



The St John's Journal

December 2024



LET THERE BE LIGHT

And God said: "Let there be light and there was light"
God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness.
God called the light "day" and the darkness he called "night."

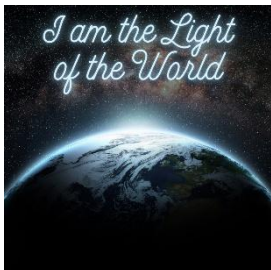
In the first twenty verses of the Bible light is mentioned over ten times. Light is important!

Unfortunately, as the story unfolds darkness enters the good creation God made. What hope is there for a people walking in darkness? We find an answer in Isaiah chapter 9. It's a passage we hear every December at Christmas services. It goes like this:

*The people walking in darkness have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. (Isaiah 9:2)*

Lego often rates high on peoples Christmas list. It's a great toy but it has one notable downside. The pieces can be lethal. It isn't just the Wet Bandits from the movie Home Alone, who have fallen foul of this toy - Ouch! More than once, when sneaking into my child's room to kiss them goodnight, the darkness has kept hidden from sight a lethal Lego piece which then finds itself painfully imprinted in the bottom of my foot. Let there be light!

December nights are long and the contrast of darkness and light is more pronounced than at other times in the year. The stars in the night sky, the lights on a Christmas tree, the flicker of candlelight in a church. When God brought light into the world in the beginning, it was good! So light was needed once again to end the reign of darkness. What is the light that was promised that would dawn on those living in darkness? A child? Really? Yes a child, but more than a child. A Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace.



This child born in the town of Bethlehem was given the name Jesus because he came to save people from the darkness. This Christmas on dark nights we look towards the shining light that is very good.

Jesus said "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

Revd Elliott Ireton, Vicar of St John's





Advent & Christmas 2024 @ St John's

Christmas at St John's is going to be a busy and exciting time! We still have many of your favourite Christmas services & events and some new events for this year! All the latest information on what is happening can be found on MyChurchSuite, and on the St John's website (www.sjb-burscough.church)

Click on the name of each item to get more information. Sign up for events where you see this icon.

Saturday 14th December

Kingdom Kids Christmas Movie Party 2.30pm to 5pm Church Hall

Sunday 15th December

Christmas Nativity Service (Kingdom Kids Takeover) 11am Church

Traditional Carols by Candlelight 7pm Church



Tuesday 17th December

Tuesday Service Carol Service 10.30am Church



Thursday 19th December

Christmas Community Coffee 9am to 11am Church Hall



Saturday 21st December

Carols & Christmas Cheer 3.30pm onwards Outside Church



Sunday 22nd December

All Age Worship Christmas Jumper Special 11am Church

Christingle Making (bring your own lunch) 12 noon Church

Blue Christmas Service 3pm Church



Tuesday 24th December – CHRISTMAS EVE

Christingle Services *Note the change of time this year* 3pm & 5pm Church

Midnight Holy Communion Service 11pm Church



Wednesday 25th December – CHRISTMAS DAY

All Age Christmas Day Worship with Holy Communion 10am Church



Sunday 29th December

Traditional Holy Communion Service 9am Church
(This is the only service in church on this day)

Family Brunch & Games Morning 11am Church Hall

Traditional BCP Service 5pm St Andrew's Crabtree

FAIRTRADE STALL – Sunday 15th December

The Fairtrade stall will be in church on Sunday 15th December after the 9am and 11am service. Please support this worthy cause. Liz has lots of lovely treats and gifts which are perfect as Christmas Gifts, stocking fillers or to enjoy yourself over the Christmas period! Speak to Liz Hawksby for more information.



HELP WANTED – WE NEED YOU!

The success of many of our Christmas events and services relies on everybody working together as a team. Thank you to everyone who has already volunteered to help. Here are ways you can help:

- **Letting Others Know what is going on** – word of mouth and personal invite is the most effective way for people to come to our Christmas services and events! Our Christmas flyers are now available in Church & at the Church Hall. Please take some to hand out to your friends and neighbours and personally invite them along to our services & events this advent and Christmas. Alternatively, you can find a number of digital resources available for you to share events with your friends, family, neighbours and colleagues. You can access it all [here](#)!
(Please note: we will not be posting flyers through every door in Burscough this year, but feel free to take some to take to your neighbours)
- **Christingle Making – after the 11am Service on Sunday 22nd December** – our Christingle services are very popular which means we need to make up hundreds of Christingle kits. This is a great opportunity to help us prepare for that service whilst catching up with the church family. This year we are asking you to stay behind for a short time after the 11am service. Bring your lunch, have a brew and a natter as we work!

WORSHIP AT ST JOHN'S AND CRABTREE

Here are the service times for the next month. See the [website calendar page](#) for details of other weeks.

SUNDAY 15TH DECEMBER

9am Traditional Morning Prayer Service
11am All Age Contemporary Worship - Nativity Service (Kingdom Kids Takeover)
5pm Informal Service at Crabtree St Andrews
7pm Carols by Candlelight

SUNDAY 22ND DECEMBER

9am Traditional Holy Communion Service
11am Contemporary Worship All Age Special Christmas Jumper Service
3pm Blue Christmas Service
5pm Traditional Evening Prayer at Crabtree St Andrews

There is no 7pm service this week.

SUNDAY 29TH DECEMBER

9am Traditional Holy Communion Service
11am Family Brunch & Games Morning in the Church Hall
5pm Informal Service at Crabtree St Andrews
There is no 7pm service this week.

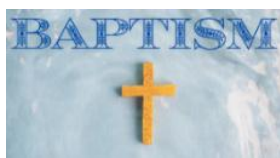
SUNDAY 5TH DECEMBER

9am Traditional Morning Prayer Service
11am Contemporary Holy Communion in Church
5pm Traditional Evening Prayer at Crabtree St Andrews
7pm Contemporary Evening Worship

Tuesday Shoppers Service at St John's: 10.30am Informal Worship Service

There will be no Tuesday service on the 24th December and the 31st December.

It starts back on the 7th January.



It was amazing and such a blessing to see three people from the St John's family be baptised by full immersion: Kaitlyn Summerfield, Phil Parkinson & Peter Styles. Please pray for them as they continue their faith journey. ***Father God, we thank you for those who were baptised earlier this month. We pray for your peace and joy to be with them, and to protect them all of their days.***

CHRISTMAS COMMUNITY COFFEE

Thursday 19th December

9am to 11am

Church Hall

As part of "Love Where You Live" we are seeking to improve our Community Offering where we can build relationships with those outside of Church. We are working hard to develop what this might look like at St John's.



It was lovely to welcome some new, and some familiar people to our first Community Coffee session last week. The coffee and snacks were good, and no one seemed to want to leave! We have another one this Thursday. Please come along, or invite those in the local community to come along for a cuppa and a chat. A warm welcome will be offered to all.

NEW WINE WOMEN – RESET MANCHESTER Sat 1st February 9:30am to 4:00pm



This February, the New Wine Women's team will be heading to Manchester for a 'Women's Reset Day' with worship, teaching, prayer ministry and time together. A few from St John's have already signed up and we can arrange lift sharing nearer the time if needed. Book your place here - [Reset Manchester - New Wine - Book Now](#), or speak to Jo Ireton for more information.

GIVING UPDATE

Thank you so much for your generous ongoing prayerful and financial support of St John's and St Andrew's Crabtree. Your contributions are vital to our growth in spiritual depth and congregation numbers, and we are immensely grateful for your help in these areas.

I'd would like to inform you that, after careful consideration and consultation with Elliott and the PCC, we have decided to discontinue the use of weekly dated envelopes for regular donations beyond the end of 2024.



While the envelope scheme was once popular, its usage has significantly declined, with only eight regular users remaining across St John's and St Andrew's Crabtree. We understand this change may affect how you give, but rest assured, we have several other convenient methods for regular donations, which we will outline below.

Preferred Methods of Giving

1. Parish Giving Scheme: This is our most preferred method. By setting up a monthly direct debit. You can access this here: [Burscough Bridge St John - Parish Giving Scheme](#) (or look up www.parishgiving.org.uk and search for St John the Baptist Burscough)
2. Standing Order: You can instruct your bank to make regular transfers to the church. Our account details are St Johns PCC, 67214677, 08-92-99
3. White Envelopes in Church: As a direct replacement for the weekly envelopes, we have white envelopes available in each pew. Simply place your donation in the envelope along with your name. If you need a larger supply, please ask me or one of the churchwardens.
4. Cheque: Cheques can be made payable to St John's PCC and placed on the collection plate or sent to church by post.
5. Cash: On the collection plate each week.



If you are a UK taxpayer, please remember to Gift Aid your donations!

As always, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to speak to me or email me (treasurer@stjohns-burscough.org)

Thank you once again for your prayerful, spiritual, and financial support of St John's and St Andrew's Crabtree.

Yours in Christ,

Pete Short

Hon. Treasurer

SAFEGUARDING UPDATE



Denise Prescott will be the Parish Safeguarding officer. All concerns should be directed to her via email: safeguarding@sjb-burscough.church

We pray for Denise as she takes up this role, and we give thanks for all the time Joanna has spent fulfilling this role in recent years. More information on Safeguarding at St John's can be found on our [website](#).

RECENT DEATHS Please pray for the family and friends of those who have recently passed away.



Vi Watkinson

Tracy Adams

Ron Gillard

Vernon Rawsthorne

ARRANGEMENTS FOR RON GILLARD'S FUNERAL AND SERVICE OF CELEBRATION.



Ron's family are having a quiet funeral service for family members only just before Christmas. However, on what would have been Ron's birthday they would love to invite everyone who knew Ron to come to St John's Church for 10.30am on Monday 6th January for a joyful celebration of Ron's life. This will be followed by food afterwards at The Aviary, Bindman's' Lane in Ormskirk. All are invited. No black clothes please.

JOANNA MARSHALL SABBATICAL

Joanna Marshall, our Youth & Young Adult Coordinator is currently on sabbatical to learn, pray and rest. She will return on the 1st February 2025. We thank the incredible volunteer team who are helping to cover this sabbatical. Please continue to pray for Joanna. We are excited for what the future holds as we look to 2025 as a new season of seeking the Lord for his kingdom to come in the lives of young people and young adults in Burscough and beyond.

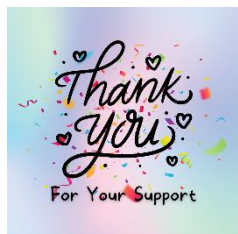


LUNCH AID **Sunday 19th January** **12.30pm** **30 Croft Avenue, Burscough, L40 5TB**

Lunch Aid is a wonderful ministry that has been running for decades at St John's and has raised thousands of pounds for various charities. This is a simple lunch of bread, cheese, fruit (and lots of tea and coffee) provided by the host, and we just ask folk to contribute a small donation (if you are able) that goes towards supporting various charitable work abroad. It is also a lovely chance to connect with others from church and share in fellowship. **Everyone** is welcome, including families with young children, so if you haven't been before, come and say hello.



SAVE THE DATE -SJB VOLUNTEER THANK YOU NIGHT **Saturday 25th January** **7pm** **In the Church Hall**



At St John's we are incredibly blessed with so many amazing volunteers who use their time and talents to serve the church in a number of different areas, whether that be supporting our kids & youth work, contributing to our times of worship, ensuring our buildings and outside spaces are well maintained and safe etc etc (the list is endless!).

We want to thank all our volunteers - **all our volunteers are invited to come along to our Thank You evening on Saturday 25th January at 7pm in the Church Hall.** More details to follow in the new year. To help us ensure we cater for everyone please sign up on MyChurchSuite, [online](#), or by contacting the church office.

ONLINE RESOURCES www.sjb-burscough.church

Take a look at our [BLOGS & NEWS](#) page. Click for up-to-date information and interesting articles about events happening at St John's and in the local community.



Like, Follow and Subscribe: Click the icons to go to our social media channels.



CONTACT US: You can call the church office on 01704 897852, or by emailing office@sjb-burscough.church. If you have something that you would like to be included in our communications, please email office@sjb-burscough.church.



Our verse for 2024

"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms." 1 Peter 4:10