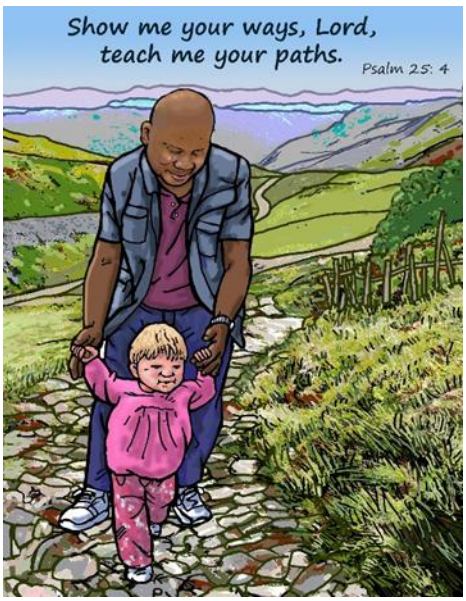
Keep in touch with

St Alban's Church

Revd. Marie Flint

Parish Office: 0161 477 0456

(Mon & Fri 9.30-12.30)



May 2026

To Contact the Church……

Parish Office:	0161 477 0456
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Priest:	Revd. Marie Flint 0161 480 3773 revmarieflint@gmail..com

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	Tony Renshaw	
Treasurer	David Haslam	
Secretary	Janet Renshaw	
Reader	Brenda Baxendale	
Safeguarding	Jen Sadler	
	safeguarding@stalbanofferton.org.uk	

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

Debs Writes -

I am approaching my one-year anniversary as a Curate at St. Albans. As I look forward to being ordained as a Priest on 20th June at St. Albans (you are very welcome by the way!) I am reflecting on all I have experienced so far. I am so thankful for the kindness and warm welcome that I have received. It has been a joy and privilege to worship and serve with the church family and wider community. When I started my curacy Marie gave me a little wooden praying mouse. I have since discovered that this isn't the only praying mouse at St. Albans, there are other praying mice which if you look really carefully move around the church.



This is such a great reminder of how central prayer is to our communal and individual lives. How the continuing faithfulness of the praying people at St. Albans over many generations is so precious. The bible uses the burning of incense as a picture of prayers continually rising up to God, King David says in Psalm 141 'May my prayer be set before you like incense'. Sometimes it can feel like our prayers go into thin air or make no difference. But the picture of prayer being like incense tell us that our prayers are precious and valuable to God. We are encouraged by St. Paul to pray continually, to pray all sorts of different kinds of prayers – asking, thanking, listening, confession, praising.

Do our prayers make a difference? I think they do, although not always in the way we expect. There is so much we do not see or understand about other people and the world around us. We do not ever see the full picture. Jesus came to bring his kingdom of joy, grace and peace but he told his disciples that they would experience hardship and trouble. One day 'he will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away' (Rev 21:4). But now we get glimpses of God's kingdom of joy, peace and grace breaking through the chaos and pain around us in the world.



Our Garden of Gethsemane for schools Easter experience and Holy Week

Just as Jesus experienced in the Garden of Gethsemane and Mary Magdalene did in the garden on resurrection morning there is still pain and tears but this pain comes with hope. Jesus is strengthened by an angel and knows God's presence with him, Mary Magdalene encounters Jesus in her confusion even though she doesn't recognise him at first.

The Easter experience tomb



Corrie Ten Boom speaks movingly about the difference prayer made to her in very difficult circumstances. She was a Dutch Christian Holocaust survivor, arrested in 1944 and taken with her sister to Ravensbrook concentration camp. Her family had been betrayed to the Gestapo for hiding Jews so they could escape to safety and resistance fighters. They managed to smuggle a bible into the camp, Corrie tells of a time they had been reading St. Paul's encouragement to the Thessalonians to 'give thanks in every circumstance' and wondered how they could be thankful for their flea infested dormitory. But then they realised that this was the reason that the guards had stopped checking their room which left them in peace to pray and worship. I wonder if sometimes one of the ways prayer makes a difference is by helping us see our circumstances differently, to see situations and people the way God does. Prayer reminds us that God is with us in every situation.

"What wings are to a bird, and sails are to a ship," said Corrie Ten Boom, "so is prayer to the soul."

If you would like an opportunity to pray with others why not come along to Thursday Evening Prayer 5.30pm-6.00pm join in person (in the Galilee) or online email the office for the zoom link.

I finish with a favourite prayer from Ephesians 3, I pray that we 'may have power to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge'

Debs Kelly (Curate)

Welcoming school children to Experience Easter



During Lent we had the pleasure of welcoming children from 3 different local schools to church to 'Experience Easter'. We journeyed around different interactive story stations where the children learnt about Jesus' entry to Jerusalem, the Last Supper, the Garden of Gethsemane, the crucifixion and resurrection. Thank you to all the volunteers, staff and pupils who worked so hard to make this happen.







Rev'd Marie

Beware Bread for Ducks



The Canal & River Trust, which looks after Britain's waterways, has warned that bread is 'junk food' for ducks. It can lead to excessive droppings, which spread disease. If bread is left to rot, it can trigger noxious odours which can kill fish and encourage algae, as well as rats and mice. So – what DO ducks eat? Try corn, peas, lettuce and seeds.

Church Bells rang for the first time in Betws-y-Coed



Those who enjoy visiting Betws-y-Coed will be glad to know that the bells at St Mary's Church in Betws-y-Coed were rung for the first time at a church service this Easter, following the completion of a major restoration project. Although the church was built with plans for a full ring of bells, that work was never completed. More than 150 years later, the tower now has a full set of bells in place. Eight of the bells were brought from St John's Church in Porthmadog, after its closure in 2024. Six dating from 1900 and two added in 1902. The remaining bell, cast in 1873 for Betws-y-Coed by John Warner of London, has been restored and rehung as the clock and chiming bell. Work on the installation included cleaning and tuning the bells, removing original fittings and installing new headstocks. A new base frame was designed using sections from the Porthmadog installation, supported by the original beams in the tower. The church clock mechanism has also been replaced so it can now chime the hour. The project has cost around £100,000, funded mainly through grants, including support from the Keltek Trust, Hobart Trust and Bernard Piggott Trust.

IS IT YOU?
Ministries in the Church of England

Vocations Sunday - Is it You?

That could be what you are asking. You feel like there's a nudge, a stirring, a prompting and are asking God - "Is it you, Lord?". And it could be that it is God calling, that God is asking you: "Is it you?"

When we talk about ministry or calling, we often think it's just about being ordained or about being something like a Reader, involved in the preaching and worship leading. But ministry is so much broader than that, and God calls all kinds of people to all kinds of things. Being a churchwarden or a sidesperson, being a PCC member or involved in any number of different church activities is a ministry, as is living out your faith in the workplace, the community, at school or college or wherever you are during the week.

As we seek to bless the 1.5 million people across our diocese who don't yet know Jesus, each of us might gently ask two questions:
"Is it you, Lord?"

And…

"Is it me?"

April 26th was Vocations Sunday, a day when the church encourages people to think about how they might serve and whether God might be saying to them "Is it you?".

There are many ways to serve — some visible, some quiet, some public, some deeply personal.

Sometimes the question begins as, *"Is it you, God?"*
And slowly becomes, *"Is it me?"*
If that question is stirring for you, make sure you talk to someone about it.

If you, or someone you know, is beginning to wonder about that, there are plenty of ways to explore further.

Called to Serve events

These events run throughout the year and are designed for anyone who wants to explore different ways of serving and growing, whether you're just curious or sensing something more intentional.

- Monday 8th June 2026, 7:00–9:30pm (online)
- Saturday 7th November 2026, 10:00am–1:00pm, St Mary's, Ashton Mersey

The diocesan Ministry team also has Vocations Explorers, who can help you reflect on your gifts, your experience, and that emerging sense of calling. Or you might consider joining Foundations for Ministry, a 10-week course where people from different churches explore together how they can serve God's mission in the world.

For information on any of these opportunities, email ministry@chester.anglican.org.

Archbishop of Canterbury to visit West Africa



This summer, from 26th July to 8th August, Archbishop Mullaly will visit the Anglican Church of the Province of West Africa "to strengthen the ties between the See of Canterbury and the Province".

Archbishop Mullally will visit Ghana and Cameroon at the invitation of Dr Cyril Kobina Ben-Smith, the Bishop of Asante-Mampong and Primate of West Africa, who was among the 26 Primates to attend the archbishop's installation at Canterbury. The visit is part of Archbishop Sarah's commitment to building relationships across the Anglican Communion.

Sharing God's word in Holy week





On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of Holy week we gathered at the Puss in Boots with our brothers and sisters in Christ from different denominational churches in Offerton to read the Passion of Christ aloud. Each day we chose a different Gospel to read and followed with a short discussion about the passage. It's always wonderful to share time and learning with our friends from different churches and to pray together. Our time together in Holy week was particularly special and blessed.

Rev'd Marie

Pictures from Holy Week













8th May- Julian of Norwich, a voice from a distant cell



Many years ago, studying English literature at university, I was intrigued to be introduced to the work of Julian of Norwich. She was writing at the end of the 14th century, when our modern English language was slowly emerging from its origins in Anglo-Saxon and Middle English.

Our lecturer was mainly concerned with her importance in the history of the language (she was the first woman, and the first significant writer, to write in English). But I was more intrigued by the ideas she was expressing. She was an anchoress – someone who had committed herself to a life of solitude, giving herself to prayer and fasting. St Julian's, Norwich was the church where she had her 'cell'.

Her masterpiece, *Revelations of Divine Love,* reveals a mystic of such depth and insight that today up and down Britain there are hundreds, possibly thousands, of 'Julian Groups' who meet regularly to study her writings and try to put them into practise.

She is honoured this month in the Lutheran and Anglican Churches, but although she is held in high regard by many Roman Catholics, her own Church has never felt able to recognise her as a 'saint'. This is probably because she spoke of God as embracing both male and female qualities. *Revelations* is an account of the visions she received in her tiny room, which thousands of pilgrims visit every year.

Her most famous saying, quoted by T S Eliot in one of his poems, is 'All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well.' These words have brought comfort and strength to many a soul in distress.

The nations favourite churches and favourite stained glass window



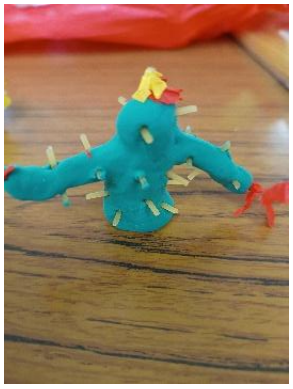
The East Window in Carlisle Cathedral has been declared the nation's favourite stained-glass window (in a recent survey by the Association of English Cathedrals).

As for our favourite church, there is no one clear winner, but the following 10 churches consistently high as among the most loved in the country, according to data from the National Churches Trust:
St Paul's Cathedral London; York Minster; Coventry Cathedral; St Mary's Redcliffe, Bristol; Shrine of our Lady of Walsingham; Durham Cathedral; Lincoln Cathedral; St Bride Fleet Street; and Tundergarth Parish Church.

15th May – Matthias the Apostle – called by lots

Have you ever happened to be in the right place at the right time, with certain qualifications, and suddenly realise that God is singling you out for a special task? If so, Matthias is a good patron saint for you! In Acts 1 (15 – 26) the apostles had a task to do: Judas had betrayed Jesus and died, and so a new apostle needed to be chosen. He had to have been a follower of Christ from the Baptism to the Ascension, and a witness of the Resurrection in order to qualify. In the event, the choice fell to one of two: Joseph Barsabas and Matthias.
Lots were drawn, and Matthias was chosen. How confident he must have felt in his calling: what encouragement that would be when the going got rough in later years! Matthias is thought to have ministered in Cappadocia and even Ethiopia. His emblem is usually an axe or halberd, regarded as the instrument of his martyrdom. His supposed relics were translated from Jerusalem to Rome by the empress Helena.

Messy Easter







This month our activities included a scavenger hunt, clay crosses, decorating a chicken, Holy week hanging, desert cacti's, wilderness sand pit, salt painting Easter eggs and an edible Easter garden.



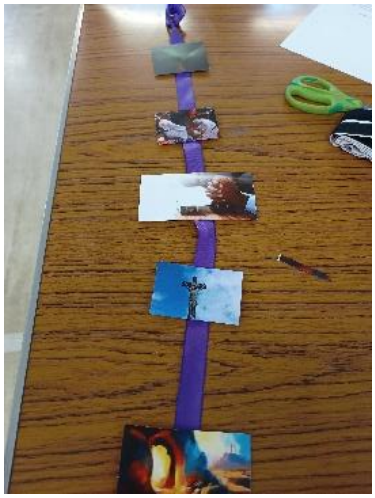




























Easter at St. Alban's















MAY 2026

ECO CHURCH
AN A ROCHA UK PROJECT



Plantlife's NO MOW MAY is here; it's time to give power to the flowers.

No Mow May is just the beginning; it's followed by LET IT BLOOM JUNE and Mow-saic months right the way through. They're all part of the growing No Mow Movement!

Plantlife see May as an entry point for people who want to have wildlife in their gardens, whether you're someone who has never thought beyond a neatly manicured lawn or someone who has always wanted to try gardening for nature. They want to get people cutting less, for longer. So, whether you join just for May or stick with it until Autumn, it all makes a real difference for nature.



Why your Lawn Matters……Your lawn can be colourful kingdom, bursting with life, nature at its best . Take a closer look. Your lawn is an ecosystem in itself – below the ground there's a complex world of fungi and microbes living among the roots. Above the soil, plants form mini jungles which shelter, feed, and support all kinds of beasties from insects, birds and mammals. They just need a bit of room to grow.



Don't panic about going wild, give it a go and aim to maintain at least 2 lengths of grass throughout and beyond No Mow May**.**

May marks the onset of the summer and the start of a season full of brilliant blooms, colour and life! That buzz doesn't die down at the end of May, it continues well into autumn. Giving some areas a monthly cut will surprisingly let shorter flowers multiply, boosting nectar production. Leaving other areas longer will support more specialist, tall plant species, which feed and shelter an array of animal life. Variety is key for a wilder garden! As it is to a great life…**so join in NO MOW MAY and beyond, and see your garden come alive – giving POWER TO THE FLOWERS.** Ideas from www.plantlife.org.uk

MAY 2026

Clothing & Travelling - a few tips on how to be more Eco Friendly

Washing your clothes

Synthetic material sheds microplastics in the washing machine, which reach the ocean and are ingested by the fish we eat. 14 million tonnes of microplastics are on the seabed, and this number is increasing annually. If you over wash clothing at high temperature it will, in time affect how they look.
-Try to wash less, this saves energy and water, and will make your clothes last longer, save you money and help to save the planet.

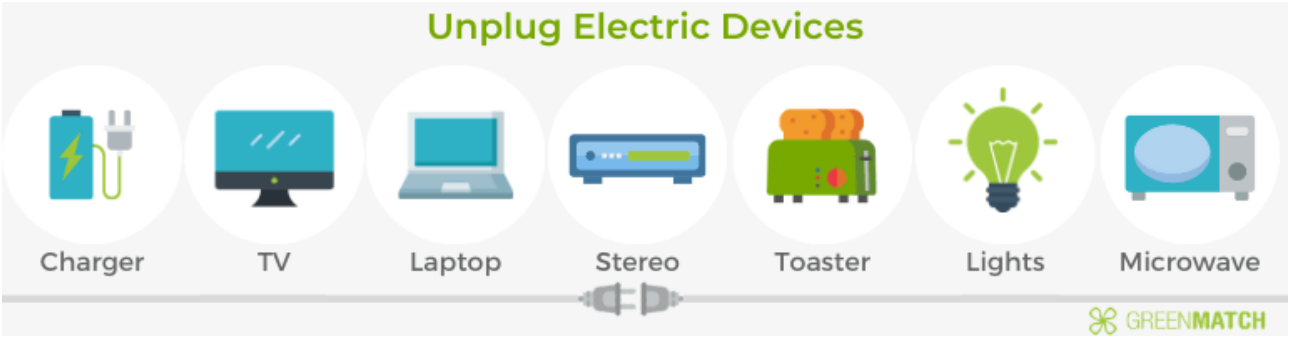
Throwing away wearable clothing



1 million tonnes of textile waste is produced by the UK each year, clothing can take 100 years to decompose in landfill sites and release huge amounts of greenhouse gases.
-Don't be a slave to fashion and over consumerism. Spending a fortune on clothing that will go out of fashion tomorrow! Repair your clothes or making easy alterations and repairs will enable you to wear them for longer and fit in with current trends. Vintage and second-hand outlets will offer more affordable alternative options, often based on the same clothing items.
If you do need to by some clothes why not but from a charity shop, you can easily adapt this clothing to your needs at a fraction of the cost of buying new.

Unplug before you travel

Devices that are shut off or in sleep mode still use energy. So wastes energy, so before going on holiday unplug your devices and save electricity. The average UK household spends between £50-£86 per year to power appliances left on standby or unused.

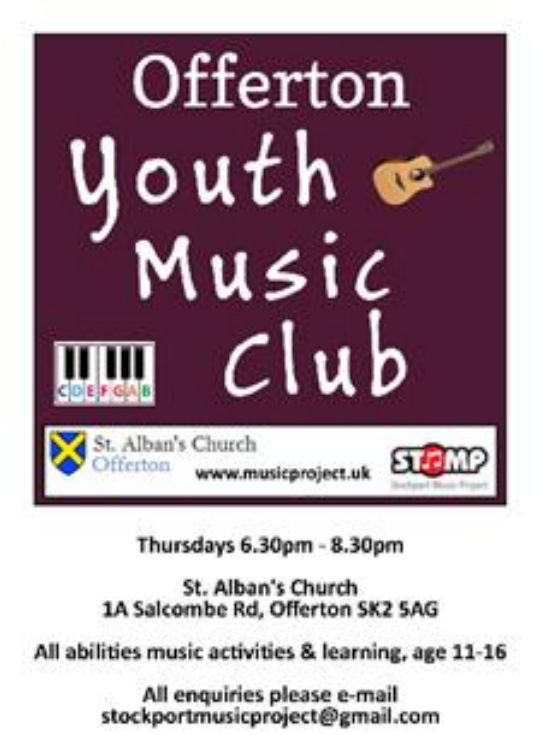


Pack light

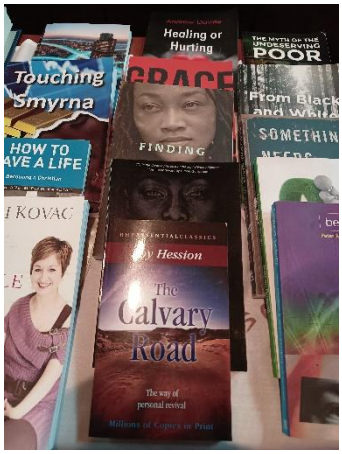
Flying to foreign destinations will emit emissions no matter what. However, if flying is the only option, then travellers can try to travel light to minimise pollution. The more luggage a plane carries on its travels, the more fuel the plane needs to fly.
Even if travelling in your car the less you take with you the more fuel you will save.
Ideas from www.greenmatch.co.uk

Cycle of Prayer

This month we pray for the people who work in our local businesses, and we pray for people living in Afghanistan. Since the return of the power of the Taliban regime, international aid has disappeared in a context where the country suffers from drought or 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!

<u>Notices found in church newsletters – that didn't quite come out right!</u>

Remember in prayer the many who are sick both of our church and the community.

Ladies are requested not to have children in the church kitchen.

Red Squirrels on the Isle of Wight



A sunbeam, in the woods of Wight
Illumines a magenta coat
And, sat within that beam of light.
A squirrel – red! And how we gloat!
Though squirrels are a common sight
We see them nearly ev'ry day
Aloft within the treetops height
But there, upon the Isle of Wight
No greys have ever set a paw
So go! You never know, you might
See squirrels you've not seen before.
A lovely island's best delight –
Red squirrels on the Isle of Wight.

By Nigel Beeton

Nigel Beeton writes: "I promise that I'm not receiving any commission from the Isle of Wight Tourist Board, but we had a lovely couple of weeks on that verdant isle last year. It has much to offer visitors of all ages, but for us, the highlight was spotting a red squirrel as we walked in the woods. This was the first time we'd ever seen a red squirrel in the wild, and it made our holiday!"

Welcome



We welcome into our family Zachariah Shaw

who was baptised on

19th April 2026

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

Sunday

9.00am Said Holy Communion with traditional language (1st Sunday only)

10.30am Sung Holy Communion for all the family (children's club 3rd Sunday)

Tuesday

10.30am Praise & Play (term time)

Wednesday

1-3pm Knit & Natter

Thursday

2-4pm Adult Craft Club (1st Thursday of month)

5.30pm Evening Prayer at St Alban's

6.30-8.30pm Youth Music Group (term time)

Saturday

10am-12pm Gardening club (1st Saturday of month)

3.30-5.30pm Messy Church (1st Saturday of month)