Keep in touch with

St Alban's Church

Revd. Marie Flint

Parish Office: 0161 477 0456

(Mon & Fri 9.30-12.30)



November 2026

To Contact the Church……

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

Churchwardens	Eileen Comerford	0161 480 4235
	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

Upcoming Special Services

Safeguarding Sunday – Sunday 15th November 10.30am
Scout and Guide Christmas Fair – 21st November



Marie Writes-

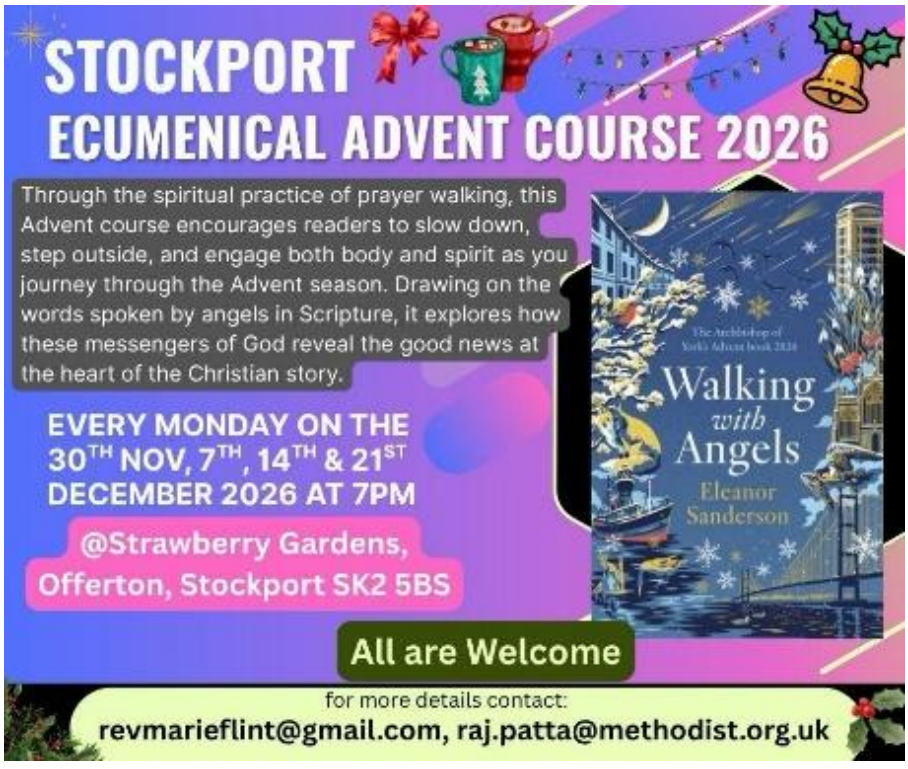
The autumn leaves seem to have started falling a little earlier than usual this year – I suspect due to the warm, dry summer we experienced. As the November nights draw in and the rest of the leaves turn orange and fall, November seems to bring a natural slowing down to our world. The colder weather and shortening days invite us indoors,

calling us to reflection. In the rhythm of the church calendar, November is a unique and beautiful bridge—a season that asks us to look back with deep gratitude before we look forward in hopeful anticipation.



We begin the month by celebrating All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day. These days serve as a profound reminder that we do not walk our journey of faith alone. We are surrounded, as the writer of Hebrews reminds us, by a "great cloud of witnesses."

This cloud isn't just made up of the monumental figures of history—the Peters, the Pauls, or the Francis of Assisi's. It is woven from the quiet, ordinary saints who have touched our own lives specifically. It is the Sunday school teacher who patiently taught us our first prayers, the grandparent whose well-worn Bible spoke volumes without a word, and the neighbour who quietly brought a hot meal in a time of grief. November invites us to name them, remember them, and thank God for their enduring light. I remember and give thanks for Morag who bought us homemade cottage pie just after the birth of our third child, when we were in the middle of household chaos and very sleep deprived.



Saints are not people who lived flawless, easy lives. They were human beings who faced uncertainty and hard times, just as we do. What made them saints was their stubborn refusal to let the darkness have the final word. In a world that often feels fractured, we are called to inherit that same stubborn hope. We are called to be the ones who light a candle rather than curse the dark.

Rev'd Marie


Stockport Ecumenical
Christmas
Carol Singing
@ALDI, 126 Lisburn Lane, Offerton,
Stockport SK2 5RH
At 1 pm, on Wednesday,
9th of December,2026
for more details contact:
revmarieflint@gmail.com, raj.patta@methodist.org.uk


ST ALBAN'S CHURCH OFFERTON
CHRISTMAS
FAIR 2026
28TH NOVEMBER
11AM-2PM
ST ALBAN'S CHURCH OFFERTON
FREE ENTRY!
WWW.STALBANOFFERTON.ORG.UK


St Alban's Church, Offerton
Blue Christmas
Christmas without a loved one
A reflective service of hope and remembrance for those who are hurting this Christmas
Sunday 20th December
6pm


ST ALBAN'S CHURCH, OFFERTON
invites you to
CHRISTINGLE SERVICE
Thur 24th December
4pm

Inclusive Church Newsletter

Excerpts from Inclusive Church network newsletter June 2026 – giving insight into why our toilet project at St. Alban's is so important.

A Penny for your…….

Going to spend a penny should never cost you your dignity.

Yet in recent years, toilets have become one of the most contested spaces in public life. Which perhaps tells us something important: toilets were never *really* about toilets.

They are about **dignity**. They are about **safety**. They are about **participation**. They are about whether people can **fully belong** within a community. They're part of how Churches embody Inclusivity.

The recent EHRC guidance and the ongoing public conversation around trans people and access to facilities has left many feeling frightened, uncertain and overwhelmed. Inclusive Church are working alongside others to understand the implications and to offer support, guidance and reassurance to our members, church leaders and partners. The legal situation remains complex and evolving, so rather than add another voice to the confusion, we are taking time to listen carefully and seek expert advice.

What I do feel able to say is this: many **trans people are really scared right now.**

Not theoretical people. Not abstract concepts. Real people. People who worship in our churches, volunteer in our communities, sing in our choirs, make tea, lead prayers, laugh, cry, hope and belong. People who are telling us they are worried about their future, their safety and whether they will remain welcome in spaces they have long called home. Many of them are losing sleep and the worry is making them ill. This matters.



As Christians, we are called to pay attention when vulnerable people tell us they are afraid. And we are asked to respond with **compassion**.
Nobody should face violence, intimidation or exclusion. Women deserve safety. Trans people deserve safety. Disabled people deserve safety. Everybody deserves dignity. Inclusive Church is an educational charity. We exist to help people keep learning, listening, discerning and growing in appreciation and awareness of the importance of inclusive, accessible church communities. Inclusion is not a destination we arrive at. It is an attitude of attention, a practice of pastoral care and inhabiting of compassion. It is

the ongoing work of noticing who is missing, who is struggling, and whose voice is being drowned out by louder ones.

The story of Elijah listening for God in **the still small voice** comes to mind. Not in the earthquake. Not in the fire. Not in the wind. Sometimes the loudest voices dominate the conversation, while the quiet voices carry the deepest truths. We must keep listening.

One of the challenges of our current media landscape is that attention and significance are not the same thing. Some stories dominate headlines for months, while others receive barely a mention.

In recent years trans people, who make up a tiny proportion of the population (around 0.5%), have been the subject of extraordinary levels of media and political attention. Yet at the same time other issues affecting the safety of women and girls often struggle to gain comparable coverage.

I was particularly struck by recent reporting into online communities that **actively encourage sexual violence** and coercive behaviour **towards women**. One such site reportedly received **81 million visits in a single month**, yet the story barely registered in the national conversation.

As Christians **committed to justice**, we need to be discerning whose voices are amplified, whose fears are centred, and where genuine harm is occurring, and keep returning to that question 'and what would Jesus do?'

And that brings us back to toilets.

Because toilets are one of those fascinating places where questions of dignity, access and belonging suddenly become visible. Everybody pees. Everybody needs the loo. Yet not everybody experiences that need with equal ease, safety or welcome.

We are not, nor should we ever be, about policing what someone has in their pants and whether we will let them pee in peace.

So, with apologies to anyone expecting a more conventional newsletter theme, this month I'd like to offer a collection of toilet thoughts.

Not because toilets are the most important thing in the world. But because they reveal a surprising amount about who we imagine our communities are for. And, one way or another, we all need toilets, just as we all need community. It feels to me to be an appropriate topic for Inclusive Church members to engage with. ***Rev Chantal***

Toilet thoughts

A well-designed toilet is almost invisible to the people it serves.



A poorly designed one can communicate: "We didn't imagine you would be here" which is often heard as “we don’t want you here”.

Parents with young children. Older people. Disabled people. People living with continence conditions. People taking medication. Neurodivergent people. Trans people. Visitors unfamiliar with the building. All may experience the same space very differently.

Here are a few things worth considering...

Privacy and Dignity

Decent toilet paper (and enough!). Covered bins. Good lighting. Clean facilities. Mirrors. Working locks. Effective fans.

These may seem basic, but they matter. To everyone.

Many people experience periods, incontinence, stoma care, medication side-effects or other health conditions that require privacy and dignity. Small changes can make a significant difference.

If your church provides food parcels or Christmas hampers, remember that toiletries, soap, toothpaste and toilet paper are often among the items most appreciated and least frequently donated.

Parenting and Caring

Baby changing facilities should not be restricted to women's toilets. Fathers, grandparents, foster carers and guardians change nappies too. Likewise it isn't a large outlay to add a child's potty and/or moveable step into some cubicles.



Where possible, consider family-friendly facilities that allow carers of different genders to support children safely and comfortably. Preferably in the same space as a toilet so single parents can also go without leaving their child unsupervised.

Accessibility

There is a huge range of accessibility considerations, and no single solution fits everyone.

However, some relatively simple adaptations can make a significant difference:

- **Hooks** at different heights for bags, coats, walking sticks or crutches.

- A **shelf** near the sink for medication, stoma supplies or changing bags.
- Contrasting **colours** around fixtures to assist visually impaired users.
- **Lever taps** that can be operated with limited dexterity.
- Doors that can be opened from the outside in an emergency – preferably that swing outwards.
- Adequate **turning space** for mobility equipment.
- **Grab handles** to assist with manoeuvring.

If accessibility isn't your area of expertise, seek advice from disabled people and accessibility organisations. They are the experts in their own experience.



Neurodiversity and Wellbeing

Mirrors, at heights that are usable, can be very helpful to those needing to centre themselves and regulate anxiety. Ideally above the sink, but that isn't always practical. Automatic lighting can be helpful, but lights that switch off while someone is in a cubicle can be deeply distressing. Clear signage, predictable layouts and spaces that feel safe and calm can all support people who process the world differently.

Never underestimate the value of reducing unnecessary stress.

Gender and Inclusion

Equal numbers of men's and women's toilets do not necessarily create equal access. Anyone who has attended a busy event has witnessed the disparity in queue lengths. Sometimes flexibility serves people better than rigid assumptions.

In my last parish one of the first things I did was turn two individual toilets into unisex facilities. The reason was simple: every user group had a different gender balance. Having two available toilets made more sense than effectively restricting access to one. Legally, gender neutral facilities are required to be provided. Segregated options are not.

The goal is not ideology. The goal is ensuring people can participate as fully as is practically possible in church/community life.

Hospitality

Some churches still have no toilet provision at all. Sometimes there are genuine historical or practical reasons, and it can feel just too hard to tackle. Yet it is worth recognising that access to toilet facilities is often a prerequisite for participation.

A person living with IBS, Crohn's disease, continence issues, pregnancy, disability or age-related conditions may simply be unable to attend a lengthy event without suitable facilities. Hospitality begins long before the sermon starts. Toilets don’t have to be the traditional, mains connected, flushing sort. There is also often funding available specifically to help with adapting buildings to increase their accessible facilities and provision.

I think it's fair to say that many of us fall into the trap of assuming our 'normal' is universal. It's important to remember that different countries and cultures can have very different habits and practices when it comes to the bathroom facilities folk are used to. What we know and do isn't the only way, nor always the best! Being aware of this can be helpful.

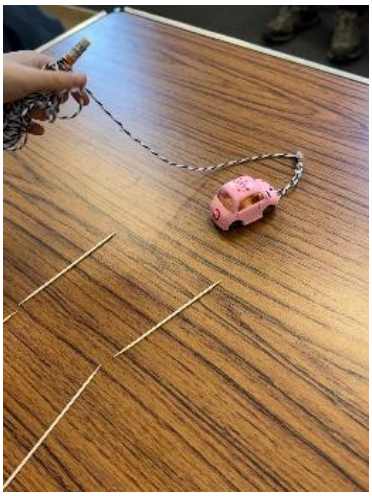
Inclusion is rarely about grand gestures. More often it is about noticing small barriers and quietly removing them. The more we attend to the smaller things, the easier and more manageable the bigger ones feel to tackle.

Going to spend a penny should never cost someone their dignity, their belonging or their place in the community. If we can elevate toilets from a taboo area we try to avoid considering, everyone benefits. Don’t underestimate how much can be improved with clear signage, clean facilities, pleasant soap, some paint, pictures or even a plant.

Article from the Inclusive Church network newsletter kindly submitted by Paul Mittler



October Messy Church







Our theme this month was John the Baptist and our activities included a Bee bookmark, friendship bee, winter veg, satsuma pumpkins, moving caterpillar, creepy crawly hunt, edible insects, straight and crooked path and a warm woolly coat.





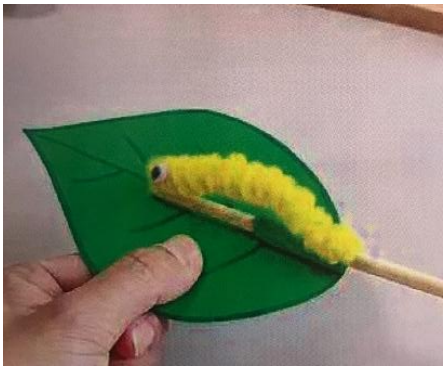


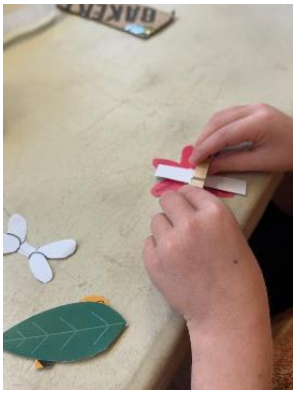




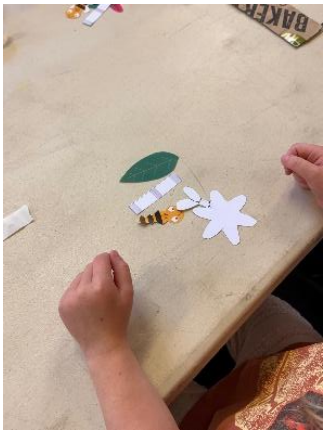
















November 2026 Eco News

Veg Pledge 2026 1-30 November 2026



Veg Pledge 2026 is a campaign to encourage us to make a positive impact on our health, the environment, and animal welfare by pledging to follow a vegetarian or vegan diet for a specified duration. This annual event invites people from all walks of life to explore the benefits of plant-based eating and to consider the impact of their dietary choices on a global scale. Veg Pledge provides resources, support, and a sense of community for participants, making it easier than ever to embrace a vegetarian or vegan lifestyle.

Veg Pledge campaigns have been organised by various vegetarian and vegan advocacy groups and organisations for several years. Over time, Veg Pledge has grown into a global movement, inspiring countless individuals to explore plant-based eating and make more conscious dietary choices. So why not challenge yourself to try vegetarian food for a week or a month. The aim to raise awareness about the benefits of plant-based diets, including improved health, reduced environmental impact, and animal welfare.

Now I am by no means a vegetarian, I must admit I love meat, but I do try to have a vegetable-based meal at least once a week. If we're having a mince-based meal, I usually use half meat mince and half plant-based mince, no one really notices the difference. I do like the Quorn sausage recipe, and we have this quite often.

Here are a couple of yummy recipes for you to try.



Quorn Sausage Casserole serves 4

Sausages are hardly known for their low-fat content. Luckily Quorn Sausages are! Quorn is great for weight-loss, containing less saturated fat than pork sausages. This recipe is great for filling you up, without filling out your new pair of jeans!

Ingredients

- 8 Quorn Sausages, cut into pieces
- 1 pepper (green or red), diced
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 150g sweetcorn
- 2 vegetable stock cubes
- 1 large onion, diced
- 1 celery stick, chopped into small pieces
- 400g chopped tomatoes
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- Dash of vegetable/olive oil

- 400g kidney beans, black beans or broad beans (depending on preference)

Method

1. Heat the oil in a large pan and fry the sausages, onions, garlic, celery and peppers until the onions have softened and the sausage pieces have turned a golden brown.
2. Add the sweetcorn and paprika and stir on a low-medium heat for 2 minutes to help the flavours infuse.
3. Add the tomatoes, beans and stock cubes. Season to taste and simmer for 15 minutes.



Homemade Quorn Burger serves 6

Using Quorn mince – a low fat, high protein food – as the main ingredient for your burger, complete with all kinds of tasty salad, you'll have a wonderfully tasty burger to feed your family.

Ingredients

- 500g Quorn Mince
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 125g breadcrumbs
- 2 tbsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tbsp black pepper
- 1 large onion, diced
- 1-2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 large egg
- 1 tbsp salt

Method

1. Fry the Quorn mince, onion and garlic with the olive oil on a medium-high heat for 4-5 minutes.
2. Leave to cool for 5 minutes before transferring to a large bowl (make sure its completely cooled before the next step!). Add the breadcrumbs, egg, mustard, salt and pepper, and mix with your hands to combine all the ingredients.
3. Divide the mixture into equal amounts and shape into burgers (approx. 6)
4. Using the same pan from before, fry the burgers on a medium heat for 10 minutes (you may need a splash more oil) or until browned.
5. Serve with soft brioche buns, lettuce, tomatoes and any other dressings or condiments you fancy! You can even have chips.

   All you need to do now is eat your delicious home cooked vegetarian meal and have a search for other meals for your family to enjoy. Try changing one meal a week and see how you go.

November 2026

Some Sowing and Planting ideas for November

Planting or sowing in November gives you a head start on the gardening year ahead, bringing flower and vegetable harvest times forward, while taking up soil space that would otherwise remain empty. Sowing as much as you can in November will save valuable time when temperatures increase again, enabling you to grow more of what you love.



Broad Beans - broad beans can be sown in the ground in autumn or alternatively in pots, for transplanting later. Sowing broad beans in November can bring your harvest forward by a few weeks, while having roots in the ground will aid soil structure and prevent leaching of soil nutrients in autumn rains. Sow hardy varieties suitable for autumn sowing. Harvesting from May to August



First early Peas - sow first early peas like 'Meteor' and 'Kelvedon Wonder' in autumn to overwinter, providing harvests in early summer. Protect the peas from slugs, birds and mice by growing in covered containers. Harvest from June to October



Onions and Shallots - plant sets now in well-drained soil. They grow best in a warm, sunny spot. Plant each bulb so that the tip is just showing, with 10-15cm between each bulb. Leave 30cm between rows. Shallot bulbs can be planted in the same way, but 15-20cm apart, and they can be planted up until December. Cover with fleece or netting to stop birds pulling up the bulbs. Harvest from June to September



Bare rooted fruit trees such as apple, pear, cherry and plum, along with blackcurrant, raspberry and gooseberry, can be planted now. These trees are dormant when planted but have the full season to grow as soon as temperatures increase in spring. Plant your tree/bush hole twice as wide as the roots and so the graft is 2/4 inches above the soil. Follow the planting instructions and water well.

Flowers

Spring bulbs can also be planted this month – the best bulbs to plant in November include tulips and alliums. Plant your daffodils, tulips and crocus now as well for a spring extravaganza of colour.



Sweet Peas - One of the best flowers to sow in November is sweet peas, as they'll flower earlier than spring-sown sweet peas. You can sow sweet peas anytime from October to April. Those sown in autumn will enter dormancy in winter and then start into growth again when temperatures warm up in spring. They will flower sooner than spring-sown sweet peas. For a long display, sow successionally from autumn to spring, so you have sweet peas flowering from May through to August. Pinch out the top of the seedlings once they reach about 4inchs high to encourage bushy growth. You will need to cover them with a cloche if the weather goes below -5C. You could place the top half of a cut plastic bottle over each seed when you sow them.



Bugle or Ajuga reptans, is a fantastic UK native and a useful groundcover plant in sun or partial shade and provide evergreen colour. This hardy perennial can be planted any time of year, especially if it's being used in a pot, but the best time to plant is in spring or autumn, when the soil is warm and moist. Divide clumps in early spring or autumn if the plant becomes congested. **Flowers:** April to May



Allium sphaerocephalon*,* these striking alliums are a hit with bees and other pollinators. They're usually grown by bulb, but it is possible (and cheaper) to grow them from seed. Sow them any time of year, ideally in containers, as they take a long time to germinate. They need a period of cold to germinate successfully, so sowing in November/December is ideal. **Flowers:** July to August.

Now is a great time to sow your wildflower seeds, they will hibernate under the soil over the winter months and give you and the pollinators a fantastic display in the Spring. Right, I'm off to buy my bulbs, seeds and plants and get sowing and planting.

Planting instructions from www.gardenersworld.com

Cycle of Prayer

This month we pray for the staff and pupils at the Fairway and we pray for more renewable energy projects in our community.



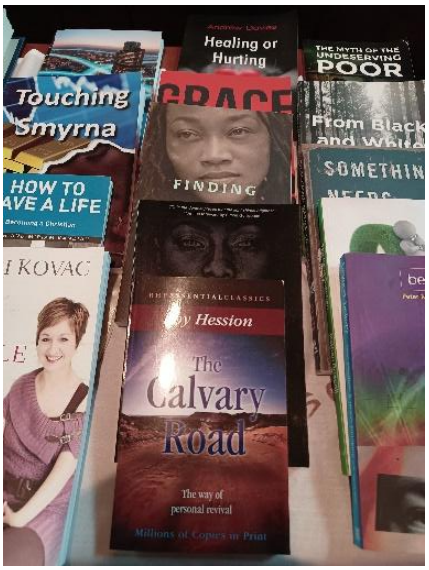
Thursdays 6.30pm - 8.30pm

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





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!

Our Pet Blessing Service















We honour those men who gave their life in WW1 so that we might live – from Offerton Church School, Battersby's Hat Factory and those who lived in Offerton

Albert Kendrick, Alfred Henry Mullard, Alfred Whitehorn, Arthur Smith,
Charles Hughes, Christopher Harris, Colin Reynell Thorpe,
Edgar Battersby, Edwin Corbett, Edwin Newton, Ernest Allen,
Frank George Westall, Frank Wilkinson, Gerald Sidebotham,
John Frith Sidebotham, Herbert Higginbotham, William Mein,
Harold Higginbotham, Harold Symes, Harry Critchlow, Henry Holbrook,
Harry Partington, Herbert Brown, Herbert Fletcher, James Griffin,
John Brindley, Joseph Forster, Joseph Fox, Percy Jinks,
Robert Stowell Hughes, Rowland Joseph Bissett, Sam Fernyhough,
Sydney James Brown, Simeon Brown, Tom Rethman Mills,
Walter Hallworth, Walter Rowland, William Harold Bruckshaw,
Walter Lister Read, Joseph Booth, James Briggs, William G Clarke,
Louis B Jones, Arnold Jones, John Openshaw, Gilbert Stanton,
Harry Stenton, Bert Morris, James Attwood, Stephen Blackshaw,
Harold Bracegirdle, Harry Buckland, Ernest Dean, Walter N Depledge,
Richard Nixon, Frank Ellis, Albert Farrow, Robert Fenna, John Garner,
Harry S Gibbons, Davis Goodwin, James Graves, Cornelius Hayes,
William Holbrook, John Jackson, Charles Jackson, Frank Middlebrook,
Alfred Moores, Joseph Parrott, Frank Renshaw, Alfred E Shorter,
George Smirthwaite, Thomas Tomlinson, Thomas F Wilkinson,
Harry Wood, John E Worrell, Andrew Capper,
Fred Layland, Ellis Adshead.



Welcome



We welcome into our family Romea Antonia Bilardi

who was baptised on 27th September 2026

Our Parish Christmas Card

If you would like to be included in this year's Christmas card, please submit all names that you would like to put in the card along with your donation to Eileen.

Our Magazine

Please note that in future we will be producing our magazine once every 2 months starting with the December/January issue.

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)