL)
Friday 2 nd	1-3.00pm	Wellbeing Café (SL)

Looking Ahead...

Coffee Morning

Saturday 10th February (SJ Hall)

Soup and roll lunch

Saturday 10th February, after the coffee morning (SJ hall)

Ceilidh

Saturday 24th February time tbc (SL)

Marriage Preparation Session

Saturday 2nd March, 9.30am-12.30pm (SJ)

Coffee Morning for Youth Work

Saturday 9th March

Good Friday Children's Activity

Friday 29th March, time tbc (SJ)

Family Walk

Saturday 18th May, time and place tbc

Summer Fair

Saturday 29th June, 10.30am-1pm



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RAISE A DONATION

The advertisement features a green background with yellow stars and a white outline of a gift tag. Two circular images are connected by a yellow arrow: one shows a woman and a child looking at a laptop, and the other shows a man holding a cardboard box. The text is in white and yellow, with 'make it count' in a stylized font.

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

Parish Office Phone No: 01423 565129

Parish Office email: church@stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk

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

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simon.dowson@leeds.anglican.org

Laura Martin—Team Vicar (from 25th)

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laura.martin@leeds.anglican.org

**Emma James—Young People's
Worker**

Tel 07803 586566

YouthWork@stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk

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Mrs Jane Reichert

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St Luke's

Mrs Alethea Fry

Alethea.fry@gmail.com

Editorial Team

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Editors: Jean Burton 569907

Magazine email: SJSJfocus@gmail.com

SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING

Our small, friendly Scottish Country Dance group meet at St Luke's Church hall on Mondays from 7.30 to 9.30.

We welcome new members -
It is not necessary to have experience or bring a partner, just soft shoes and a sense of humour!

It's fun, good exercise and sociable.

The first night is free,
thereafter the fee is only £3.50.

We would love to see you!
Either turn up at the hall or contact:

Alan Horsfall 01423 863162
or Alan Fox 07879 715557



Bilton & Woodfield
Community Library



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Friday	9.30am - 1.00pm
Saturday	9.30am - 1.00pm
Sunday	CLOSED

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