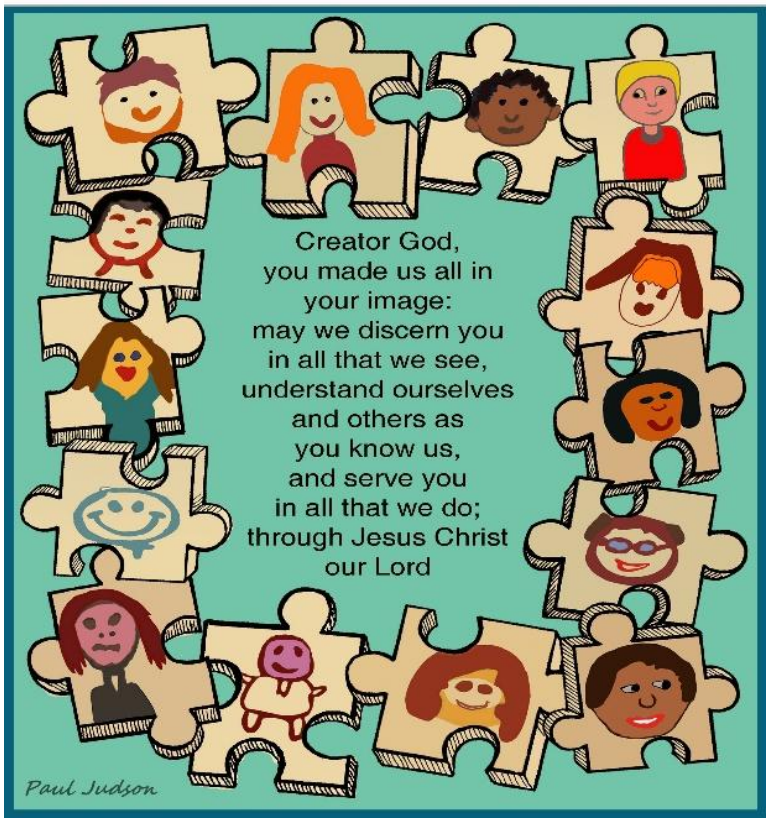
Keep in touch with

St Alban's Church

Revd. Marie Flint

Parish Office: 0161 477 0456

(Mon & Fri 9.30-12.30)



JULY/AUGUST 2025

To Contact the Church……

Parish Office: 0161 477 0456
Email: stalbanofferton@gmail.com

Priest: Revd. Marie Flint
0161 480 3773
revmarieflint@gmail..com

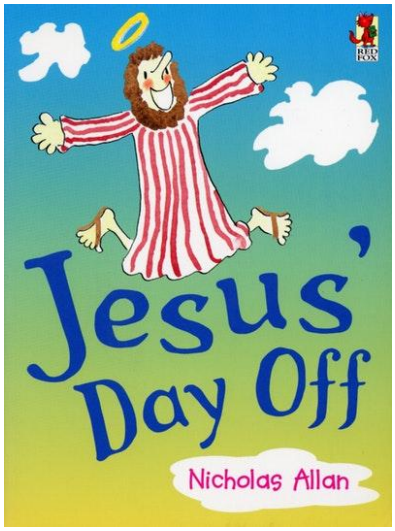
Churchwardens	Eileen Comerford	0161 480 4235
	David Griffiths	07505122531
Treasurer	David Haslam	
Secretary	Janet Renshaw	
Reader	Brenda Baxendale	
Safeguarding	Jen Sadler	

safeguard@stalbans@gmail.com

You can find lots of information about the church and its activities on our Parish Website:
www.stalbanofferton.org.uk

Find us on Facebook, Instagram, X and
www.achurchnearyou.com

Marie Writes-



As the Summer holidays approach, I am looking forward to a week away with my family and hoping that the nice weather holds out until August.

I've got a little book at home called 'Jesus' Day Off' by Nicholas Allan. It is a children's picture book that I sometimes share with groups of children. In the story, Jesus gets so worn out from saving the world that one day he wakes up tired and some of the miracles don't quite go to plan and he gets his words muddled when he's preaching. So, Jesus goes to the doctor, who prescribes a day off relaxing sitting in the sun. Jesus spends his day off by doing cartwheels in the sand, playing catch with his halo, going for a picnic, having a swim and then a long donkey ride! When he sits down at the end of the day, although he's had a lovely time, Jesus feels bad because he hasn't been able to help anybody. So, he tells his dad all about it. His dad points out that even though Jesus didn't realise it, he was blessing people all the time. Where Jesus had cartwheeled, fountains of water appeared in the desert, where he'd played with the halo and had a picnic the trees bloomed with fruit. Where Jesus has swam, the fishermen had caught lots of fish and anyone who had seen Jesus on his donkey ride felt instantly happy. "See", says the father "When you're feeling better yourself, you can only make others feel better too".

It's a bit of a silly story really but it makes an important point. Only when we are rested and spiritually well-resourced can we give our all in the service of other people. You can't pour from an empty cup, so they say.
Scripture tells us that this is something that Jesus did understand. He took naps in boats. He took himself off to be alone to pray. He escaped from the busyness of the crowds that wanted more from him. He rested in the homes of his followers. The idea of resting is of course, right at the beginning at creation when God takes a rest on the 7th day. This kind of sabbath rest is a holy rest – of recuperating, reconnecting and resourcing. It points towards our final rest with God at the end of our earthly lives; something which Peter Burn highlights in his poem 'The Sabbath Call':

Come, children all,
Obey the call,
The Sabbath gives to every soul;
Leave work and play,
Make no delay,
Your God hath bless'd the Seventh day:
It floods the world with holy calm,
Its hours are rife with healing balm;
Have you a care? To school prepare, Make known your wants to God in prayer.

"We children all,
Obey the call,
The Sabbath gives to every soul;

All things of play,
We cast away,
And welcome now the Seventh day:
Our Sabbath School we love, we love,
Sweet emblem of 'The Home' above.
We love to raise,
In prayer and praise,
Our voices to the God of days."

So, be sure to make time for rest, whether that involves a holiday with the family, cartwheels, donkey rides or something else. Take time to connect with God and allow God to refill your cup.

Wishing you a blessed summer,

Rev'd Marie

Walking is amazing – here's how to get started-



Walking is simply good for you. Even a casual stroll can give your overall physical and mental health a boost. So says Britain's leading walking charity, Ramblers.
It also says that the current mantra of 'ten thousand steps a day' need not daunt you, as "you don't need to adhere to this to feel the benefits of getting outside and stretching your legs." Even walking for just 30 minutes five times a week can help ward off back pain, according to a recent study.

So – here's five ways to get going….

Walk in the morning – you are more likely to fit it in before the day takes off.
Start gently, set an easy pace.
Keep it short, to start with. Build up your distances gradually.
Aim to build it up to last for at least half an hour.
Work out some simple local routes that suit you.

Doctors tell us that 'movement is medicine', and this medicine is certainly cost-free.

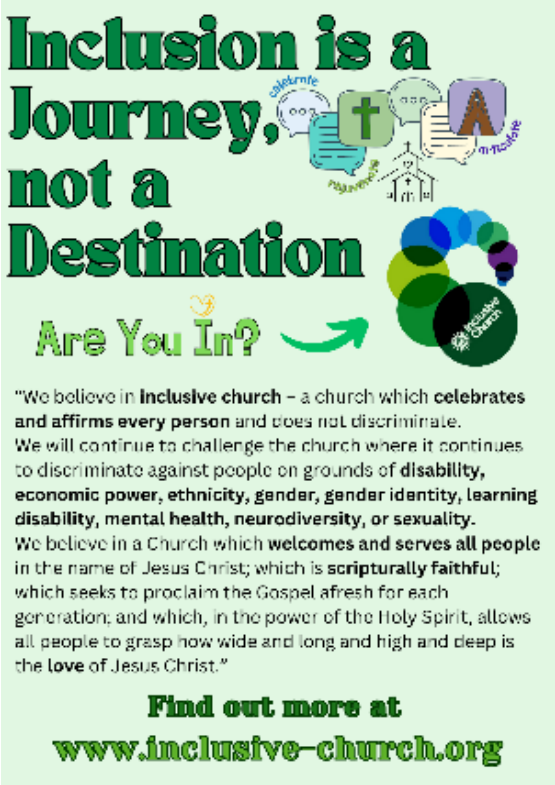


Thursdays 6.30pm - 8.30pm

St. Alban's Church
1A Salcombe Rd, Offerton SK2 5AG

All abilities music activities & learning, age 11-16

All enquiries please e-mail
stockportmusicproject@gmail.com



Joining the Inclusive Church Network

Paul Mittler, our inclusion officer has been working hard, with support from the PCC, to try to make St. Alban's as inclusive as possible. We've introduced welcome signs and bibles in different languages, provided Makaton resources in the children's corner, made sure our lighting is improved and hearing loop is working well. Some of us have become dementia friends and we make sure we have large print hymn books and service sheets.

We celebrate Pride month by flying the Pride flag in June and the PCC has agreed to offer Prayers of Love and Faith for same sex couples. St. Alban's has a good reputation for being a friendly place and we believe that our church should be a place of welcome and safety for all God's children. There is still some work to do, especially as our building is difficult to move around for people with physical disabilities, but inclusion is high on our agenda.

We are delighted that we have recently been accepted into the Inclusive Church network, which is a nationwide network of like-minded churches from across different denominations. It means that if a person is searching for an inclusive church, then they will be able to find us more easily. We can also use the network to build on what we already offer. If you have any ideas about how we might make St. Alban's more inclusive, please let Paul know.

Many thanks to Paul for his advocacy and relentless striving to make improvements to our inclusion provision.

Rev'd Marie

No worries



A 102-year-old lady was asked if she had any worries about the future. She replied: "Not since I got my eldest son into an old people's home.'

Celebrating St. Alban’s Day with confirmations!

On St Alban's Day on 22nd June we celebrated by welcoming Bishop Mark Tanner, Bishop of Chester to lead our service of baptism, confirmation and communion. Congratulations to Tom, Sophia, Natalie, Debbie and Lou plus the 2 candidates from Norbury on your baptisms and confirmations!
It was such a joyous and spirit filled service, followed by coffee and cake, of course!



A Celebration of St. Alban's weddings



On Saturday 21st June, to coincide with St. Alban's Day the following day we welcomed visitors to church for a celebration of weddings that have happened in our church over the years. Many thanks to everyone who shared photos, wedding dresses and wedding memorabilia for people to enjoy looking at on the day. From the wedding of Annie Moss to Joseph Pickford on 9th August 1929 to our most recent marriage of Gemma and Brain Horton on 7th June 2025 and everything in between, we really did get a good feel of the celebrations that have happened in our church through time – as well as a snapshot of the changes in fashion styles over the years! Church was also decorated beautifully with flowers and lights and it was a delight to be able to leave these in place for the wonderful confirmation service on the following day. Thank you to everyone who worked so hard with preparing the church for the weekend.

























We are planning on using the wedding photos we have on display later in the year, when we have another open day. This time, we'll be opening for the Heritage Open Days on Saturday 13th September; a day which we hope to coincide with the season of Harvest, by also having a Scarecrow Festival.

We will be inviting local schools, organisations and local businesses to make a scarecrow for inclusion in the festival, so it will be a real community event as well. If you'd like to make a scarecrow then get planning now, or if you know of a group that would like to get involved, please do let them know about it.



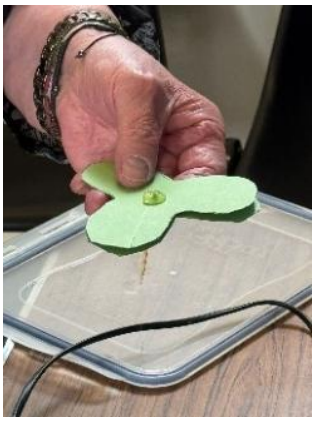


June Messy church







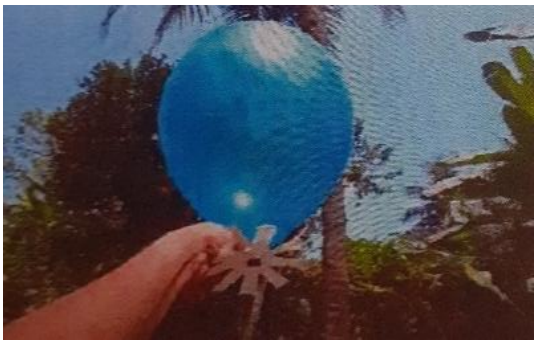






June's activities included a fidget spinner, balloon helicopter, birthday cake, breath powered rafts, tongues on fire, s'mores marsh mallows and a peace dove.



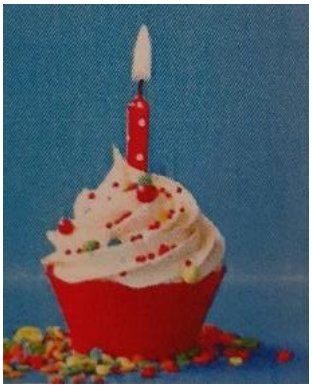












ST ALBAN'S CHURCH, OFFERTON

GARDENING CLUB

COME AND HELP OUR GARDEN BLOOM

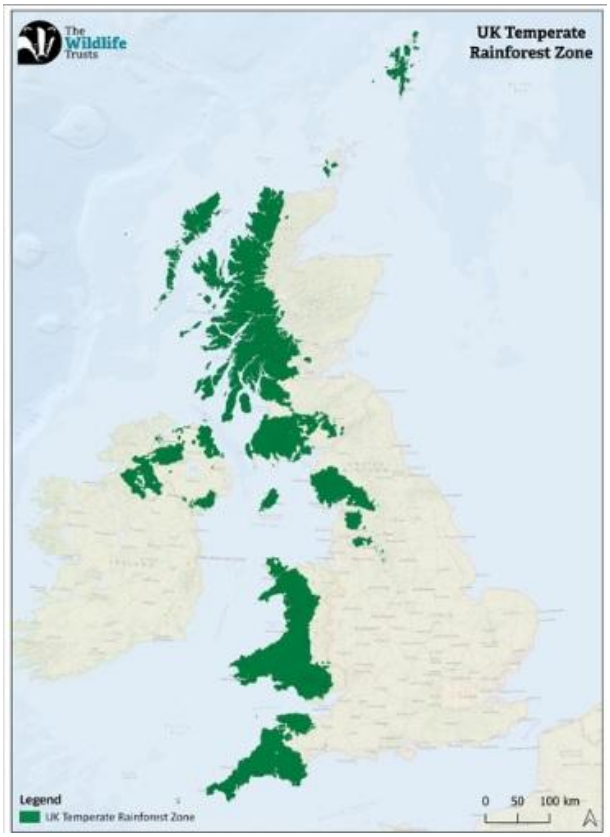
1ST SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH

10AM–12PM

ALL ARE WELCOME – ANY AGE, ANY ABILITY. JUST DROP IN TO LEND A HAND, HELP BUILD A BUG HOTEL, WEED, PLANT, MEET NEW PEOPLE AND HAVE SOME FUN.

JULY/AUGUST 2025 Newsletter

ECO CHURCH
AN A ROCHA UK PROJECT



June 22 was World Rainforest Day. Did you know we have temperate rainforests in the UK. I never knew, but we do. Temperate rainforests are home to mosses, lichens, fungi, as well as trees, plants, birds, insects and mammals. If you are on holiday in the Western areas of the UK such as the Lake District, Wales, Cornwall, Devon or the west coast of Scotland, many of the woodlands you will walk in will be temperate – check them out. But we don't have to go too far to see this type of woodland – Woodbank Park and Woodlands Park also contain some temperate areas. Have a walk around and see if you can find them.

If you are holidaying near Sudbury on the North Essex/Suffolk border why not visit A Rocha UK's Foxearth Meadows Nature Reserve. An 11 acre site which has a variety of habitats where you can see dragon flies, damselflies, kingfishers, lizards, toads and even otters, it's a beautiful, peaceful reserve for wildlife.





A Rocha UK also have an urban community nature reserve called Wolf Fields which just off Norwood Road in Southhall, West London if you're ever in that area. It's a 3 acre community greenspace, with orchard, allotment, beehives, sensory garden, meadow, art installation, prayer labyrinth and ponds. They cleared 54 tonnes of rubbish to make this special place.

Here's a couple of lovely plants to keep a look out for whilst you are holidaying. They both flower from now until September.



Lesser Stitchwort

Has pretty star shaped white flowers seen in woodlands, meadows, hedges and roadside verges. Each flower is only open for 3 days but new flowers are produced until the end of September.

Oxeye Daisy



Grows in swathes along roadsides, edges of fields or hay meadows. You will see them in the countryside, towns and at the coast. They are large, white daisy like flowers which are easily recognisable. The large blooms can be seen until the end of September and are so bright they appear to glow in moonlight, sometimes known as the Moon Daisy or Moonpenny.

4 things to find on the seashore



Mermaids Purse



Cuttle Fish Bones



Razor Shell



Sea Potato

If you find any why not bring them to church to show us.

Looking forward we have the **Season of Creation** from 1 September to 4 October – an ecumenical celebration of prayer and action for creation. The theme for 2025 is **PEACE WITH CREATION**.

The season starts with a day of prayer for Creation and ends with the fast of St Fransis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology.

Look out for more information in our September Magazine



PEACE WITH CREATION
SEASON OF CREATION 2025

JULY-AUGUST 2025

Our summer tip this year is to go out and just enjoy what nature has to offer.
Cheshire Wildlife trust suggests a SUMMERTIME SENSORY ADVENTURE – here's some ideas.
If you want more go to their website www.cheshirewildlifetrust.org.uk

Listen

Stand outside in your garden, local green space or wild area and listen. What can you hear? Notice all the sounds around you. You might want to close your eyes to focus more clearly. Can you hear…the wind blowing? leaves rustling in trees? birds singing? water flowing? How did it make you feel.

Touch

There are so many textures in nature! Try feeling the bark on a tree (make a rubbing to put in your sketch book), or running your hand over a smooth pebble or feeling cool water trickle through your fingers or feeling different leaves and noticing their different textures

See

Wherever you are, whether in the middle of a city, or in the countryside, or by the sea, there's always wildlife to be found if you look closely enough.
Challenge yourself to find... underwater wildlife - take a look in a pond. Can you see snails or diving beetles just below the surface? Can you see bees looking for pollen on a flower or birds flying overhead

Smell

There are so many rich, vibrant scents in nature. Why not try smelling... freshly cut grass, a range of different flowers, noticing the differences between them or smell herbs, like lavender and rosemary, or the best in my opinion smelling the sea air.



Why not start your very own NATURE JOURNAL of all the things you have heard and seen. Nature diaries capture special moments in time with nature. You don't have to be an artist – just sketch or write down what you have seen – or take a photo, print it off and stick it in your diary. Go on give it a try?



It doesn't have to be perfect - A brand-new sketchbook can feel scary. It's an opportunity to learn and be curious. With each drawing or photo, you will create your own library of things to look back on. You may like some more than others, but that's ok! It should be fun and relaxing, so don't worry about making mistakes. This is your chance to slow down, learn and look carefully at the wild world around us.

Write about all these things in your Nature Journal, find poems, pictures or leaflets to put in your journal as well.

Church of England Attendance rises for fourth year



Attendance at Church of England churches grew for the fourth year in a row last year. The overall number of regular worshippers across the Church of England's congregations grew to 1.02 million in 2024, a rise of 1.2 per cent, according to an early snapshot of the annual Statistics for Mission findings.

It was the second year in a row in which the Church of England's 'worshipping community' – the combined number of regular members of local congregations – has stood above a million since the Covid-19 pandemic. The numbers in the pews on a typical Sunday was up by a further 1.5 per cent to 582,000 in 2024, extending rises over recent years.

Overall, the in-person attendance across the week edged upwards by 1.2 per cent in a year, and stood at just over 701,000 last year, according to the early figures. The increase was driven by a recovery in attendance by adults (over 16), among whom average Sunday attendance was up by 1.8 per cent, and weekly attendance rose by 1.5 per cent. While the overall figures show that in-person attendance has not fully reached pre-pandemic levels, the figures suggest it is moving closer to the pre-pandemic trend.

The preliminary snapshot of Statistics for Mission returns follows separate figures which show there has also been a sharp increase in traffic on the Church of England's church-finder website, AChurchNearYou.com. The number of page visits to AChurchNearYou.com jumped by 55 per cent last year to almost 200 million as people searched for their local congregation.

The Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell, said: "The Church of England exists to share the good news of Jesus Christ. So it is encouraging to see further signs that more people are coming to faith in Jesus Christ and having their lives changed". Although this is just a snapshot and we don't know the ages of those who have started attending church in the past year, other evidence suggests that many of these are young adults.

Debbie Clinton, the Church of England's Director for Vision and Strategy, said: "Our statistics are much more than numbers, each represents an individual. In 2024 we have heard and seen exciting stories of growth in parishes, in our estates and in post-industrial and coastal towns. "Nationally we aim to ensure that each young person has a flourishing children, youth and families' ministry within reach of them, we are seeing growth in the number of churches with more than 25 young people attending."



Cycle of Prayer

This month we pray for our sisters and brothers in Christ across Stockport Deanery and we pray for people living in Pakistan, India
and other countries where changing weather patterns cause devastating flooding.



Did you know that there is a good selection of Christian books to borrow at the back of church? Please help yourself and just return it when you've finished with it. We'd love to hear what you think of them too, so we'd welcome any short reviews of any of the books for inclusion in this magazine.
Please email stalbanofferton@gmail.com with your reviews.

Happy reading!

Where do cricket bats come from?



We see them, off and on, all summer, cricket bats. But did you ever wonder how they are made?

The timber comes from mature willow trees, each of which should give about 30 bats. It is first cut into rounds, and clefts are split out.
Each cleft is then rough sawn, and waxed at the ends, to stop moisture loss. The clefts are air or kiln dried before being cut into a basic blade shape. The craftsman puts the springiest part of the bat in the centre.

Next, comes 'pressing the blade'. This is when the willow fibres are compressed, to strengthen the timber so that it can withstand the impact of the ball. Then, the handle is fitted by glue. It is made of cane and rubber strips, and set slightly forward, for a perfect pick up.

The bat is then shaped by a hand-drawn knife and smoothed by a wooden plane. The shoulders of the bat are blended with the spoke-shave, and then the bat is sanded.

Finally, there is the process of minding, polishing and labelling. This is where the bat is mounted in a lathe, controlled via a foot treadle. The handle is bound, using twine and glue. The blade is then finely waxed, to a satin finish. Finally, grips are fitted onto the handle, and labels are applied.



There's no better sound than leather hitting willow and a wonderful cricket match – summer is here

Nigel Beeton writes: July sees that annual festival of lawn tennis, Wimbledon, which seems to be regarded as the pinnacle of tennis tournaments. Whether you go to Wimbledon, or watch it on TV, it's there to be enjoyed!

It's that Wimbledon time of the year

The 'pop' of a ball on a racket
The voice of the Umpire so clear
here is nothing in quite the same bracket
As that Wimbledon time of the year!

'Fault!' cries the line judge, eyes beady,
The ball boys and girls on their toes;
For more of these matches we're greedy:
The bug for this game grows and grows!

The weather may shine, or be raining
The temperature warm, mild or chill;
Our appetites won't be restraining
For strawberries on Henman Hill.

The queues may be long but endure them
You'll get to the court – have no fear
Just settle and watch and be sure then –
It's that Wimbledon time of the year!



Welcome



We welcome into our church family -

Arabella and Ralphy Cox who were baptised on 8th June 2025

Congratulations



Congratulations to Mr and Mrs Horton married 7th June at St Alban's.

The couple are members of Soul City Church who currently meet at St Thomas's Church, the wedding service was jointly led by Revd Marie and Pastor Ben Jeffrey from Soul City.

Such a joyous occasion and a delight to share with our Christian sisters and brothers in Christ in Stockport.

Chester Diocese News

If you have access to a computer you may want to catch up on the latest news by logging on to –

www.chesteranglican.org

St Albans Church is a vibrant and active Church of England Parish Church in Stockport

We welcome visitors of all faiths and of no faith.

Our services are as inclusive as possible, and all are welcome to join the church family for services and events.

Regular Services and Events at

St Alban's & St. John's

Sunday

9.00am Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer (1st Sunday only)
10.30am Holy Communion (children's club 3rd Sunday)

Tuesday

10.30am Praise & Play (term time)

Wednesday

10.30am Holy Communion – St John's (2nd, 3rd and 4th Wed)
10.30am Healing Service- St Alban's (1st Wed of month)
1.00-3.00pm Bereavement Café (1st Wednesday only)

Thursday

2.00-4.00pm Craft Club
6.30-8.30pm Youth Music Group (term time)

Saturday

10.00am-12.00pm Gardening club (1st Saturday of month)
3.30pm-5.30pm Messy Church (1st Saturday of month)