

November 2025

FOCUS

Issue 298



Parish Magazine of St Stephen's, Hightown



We Remember Them





Editor's Note

November....a month for remembering

As time passes, I find myself in the unfortunate position of having to attend more funerals with the number of people to remember increasing: friends and relations whom I have loved and who have loved me. The people we love become part of us. When they die, a part of us dies too. This is grief and we know this is painful.

Remembering them, for me, means letting their spirits inspire me in my daily life. Sometimes, my sister and I will have a discussion about my late mother and what she would have done or said, in a certain situation; my husband and I will often recall his mother's advice and favourite sayings such as, "Waste not want not!"; my late friend, Gill Rowe, in her lifetime, wrote out several of her favourite recipes for me and when I follow them, I feel as if I am honouring her.

Remembering them, is choosing their ongoing companionship and letting their best qualities live on in me.

For me, it also means praying for them and remembering them in the presence of God, both in church and in private. And, as I believe that this is not just a single track railway, I am sure that they are praying for me too.

Every Sunday, we read aloud, from our Book of Remembrance, the names of some of those who have gone before us and whose family or friends wish for them to be remembered at that time. If you would like someone's name to be entered, please contact Reverend Keith.

Wishing you all a healthy and peaceful November,

Colette

Entries for future issues of Focus to be sent to

Focus.Mag.2023@StStephensHightown.org.uk

Please submit before last day of month

Dear Friends,

As we begin the month of November we embark on a time of remembering, of remembrance.

On Sunday 2nd November, at 6pm, we will be holding our annual All Souls Service of 'Thanksgiving and Hope', for the commemoration of the faithful departed. It is an opportunity to mark, in a special way, the passing of a loved one, whom we dearly miss; to give thanks for who they were and all that they meant to us. If you would like the name of a loved one to be read out, as part of our 'Act of Remembrance', then please do let us know, either by adding their name to the list at the back of Church, or letting me or one of the wardens know either by phone or email. Thank you.



On Sunday 9th November, we will once again come together, as a community, to remember and give thanks for those who have lost their lives in conflicts and wars, and at 11am we will fall silent for two minutes. It's important that we remember, with thanks, the names carved on our village memorial.

This year, things will be a little different. Because we will not have the support of the police, (a national funding decision), to close any of the roads around the roundabout, where our war memorial is located, we will be holding the outdoor service in St Stephen's Church Car Park, looking out onto 'The Memorial'. This change will be upsetting for some people. However, The Royal British Legion, The Parish Council and St Stephen's Parochial Church Council are unanimous that the safety of everyone must be a priority, and in addition, we do not have the authority to close roads. We will still have a procession of wreath bearers walking over to the memorial, and the service, in all other respects, will remain the same. All are most welcome in the church hall from 10:30am for coffee and for the service in St Stephen's Church after our 'Act of Remembrance.'

Fit for Mission... The PCC met in September to vote on whether to become part of the 'acting as if' phase of Fit for Mission, amalgamating parishes in the deanery into a larger single parish process of pastoral reorganisation. After attending many explanatory meetings and listening carefully to invited speakers from the Fit for Mission team, the PCC and our congregation voted against this proposal, and so we will continue as a parish in our own right, looking forward to worshipping God, growing together and continuing to serve our community here in Hightown. Of the 14 churches in our deanery, only 3 voted to continue with the Fit for Mission plan. We will continue to work closely with our deanery and our 'Churches Together' sisters and brothers.

Church Hall... The PCC are excited to announce that we are making plans to completely overhaul the existing lavatories and kitchen facilities, and have commenced fundraising activities to support this. The Church Hall is a well-used and much appreciated space, and it is important that we continue to improve the facilities we have, for the benefit of all hall users.

With your Focus magazine this month is our annual 'Gift Day' envelope. This year, moneys collected will go towards our efforts to raise the funds for this significant, though much needed, work. Envelopes can be brought to church or left with the

(cont. overleaf)

Village Store.

We very much appreciate all the assistance that is given to the church and parish.
Thank you in anticipation of your generosity and support.

***God Bless,
Keith***

St Stephen's Church Services for November

Sunday 2 nd	10:30	All-Age Eucharist
All Souls	18:00	Commemoration of the Faithful Departed
Wednesday 5 th	10:30	Eucharist
Friday 7 th	09:30	Morning Prayer
Sunday 9 th	10:30	Remembrance Day Service
Third Sunday before Advent	11:45	Said Eucharist
	16:00	Toddler Church
	18:00	Evensong
Wednesday 12 th	10:30	Eucharist
	19:00	Sanctuary @ Seven
Friday 14 th	09:30	Morning Prayer
Sunday 16 th	10:30	Eucharist
Second Sunday before Advent	18:00	Evensong
Wednesday 19 th	10:30	Eucharist
Friday 21 st	09:30	Morning Prayer
Sunday 23 rd	10:30	Eucharist
Christ The King	18:00	BCP Holy Communion
Wednesday 26 th	10:30	Eucharist
Friday 28 th	09:30	Morning Prayer
Sunday 30 th	10:30	Eucharist
Advent 1	18:00	Candlelight Taizé Advent Service

Coffee Morning

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For details, Please contact:

Brian Taylor: 0151 929 2720

Keith Aldis: 0151 929 3612

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Christmas Fayre

Saturday 29th November

10:00am—1:00pm

Many stalls, Refreshments, Children's activities,
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Free Entry - All welcome!



Prayer Prompts November

Wk 1. “Everyone whom my father gives me will come to me. I will never turn away anyone who comes to me.” (*John 6.37*)

Wk 2. “Whoever has seen me has seen the father....I am in the father and the father is in me.” (*John 14.9 and 10*)

Wk 3. “I know my sheep and they follow me. I give them eternal life and they shall never die. No one can snatch them away from me.” (*John 10.27 and 28*)

Wk 4. The Lord who created you says, “Do not be afraid—I will save you. I have called you by your name—you are mine.” (*Isaiah 43.1*)

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Brass Rota

November

Hazel Roberts

December

Colette Hudson and Jayne Cudby



Sunday Coffee Rota

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9th Pam Bessant

16th Sue Taylor

23rd Beryl Howard

30th Dave Phillips

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Who's Who at St Stephen's

Vicar	Revd. Keith Thornborough
Associate Priest	Revd. John Reed
Warden	Judith Welch Judith.Churchwarden@StStephensHightown.org.uk
Warden	Jane Copeland Jane.Churchwarden@StStephensHightown.org.uk
PCC Secretary	Beryl Howard
PCC Treasurer	Keith Aldis
Gift Aid Secretary	Brian Taylor
Safeguarding	Cath Marshall cathmarshall47@yahoo.co.uk
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
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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 St Stephen's Hall	Marjorie Walker
Gardening Club 2nd Monday 8pm St Stephen's Hall	Hilary Munro
Bowling Club, Sandy Lane	Diana Killen
Hightown Club	Chris Scrine
Blundellsands Sailing Club	Rohan Pickard RohanPickard@gmail.com Deryk Johnson DerykJ@gmail.com
Yoga Classes, Hightown Club	Rose Billinge
Flower Show	Debbie Underhill underhillsathome@aol.com
Open Mic Poetry Group 3rd Thursday 7.30pm St Stephen's Church hall	Sally Anne tapiabowes@gmail.com Alex
Craft Group, Every Thursdays 1.30-3.30pm, St Stephen's Hall	Sue Taylor
Hightown Parish Council	Jenny Farrar clerk@hightownparishcouncil.uk www.hightownparishcouncil.uk
Community Library, Alt Centre, Lower Alt Rd. Mon 12-2, Tues 1-3, Weds 1-4, Fri 10-12	Linda Munro lindamunro@hotmail.com
Zumba Gold, Dance for all aged 55 plus, Mondays 9.45-10.30, St Stephen's Hall	Nicky Garsforth
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From Beth's Kitchen

CHOCOLATE AND BEETROOT CAKE

I must apologize for providing another beetroot recipe but it is the season and beetroot gives a lovely delicious depth to this cake. The friend who grows them on his allotment came with a box full of roots and we all shared them out. I did not want to make more soup so I searched out this recipe. Sweet vegetables can be made into many cakes. I have made them with carrots, parsnips, pumpkin and courgettes. Soft fruit can also add variety to an afternoon tea menu. Gooseberries, figs, peaches and pineapple all fall into this category. Just be uninhibited in your choice of ingredients and get baking. They all freeze well.



Ingredients

3 large eggs	50g cocoa
150g SR flour	2 tsp baking powder
125g light muscovado sugar	300ml sunflower oil
225 raw beetroot – peeled and grated	

Method

Heat the oven to 180C. Grease and line a 30 cm by 23 cm traybake tin

Place the eggs, cocoa, flour, baking powder and sugar into a bowl and mix with a wooden spoon. Mix in the oil and beat until it forms a thick batter. When smooth, stir in the grated beetroot.

Bake in the tin for 35 minutes. Leave to cool completely and then ice with a layer of chocolate icing. I must admit I cheated and used a readymade version from the supermarket.

Cut into portions and serve with tea and scones. Cuts into 12-16 squares

Cocktail Evening

A fun time was had by all at the cocktail evening. Many thanks to those who organised it and made the mocktails and cocktails.



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

NT Formby Woodland Conservation Area

"In late August and early September, National Trust Formby delivered a number of their annual pre-winter walk and talk events, to discuss the woodland conservation work which will be happening in the coming months. Led by one of their rangers, the talk covered the challenges of managing a planted pine woodland, which has seen multiple landowners and had varying levels of management accordingly. The work they will be doing includes thinning some of the dense pine woodland to create more light and space in the canopy, as well as restocking through planting. This in turn will give those other trees greater opportunity to grow, and allow more light to reach the forest floor, benefiting the plant flora found here.

Additionally, they will be employing specialist contractors, this winter, to assist with removing large areas of invasive grey poplar in the dune grassland, south of Lifeboat Road. This work is necessary to prevent the rare and protected dune grassland from succeeding into woodland, with the long term ambition being to return old breeds of cattle to the area, to mimic the large herbivores that would have roamed this landscape many centuries ago. The walks were very interesting and insightful into the crucial conservation work that this small team are championing and delivering. If you have any further questions, please feel free to get in touch with the National Trust, who will be happy to explain more, and look out for similar events advertised on their social media and website year-round."

Chris Hunter, NT, Formby



Harvest Thanksgiving

**We extend our thanks to
Barbara Brown for arranging
the church flowers on this
special day.**



The Bells *By Kevin Howard*

Church Bells are rung as a signal to the people that it is time to make their way to church for worship. The sound made by bells is called a tintinnabulation, from the Latin tintinnabulum, and refers to a sound of wind chimes blowing in the breeze. Bells are mentioned in the Bible in only one context; “small bells are to be attached to Aaron’s vestments, which shall be heard when he goes into the Holy Place before the Lord” (Exodus 28 33-35).



Campanology is the study of the art and science of bells so bell ringers are referred to as campanologists. This differs from carillonneurs, musicians who play the carillon, a musical instrument consisting of a series of bells. There is no legal curfew for bell-ringing.

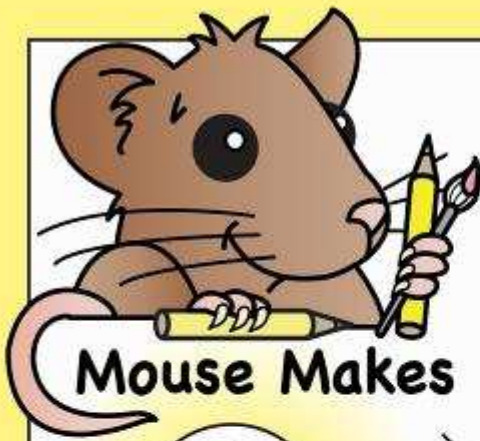
Church bells in Britain rang for the new millennium during a countrywide event called “Ring in 2000” on January 1st 2000, at 12 noon. The nations bells, including a hundred consecutive chimes from St Stephen’s, resounded for this event, not for a set duration, but to mark the historic moment. The campaign aimed for all church bells in Britain to ring and it achieved a success rate of about 90%.

St Stephen’s was bell-less for many years after the church was founded in 1914. But in 1966 a Loughborough Bell Foundry offered to supply the church with a Manganese-Bronze bell. In the end the offer was not taken up, the original plan of a combined porch and belfry being dropped for a porch alone. Instead, it was agreed that the Loughborough foundry would recast a fragment of a larger bell and store it until it could be hung.

And so it was that in February 1970 the bell was collected, with the church Ladies Guild agreeing to meet the full cost of £278. By May 1970, housed at the north end of the church above the sanctuary, it was being rung every Sunday at St. Stephens. Our bell, has a modest, repeating single note rather than a carillon; today it is rung for 20 minutes before each church service. Bellringers are not required as it is electrically operated. Apart from a fairly recent absence for resetting and cleaning, its chimes have been heard for over half a century. And, most recently, its peals proclaimed a joyful August wedding.

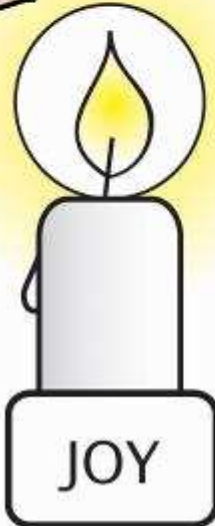
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wedding
August 2025**



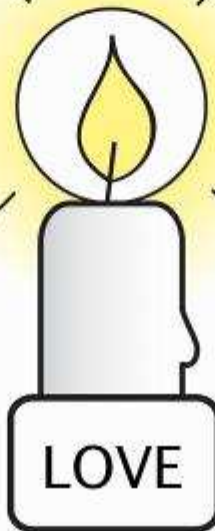


LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

Advent Sunday this year falls on 30th November. ADVENT is a time to celebrate the ARRIVAL of Jesus, God's Son, our Saviour. We look forward with HOPE, we give thanks for God's LOVE and the PEACE and JOY we have in Jesus.



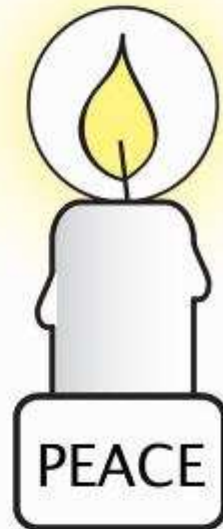
Read:
LUKE 2:10-11
Who is 'God's news of great joy' for?



Read:
John 3:16
How did God show He loves us?



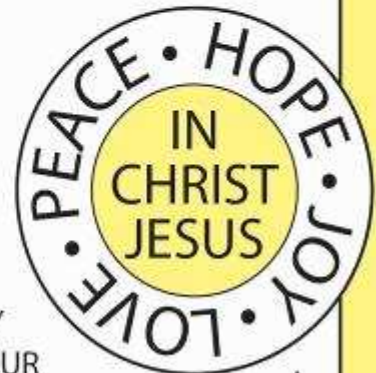
Read:
Isaiah 40:5
What shall be revealed?



Read:
Romans 5:1-2
Through who do we have peace with God?

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

ADVENT • ARRIVAL • HOPE • JOY • LOVE • PEACE • GOD • GLORY
MESSAGE • PROMISE • PROPHECY • FORETOLD • JESUS • SAVIOUR
CHRIST • GIFT • GOOD NEWS • RETURN • CANDLE • LIGHT





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 3RD SUNDAY @ 10:30AM