

September/October 2025

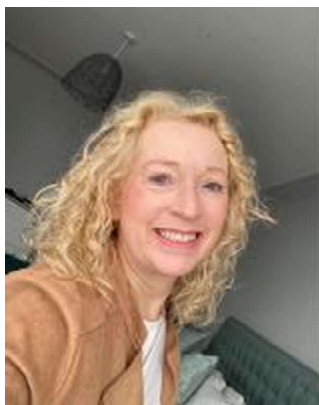
# FOCUS

Issue 297



## Parish Magazine of St Stephen's, Hightown





## Editor's Note

What are the things that you enjoy most about autumn? A dry and smoky autumn of golds and browns, rooks whirling in the sky like cinders, the excitement of soft, low mists hanging over the fields. These are just a few of my favourite things that I enjoy about the months of September and October. The inexorable reduction in day length has a profound effect upon the wildlife visitors to our shores, with September being the peak month for autumn migration. We will say our goodbyes and wish a safe journey to the little swallows, whose young have been born here (one can recognise the young by their stubbier tails), and are now flying to South Africa with their parents.

But what about our seasonal visitors? As we enter the final third of the year, I look forward to the familiar and joyful cacophony of the pink footed geese. The first skein will arrive at the beginning of September but it can be a little earlier, in late August. Their journey from Iceland never ceases to fill me with awe: over the seas from Iceland to the west coast of Scotland, where they may stop to rest and feed, and then down the coast to Hightown, following the M6 lights if travelling by night! To me, their happy honking is the sound of Hightown. What a great place to live!

Wishing you a happy autumn,  
Colette

***For regular giving—Everyone benefits***

**For details, Please contact:**

**Brian Taylor: 0151 929 2720**

**Keith Aldis: 0151 929 3612**

## Coffee Morning

Every first Saturday of each month  
10.00am—12 noon

**St Stephen's Church Hall**

Entries for future issues of Focus to be sent to

***[Focus.Mag.2023@StStephensHightown.org.uk](mailto:Focus.Mag.2023@StStephensHightown.org.uk)***

*Please submit before last day of month*

**Dear Friends,**

I can hardly believe that I am writing the letter for the September & October Focus Magazine! The year seems to be flying by! As last year, I write at the end of July and it certainly has felt cooler over these last few days and a couple of the trees at the front of the vicarage have already started to shed leaves! Let's hope for more warm, sunny days over the rest of the summer holidays!



September is, of course, a time of new beginnings, with the start of the school year, and a time when church and community activities and events resume after the summer break. I know some people will have been waiting patiently for the month to arrive as they have missed the special times together, but it is good to have a break, have a rest.

At the end of the month, on Monday 29th, we are starting a new group on Mondays: a drop-in Lunch Club, 'Souper Troopers'! An opportunity to come together over a delicious bowl of soup and bread, tea and coffee, company and chat. We will also have a prayer station set up in the hall, for any who might find this helpful. We will be open from 12 noon till 2pm and it will be a 'pay as you can' event.

Hospitality was really important to Jesus, both in his teachings and his actions, a core aspect of his ministry, so often using meals and gatherings to connect with people and show God's love, care and concern. Hospitality is also important to us here, at St Stephen's, as we offer refreshments and time together as much as we can.

Sunday 5th October will see our All-Age Eucharist for Harvest where we will give thanks for God's provision to us and have the opportunity to share what we have in supporting our local foodbank with non-perishable food items and Water Aid with our cash donations. All are very welcome at all our services.

*'All good gifts around us are sent from heaven above; then thank the Lord, O thank the Lord, for all his love.'* ... the refrain from my favourite harvest hymn: *We plough the fields and scatter.* For me, one of the joys of driving into Hightown is seeing all the fields in each of the seasons, watching the farmers ploughing, sowing, reaping and gathering-in.

If you are starting a new school, a new class, university, or a new job, or even starting to come to church or one of our church groups, 'May the Lord bless you and keep you and give you peace'.

**God Bless,  
Keith**

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Geoff Bailey, who  
died on 8th August. May he rest in peace  
and rise in glory.



***Magazine part-sponsored by John Gibson - notary services***

# St Stephen's Church Services for Sept/Oct

<b>Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>10:30</b>	<b>Eucharist</b>
<b>Friday 5<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>09:30</b>	<b>Morning Prayer</b>
<b>Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> Trinity 12</b>	<b>10:30</b>	<b>All-Age Eucharist</b>
	<b>18:00</b>	<b>Evensong</b>
<b>Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10:30</b>	<b>Eucharist</b>
	<b>19:00</b>	<b>Sanctuary@Seven</b>
<b>Friday 12<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>09:30</b>	<b>Morning Prayer</b>
<b>Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> Holy Cross</b>	<b>10:30</b>	<b>Eucharist</b>
	<b>16:00</b>	<b>Toddler Church</b>
	<b>18:00</b>	<b>Evensong</b>
<b>Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10:30</b>	<b>Eucharist</b>
<b>Friday 19<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>09:30</b>	<b>Morning Prayer</b>
<b>Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> St Matthew</b>	<b>10:30</b>	<b>Eucharist</b>
	<b>18:00</b>	<b>Evensong</b>
<b>Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10:30</b>	<b>Eucharist</b>
<b>Friday 26<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>09:30</b>	<b>Morning Prayer</b>
<b>Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> Trinity 15</b>	<b>10:30</b>	<b>Eucharist</b>
	<b>18:00</b>	<b>BCP Holy Communion</b>
<b>Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> October</b>	<b>10:30</b>	<b>Eucharist</b>
<b>Friday 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>09:30</b>	<b>Morning Prayer</b>
<b>Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> Trinity 16</b>	<b>10:30</b>	<b>All- Age Eucharist for Harvest</b>
	<b>18:00</b>	<b>Evensong</b>
<b>Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10:30</b>	<b>Eucharist</b>
	<b>19:00</b>	<b>Sanctuary@Seven</b>
<b>Friday 10<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>09:30</b>	<b>Morning Prayer</b>
<b>Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> Trinity 17</b>	<b>10:30</b>	<b>Eucharist with Healing</b>
	<b>16:00</b>	<b>Toddler Church</b>
	<b>18:00</b>	<b>Evensong</b>
<b>Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10:30</b>	<b>Eucharist</b>
<b>Friday 17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>09:30</b>	<b>Morning Prayer</b>
<b>Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> Trinity 18</b>	<b>10:30</b>	<b>Eucharist</b>
	<b>18:00</b>	<b>Evensong</b>
<b>Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>10:30</b>	<b>Eucharist</b>
<b>Friday 24<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>09:30</b>	<b>Morning Prayer</b>
<b>Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> Last Sunday after Trinity</b>	<b>10:30</b>	<b>Eucharist</b>
	<b>18:00</b>	<b>BCP Holy Communion</b>
<b>Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10:30</b>	<b>Eucharist</b>
<b>Friday 31<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>09:30</b>	<b>Morning Prayer</b>

# Prayer Prompts September/October

From the writings of Julian of Norwich

## September

**Wk 1.** Our spirit is made to be God's resting place, and our spirits' rest is in God who is unmade.

**Wk2.** I saw with utter certainty that it is faster and easier for us to come to know God than to know our own spirits. God is nearer to us than our own spirit.

**Wk3.** The spirit is as large as an eternal world and a blessed realm as well. He has made His home and eternal dwelling within us.

**Wk4.** When we contemplate God, we are made like unto God. And through Grace we are united in His peace.

***Let us pray for the people of:***

***Thirlmere Rd, Brentwood Close, Within's Field and Blundell Grove***

## October

**Wk1.** God wants us to see and delight in everything through love. Love brings power and wisdom down to our level.

**Wk2.** God wants everyone to be drawn up to Him.

**Wk3.** There is unending joy knowing God, our protector here, will be our bliss hereafter.

**Wk4.** We are guided in this transitory life by God, our Father who is endless day. In this light, Christ our Mother and the Holy Spirit conduct us. God shines forth this light with providence, making it available to us in the night time of our need.

***Let us pray for the people of:***

***Marston Crescent, Alton Close, Sandy Lane and Thirlmere Mews***

# **‘Word Together’ Bible Study**

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## ***In memory of Graham Goodchild***

*Pauline Goodchild, Old Acre*

“A what?” asked I, when our vicar, Revd. Keith Thornborough, responded to my request for suggestions for a gift to St Stephen’s, in memory of my late husband, Graham.

“An aumbry,” was what he had said. Keith patiently described the purpose and importance of an aumbry. He explained why it was needed and why it was particularly appropriate for Graham’s memory.

An aumbry is a box or cupboard kept near to the altar used for the reservation of bread and wine that has been consecrated for future use, especially for the sick. Until now, this has been kept on the side in the Sacristy.

Keith arranged a visit to Ormsby’s, church suppliers, in Southport to find an aumbry. There I beheld a fascinating array of church memorabilia: a veritable treasure trove including vestments, statues, candles, pedestals, sanctuary lamps and crucifixes. Bruno, the director of the business, knew the whereabouts of every item – including aumbries and tabernacles in various shapes, sizes and materials – carved wood or metal. Some were designed to fit into a wall like a safe; some had an inner door with a lunette for devotion. Ours, with just a front door, was to sit on the credence table at the altar and to complement our other sanctuary furnishings.



I had measured the area, but unnecessarily; Keith quickly recognised “our” aumbry - the right size, neither too plain nor too ornate. And as lacquered brass, it will not cause our valiant brass cleaners any grief, needing only occasional dusting. Bruno told us that it had previously been housed in a chapel, now closed, of a religious order in the northwest of England. It was about forty years old, and the order had passed it to Ormsby’s to ensure that it reached a suitable environment.



When Keith placed the aumbry on our credence table it looked immediately at home – as though it had always been there. Hazel, who as our sacristan, looks after the bread and wine, among her other responsibilities, was delighted.

If you would like to view our aumbry in its place, join us at a service at St Stephen’s and ask Revd Keith to show you.

Come and see!

## **Brass Rota**

### **September**

Kevin Bradshaw

### **October**

Jan Williams



## **Sunday Coffee Rota**

### **September**

7th Jan Williams

14th Jane Bessant

21st Jane Copeland

28th Di Aldis

### **October**

5th Shirley Burns

12th Jayne Cudby

19th C. Grocott

26th B. Cresswell

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**at**

**St Stephen's**

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## Who's Who at St Stephen's

Vicar	Revd Keith Thornborough
Associate Priest	Revd John Reed
Warden	Judith Welch <a href="mailto:Judith.Churchwarden@StStephensHightown.org.uk">Judith.Churchwarden@StStephensHightown.org.uk</a>
Warden	Jane Copeland <a href="mailto:Jane.Churchwarden@StStephensHightown.org.uk">Jane.Churchwarden@StStephensHightown.org.uk</a>
PCC Secretary	Beryl Howard
PCC Treasurer	Keith Aldis
Gift Aid Secretary	Brian Taylor
Safeguarding	Cath Marshall <a href="mailto:cathmarshall47@yahoo.co.uk">cathmarshall47@yahoo.co.uk</a>
Electoral Roll	Beth Cresswell
Sacristan Team	Hazel Roberts
Health and Safety	TBA
Flower Rota	Sue Taylor
CMS Secretary	Berenice Gibson
St Stephen's Youth Club	Jane Croxton
Church Hall Bookings	Sally Fraser
Focus Editor	Colette Hudson: <a href="mailto:Focus.Mag.2023@StStephensHightown.org.uk">Focus.Mag.2023@StStephensHightown.org.uk</a>
Focus Adverts	Colette Hudson <a href="mailto:Adverts@StStephensHightown.org.uk">Adverts@StStephensHightown.org.uk</a>
Focus Distribution	Mr and Mrs K Bradshaw
St Stephen's Church Website	<a href="http://StStephensHightown.org.uk">StStephensHightown.org.uk</a>

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## Easy Fundraising

St Stephens has have been using #easyfundraising to raise FREE donations for the Church when we shop online. We have just been paid! These donations will make a BIG difference and you can help during this difficult time too - it only takes 2 minutes to sign up and 4,500+ shops ( including Amazon and Ebay) will donate for free, every time you shop online with them!

Why not visit:

[easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/ststephenschhightown/  
payments/60537b0af62fd200266cbd30/](https://easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/ststephenschhightown/payments/60537b0af62fd200266cbd30/)

to find out more ?

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## Village Organisations and Activities

Tuesday Group, St Stephen's Hall Tuesday morning 10.30am	Beryl Howard Jan Branigan
Hightown Friendship Group 1st Wednesday at 8pm	Marjorie Walker
Gardening Club 2nd Monday 8pm	Hilary Munro
Bowling Club, Sandy Lane	Diana Killen
Hightown Club	Chris Scrine
Blundellsands Sailing Club	Rohan Pickard <a href="mailto:RohanPickard@gmail.com">RohanPickard@gmail.com</a> Deryk Johnson <a href="mailto:DerykJ@gmail.com">DerykJ@gmail.com</a>
Yoga Classes, Hightown Club	Rose Billinge
Flower Show	Debbie Underhill <a href="mailto:underhillsathome@aol.com">underhillsathome@aol.com</a>
Open Mic Poetry Group 3rd Thursday 7.30pm St Stephen's Church hall	Sally Anne <a href="mailto:tapiabowes@gmail.com">tapiabowes@gmail.com</a> Alex
Craft Group, Every Thursdays 1.30-3.30pm, St Stephen's Hall	Sue Taylor 929 2720
Hightown Parish Council	Jenny Farrar <a href="mailto:clerk@hightownparishcouncil.uk">clerk@hightownparishcouncil.uk</a>
Community Library, Alt Centre, Lower Alt Rd. Mon 12-2, Tues 1-3, Weds 1-4, Fri 10-12	Linda Munro <a href="mailto:lindamunro@hotmail.com">lindamunro@hotmail.com</a>
Zumba Gold, Dance for all aged 55 plus, Mondays 9.45-10.30, St Stephen's Hall	Nicky Garsforth
Creo Dance Company Mon Tues Wed Thurs Sat Children 3 to 18 years	Georgia Cardwell

# From Beth's Kitchen

## BEETROOT SOUP

(or Bortsch, as it is known in Eastern Europe.)

This is a delicious, thick intensely coloured soup, which can be served hot in Winter or cold in Summe. I have eaten it with a portion of cooked butter beans to give added protein. For a vegetarian version use vegetable stock as I do.



### Ingredients

50g butter 250g

raw beetroot, peeled and roughly chopped

1 onion, chopped

1.5 litre beef stock

Soured cream and a handful of chopped chives to garnish

Salt and pepper to taste

1 carrot, chopped

1 tbsp caster sugar

3 garlic cloves, chopped

Juice of ½ lemon

### Method

Melt the butter in a large pan and, over a gentle heat, slowly sweat the beetroot, onion, carrot and garlic, turning the vegetables over in the butter.

Add the sugar and the stock, season with pepper and simmer for 40 minutes until the vegetables are tender.

Blend the soup, add the lemon juice and salt to taste. Serve in individual bowls with a swirl of soured cream and a scattering of chives.

*Serves 4-6*

## Smile Lines

An elderly woman died last month. Having never married, she requested no male pallbearers. In her handwritten instructions for her memorial service she wrote, ***“They wouldn’t take me out while I was alive so I don’t want them taking me out when I’m dead!”***

## Eco Church—For The Love Of God's Good Creation

Did you spot many butterflies this past summer?

The wildlife charity Butterfly Conservation is deeply worried about our butterflies. Or rather, the lack of them. It seems that more than 80 per cent of our species have declined sharply in number since 1970s.



Each summer sees the Big Butterfly Count, when the public is encouraged to send in the number of butterflies they have seen over a short period of time. Last year saw the lowest number of butterflies spotted in the count's 14-year history. Even the familiar species like the small white, common blue and small tortoiseshell had their worst summer ever. And a record number of people saw no butterflies at all.



Butterflies have been hit by climate change, the use of pesticides, and damage to their habitats. The drought this summer will have been bad news for their caterpillar offspring, which need growing plants to feed on.

So, this autumn, why not plan a happier year for butterflies in 2026? As you prepare your garden for winter, go to

[www.rhs.org.uk/wildlife/butterflies-in-your-garden](http://www.rhs.org.uk/wildlife/butterflies-in-your-garden)

for some ideas of how to make your garden butterfly-friendly.

### Observations on Life

*"If you think you're too small to have an impact, try going to bed with a mosquito in the room."* - Anita Roddick.

*"Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind."* - Dr Seuss.

*"The only normal people are the ones you don't know very well."* - Foe Ancis.

## Hightown Friendship Group

The Hightown friendship group (formerly the Hightown Townswomen's Guild) has thirty members, who meet in St Stephen's Hall on the first Wednesday of the month at 8pm.

We have speakers, outings and a charity coffee evening. New members are always welcome and I think our name reflects the ethos of the group.

Some members have formed a book club, which meets at The Alt Centre on a regular basis (every 4 to 6 weeks, on a Tuesday evening, depending on the chosen book.)

We have a extra meeting on the second Wednesday in December, which we call our Christmas Special and includes entertainment. This year we have booked a group called 'Uke-a -Ladies and the event is free. Anyone is welcome to attend this evening, which will include refreshments and a raffle.

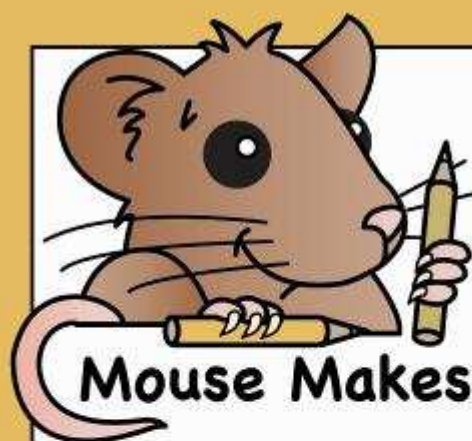
For more information about the group or our special evening, please contact the group's secretary, Judith Pike on 0151 929 2996.



## WITH GRATEFUL THANKS

We are very grateful to the Duchy of Lancaster Benevolent Fund for their Grants towards the costs of repairing the entrance surface into the Church Hall and the installation of car park lighting. Safety first!





## Mouse Makes

"May the people **praise** you **God**...  
The **land yields** its harvest, God,  
our God **blesses** us."  
- from Psalm 67:5-6

"Let us fear and respect the Lord our God.  
He gives **autumn** and **spring** rains  
at the right time. He makes sure that we  
have the harvest at just the right **time**."  
- from Jeremiah 5:24

"**Honour** the  
**Lord** with your  
wealth and the  
first part of  
your **harvest**."  
- Proverbs 3:9

"God... gives you **rain** from  
heaven and good harvests  
at the right times. He gives  
you plenty of **food** and  
fills your hearts with **joy**."  
- from Acts 14:16-17

"So the one who **plants** is not  
important, and the one who **waters**  
is not important. Only GOD is  
important because He is the one  
who makes things **grow**."  
- 1 Corinthians 3:7

D	E	B	R	E	A	D	C	R	O	P	S
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S	L	O	I	J	B	P	R	A	I	S	E
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A	U	D	H	Y	E	I	I	A	S	L	S
T	G	R	O	W	S	N	N	R	O	W	E
T	H	A	N	K	S	G	I	V	I	N	G
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S	U	N	F	I	E	L	D	R	E	A	P

Find the words in **bold** type in the bible quotes in the  
wordsearch then look for the words below too!

PLOUGH • FIELD • SOIL • SCATTER • SOW • SEEDS • SUN  
REAP • PICK • CROPS • GRAIN • CORN • BARN • BREAD • THANKSGIVING



## **Toddler Time**

**A new fun group for Toddlers 0-4yr and their carers!**

**St. Stephen's Church Hall**

**Fridays 10am-11:30am term time**

**Play- Craft- Snack- Story- Songs- Fun!**

**ALL WELCOME!**

## **Toddler Church**

**St Stephen's Church**

**2nd Sunday of every month 4pm**

**A service for pre-schoolers and their families**

**Fun songs, a bible story, craft and refreshments**

**We look forward to meeting you!**

## **Youth Club**

**From age 7**


**Friday Evening Term Time**

**6pm until 7.15pm**

**£2.50 includes snacks and drinks**

**Contact: Jane Bessant 07776 305 660**

**Please note that there will be no youth club  
during school holidays**



# ST STEPHEN'S CHURCH SUNDAY SCHOOL



**EVERY 3<sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY @ 10:30AM**