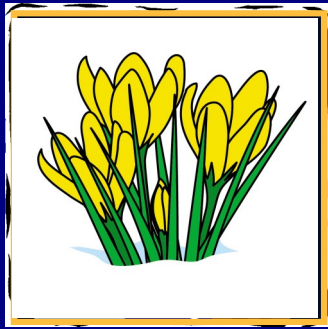




Easter 2026

Greetings

Welcome to our Easter Newsletter. As always, we look forward to the Easter period as a time that includes both reflection and celebration, sadness and joy.

The events of Easter—from the entry to Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, through to the Last Supper, the betrayal and handing over to both the Jewish and Roman authorities, the cruel aftermath of the trial and then the horrors of the Crucifixion, the despair of the disciples and other followers of Jesus and then the glorious resurrection morning, marking the point in history where death's hold over the human race was broken and life eternal was made possible. God's forgiveness was granted to all people who came to Him for forgiveness. The work was complete and perfect for all time—as Jesus

himself declared "It is finished".

But even though the work of salvation was finished, it is not the whole story. And I'd like to take the opportunity in this very short greeting to remind us of what we might think of as the other side of the equation. Yes, the work was finished, but in some ways the work was also only just starting. And a few short weeks later, as Jesus promised, the Holy Spirit was sent to all believers.

The Spirit came to the early church and empowered it to do astonishing things. At that first Pentecost the followers of Jesus received the Spirit just as Jesus had promised they would and to this day every believer receives that same indwelling of the

Comforter.

We might ask then, why do not see mighty and miraculous works in our churches today. But the Bible clearly tells us that the fruit of the Spirit is kindness, peace, joy, patience and so on, and we see those constantly, in our fellowship together, in our work to help both congregation and our community. I recently visited our IM church at Roman Road in Failsworth and one of the ladies there said to me "There is no such thing as a coincidence with God, every small thing that happens for good is a kind of little miracle"

We so easily take the work of the Spirit amongst us for granted. As we emerge from Easter and approach Pentecost, I

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Special points of interest:

- *Easter services*
- *A poem to read backwards*
- *Walking Day news*
- *A blast from the past*

hope we recognise and see the outworking of the Spirit in our church, and in our

lives.

Whatever you are doing this Easter and over the

forthcoming weeks, I pray that you will be encouraged and may God bless you

James

Visiting Preachers

The schedule for our Sunday services for the next few months looks like this, below.

The only exceptions being that we will have an extra service on Good Friday morning and on Easter Sunday we will have both a morning and evening service.

As always, morning services will start at 10:45 and evenings will commence at 6:00.

April

3rd am—Chris Mayes *

5th am —Lester Atherton Lawrinson

5th pm—Philip Gleave

12th pm — Dennis Roughley*

19th am—Roy Delooze

26th pm—Christine Ormerod

May

3rd am—Stan Kinsey

10th pm— David Grimshaw*

17th am—to be confirmed*

24th pm— Denise Helsby

31st—James Tobiasen

June

7th pm—David Okell

14th am— Ken Oatridge*

21st pm—Christine Ormerod *

28th am—Lester Atherton

Services marked * indicate sacramental services

The morning service on Easter Sunday—5th April—will also include the Sunday School Prize-giving

What's On

Our current schedule of mid-week meetings and other activities is listed below. Although this is the view at the time of writing, please pay attention to the weekly notices for any changes or further updates:

Bible Study—this will resume on the 21st April and will be at 7:30 on a Tuesday evening. The course of study is called 'Life Explored'. Please see full details in the Additional Notices section.

Coffee morning & lunch-club— The coffee morning runs on Thursdays from 10am—12noon and is followed by a light lunch from noon until 1:30. It is completely free though donations are gratefully accepted.

Bible Crafts & Boom-erang (for school-age kids) & crèche (for little ones)—The Boom-erang (Sunday School) group is available with each Sunday morning

service from 10.45 onwards till approximately 12 noon. On a (more or less) once a month basis we have the Bible Craft sessions—over the next few months these will be on the 5th April, 3rd & 31st May and 28th June.

Prayer Meeting—this takes place on a Wednesday evening from 7.30 onwards. If you can't attend in person, please consider taking a prayer list so that you join in the prayer

effort from your own home. It is a vital part of our Christian fellowship and witness and the more of us who can participate, the better.

A Message From The Past

As all our readers will know, back in December our dear friend Ron Percival went to glory. In the weeks and months since then he has somehow managed to keep popping up in different ways. As Jeff & Wendy and Alison & Dave have been clearing Ron's house, a number of items, documents, books and so on have been uncovered that are related to our church and which have been passed on to us.

In addition Lynda Ralphson found the hand-written text of a message that Ron shared with the Mother's Union at Christ Church, Padgate some years back. And as it is a fairly short and sweet message, I thought it would be fitting and appropriate to share

it here. So here, without further ado, are Ron's thoughts on the subject of 'Shining'

My little address is called 'Shining'. I like to see Christians with shining faces, it is wonderful to be in the presence of someone whose face is shining to radiate their saviour's love and I often think that I would like my face to shine all the time for Jesus.

In the Word the first instance of shining is Moses when he came down from Mount Sinai after being with the Lord for 40 days and 40 nights. His face shone so brightly none could look upon him and he had to put a veil over his face. Another person who shone for Jesus was John the Baptist Jesus said of him

"he was a burning and a shining light and you were willing for a season to rejoice in his light".

Jesus is the shining light the light of the world, yet unless we belong to him it is as if there is a veil over him as unbeliever cannot look upon him. Indeed, even believers find it hard to look into the shining face of Jesus, so aware are they of their guilt which nailed him to Calvary's cross. There are several illustrations in the Bible of Jesus shining. In Matthew 17 verse 12 we see that when Jesus took Peter, James and John apart into a high mountain he was transformed before them and his face did shine as the sun. Also in Revelation 1 verse 16 we read that his countenance was as the sun



and John says “when I saw him I fell at his feet as dead” and when we consider how bright the sun is, we can see why it affected John this way. Not only does the Bible state Jesus shone but also the Father. Psalm 50 verse 2 states “out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God has shined” and in 2 Corinthians 4 verse 6 we read “God has shined in our heart to give the glory of the knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ”. Moses’ face shone when he met the Lord and when we meet Jesus as our own saviour, our face should shine as a reflection of the shining face of Jesus.

The Bible, God’s Word, tells us to shine. Job 11 verse 17 says “thou shall shine forth, thou shall be as the morning”. Proverbs 4 verse 18 says “the path of the just is as the shining light that shines more and more unto the perfect day”. While Daniel 12 verse 3 says “the wise should shine as the brightness of the firmament” and then in Matthew 13 verse 43 we read “then shall the night shine forth as the

Sun in the kingdom of our father”.

In these passages it is noted that the just, the wise and the righteous shall shine and perhaps we might say we are none of these. But Christ, the just, suffered for the unjust and in him we are made just. Also, if we belong to Jesus instead of belonging to the world then surely we are wise because Jesus is able to make us wise unto salvation. Romans 5 verse 19 says “for it is by one disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one, many be made righteous”. There are many more instances to be found where we are told to shine but I think the best of all is found in Matthew 5 verse 16 which says “let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your father which is in heaven”. From this we see that if we shine we bring glory to our father and this is what we all as Christians desire to do.

I suppose all of us here have had the job of cleaning cutlery or brass sometime and it

isn’t a job many people enjoy but, if we do it, what reward to see the lovely shining article that once was dull and dirty. Jesus has a job of cleaning the hearts of men and women and when he has finished, after all he has done, he expects us to shine. We would enjoy polishing even less if after our toil the article was just as dull and dirty and perhaps we would give up thinking it useless.

Jesus never gives up working on us to make a shine, he tends with love and care and watches over us, especially when we fall to temptation. But oh! How happy is when he sees us shining for him. But we should remember also that he wants to shine for men & women. He wants us to bring them to him/ And just as we would sing in Sunday School, songs about shining from our earliest days, the first place we shine should be at home. It may be more difficult among those who know us, but this is what he wants us to do. Our reward will be in glory when we see his shining face and he

says “well done that good and faithful servant”. The holy city has no need of moon nor sun, for the glory of the Lord lights it and The Lamb is the light thereof.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with us all. Amen.

Many thanks to Lynda for bringing this piece to our attention.

Special Events

Easter—on Good Friday, April 3rd, we will have a service, including the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, starting at 10:45. This will be lead by Chris Mayes.

On Easter Sunday, the 5th, we will have two services. The morning worship, starting at 10:45 will be lead by Lester Atherton and then Philip Gleave will be in the pulpit for the

evening service at 6pm. Refreshments will be served after the evening service

Prizegiving — On the morning of Easter Sunday, we will include the annual Boomerang Sunday School Prizegiving in our service. The children will each be given a gift as a thank you and a rewards for their attendance during the last year. So please come along to support them on their special day.



Focus

Easter Sunday begins in the quiet, while the world still feels hushed—yet it carries news loud enough to remake everything. The Gospels tell us that at dawn, while grief was still fresh and questions still lay heavily on the minds of his followers, the tomb that held Jesus was found open and empty. For Christians, this is not merely a happy ending to a tragic week; it is the turning point

of history. The resurrection is God’s “yes” after every human “no,” the sunrise after the long night, the promise that love is stronger than death.

At the tomb, the first message of Easter is spoken not by a powerful ruler or a celebrated teacher, but by an angelic messenger. The words are simple, direct, and overflowing with hope:

“He is risen.” In those three words, despair meets its match. If Jesus is risen, then sin does not have the final word. Shame does not get to define us. Fear does not get to rule us. The stone rolled away is not only a physical sign—like a door thrown open—it is a declaration that the life of God cannot be locked behind our failures, our losses, or even the grave.

And notice who receives this breathtaking news first. The first people to be told of the resurrection are not the disciples who promised never to leave Jesus, nor the crowds who praised Him only days earlier. The Gospels place women at the centre of the Easter story—those who came with spices, expecting to honour a dead body, not to celebrate a living Saviour. They arrive with sorrow, but they leave with a mission. You can almost feel the shock giving way to wonder, and wonder bursting into urgency: they must tell the others. Their footsteps become the first “Easter sermon,” their voices the first proclamation that the world has changed.

Matthew describes them as leaving the tomb with “fear and great joy.” That combination makes sense: the resurrection is comforting, but it is also astonishing. It interrupts ordinary expectations. It invites us to believe

something bigger than what we can see. The first witnesses do not simply nod politely at the news; they run. They speak. They share it. Their excitement is not shallow optimism—it is the deep thrill of discovering that God has been faithful in the darkest moment, and that the story is not over.

That is why Easter joy has a particular brightness to it. The resurrection means forgiveness is real and not wishful thinking. It means Christ’s words can be trusted and His promises are not fragile. It means the cross was not defeat but victory—love poured out, sin forgiven, death disarmed. It means there is new life available now: a fresh start for the burdened, courage for the anxious, strength for the weary, comfort for the grieving. Christians do not rejoice because life suddenly becomes easy; we rejoice because we are not alone, and because the risen Jesus

is alive and present—calling, guiding, restoring.

So when Easter Sunday morning comes, we join the first witnesses in standing before an empty tomb and hearing heaven’s announcement: “**He is risen.**” It is the message that turns mourning into dancing and questions into praise. It is the good news that reaches beyond church walls into homes, hospitals, offices, and so many lonely places—wherever hearts need hope. If Christ is risen, then no failure is final, no darkness is permanent, and no grief is without a future. Easter invites us to receive this joy, to live in its light, and to pass it on with the same excitement as those first messengers: Jesus is alive!

May you share in the great blessings of Easter and glory in His grace.

Additional Notices

Baptism—we are currently arranging a baptismal service, to be held in our sister church in Stockton Heath. This will be baptism by full immersion (in other words the ‘baptisee’ is dunked under the water in a baptismal pool). It is one of the sacraments of Christian faith—an

act that shows the decision by a believer to follow Jesus and to signify the burial of the old sinful life, and a rising in new resurrection life. Many Christians who undergo full baptism as adults regard it as one of their great faith experiences. If you would like to be baptised, please speak with

James as he is making the arrangements with the team at Stockton Heath. There is no date set so far but we hope to have that confirmed soon.

Building Committee—our building committee has been active again and

over the last few months we have once again started and finished a number of maintenance tasks which we hope will improve the comfort, safety and usability of our church premises. So just in case you've been wondering what the team has been up to, here's a list of just a few of the things that the committee has organised or completed since our last Newsletter update:

- Fixed the loose slates and leaks over the chapel roof
- Added fire bells in the chapel and in the corridor near the kitchen
- Had all of the electrical devices and equipment in the church PAT tested to ensure that it is safe to use
- Built a new stand for the television so that it can be more easily stored and moved around
- Replaced all of the overhead tube lights with brighter, shatter-proof versions
- Provision of new ladders
- Updated the storage facilities in the cellar to

keep things flood-proof and more accessible

- A fire safety inspection survey
- Fixed the problem with the hot water tap in the kitchen
- Fixed the loose book racks on the backs of the pews
- Reupholstered and sorted the various noticeboards
- Installed a postbox

And by the time you read this we will be close to having a newly configured kitchen. That is our next major job and the work should happen some time in April or May.

As always, a huge thank you to everyone on the committee and to everyone who has helped in any of those maintenance jobs so far.

Newsletter—our church Newsletter has been running now for over a quarter of a century and in all that time the format has remained more or less unchanged. Throughout the Newsletter has been created by using a software

tool called Microsoft Publisher. Unfortunately Microsoft has recently announced that Publisher will no longer be available from September this year. That means that by the time we issue our next Newsletter—we usually do another edition about the time of the Harvest services—the format will be very different to the style we are used to. So this will be the last Newsletter in this particular type of layout. Who knows what it will look like but when you see the new version next time out, you'll now know the reason why.

Bible Study—For our spring Bible studies this year we are using a seven week course entitled *Life Explored*. Each session will include a short film, two Bible readings and teaching focused on a different aspect of God's character. There will be opportunity for group discussions as we consider how we think of God, where we look for happiness and ask ourselves what's the best gift God could give us. Each

session will be held in the School room from 7.30 to 9 o'clock on Tuesday evenings, starting on the 21st of April. All are welcome to join us for any or (hopefully) all of the sessions and the material is suitable for both believers or seekers alike. So if you know someone who might like to come along, it would be great to see them. If you would like to attend, please add your name to the list in the entrance porch so that we can order other hand books. If you would like more details, please speak to Lester.

Walking Day—this year's procession will be earlier than usual—20th June. So in a year when Warrington Walking Day has been cancelled (although it might be back again next year), our walk of witness in Padgate will be the biggest and best around. Once again we expect that the Winwick Brownies will join us on the walk. So please make a note in your diary—we hope you can join us on the day and show our local community who we are.



Keys! - over the years many, many people have had keys to access our church buildings. People have had them for all sorts of reasons—from church and Sunday School officers, to people who did maintenance, or switched on the heating, or put the bins out, or... well, you name it, people got a key for it.

Anyway, as you can imagine the number of keys that must be jangling around means that we potentially have a bit of a security problem. So we have been thinking that it would be a sensible idea to have a key holders' register.

So if you have a key for any door in or around the church buildings please let

us know by adding your name and key details to the simple form that is on the vestry table.

And of course if you have keys for the building that you no longer use, please return them so that we can keep them safe.

Easter literature—We have a variety of tract and booklets available which explain the significance of Easter in a concise and understandable way. These will be located on the piano in Church as we approach Easter. Please feel free to take them for your own use or to pass them on to others. It is worth adding that we have a variety of other Christian literature on the piano throughout the year as well. Much of it was supplied by David Lawrinson on his last visit to us. David is a member of the Gideon's International organisation which, as I'm sure you're aware, seeks to promote the sharing, reading and understanding of the Bible.

Padgate House—On Tuesday, the 31st of March we held a short Easter service with the residents of

Padgate house on Vulcan Close. The service lasted about 45 minutes and included singing of some Easter hymns, some Bible readings and a few thoughts around the Easter message. We had a great time, and it was a delight as always to chat with the residence after the service. We expect to be going near Christmas time so if you'd like to join us then please keep an eye out later in the year for details of that next event at Padgate House.

The Final Word

Refugees—a poem by Brian Bilston

They have no need of our help
 So do not tell me
 These haggard faces could belong to you or me
 Should life have dealt a different hand
 We need to see them for who they really are
 Chancers and scroungers
 Layabouts and loungers
 With bombs up their sleeves
 Cut-throats and thieves
 They are not
 Welcome here
 We should make them
 Go back to where they came from

They cannot
 Share our food
 Share our homes
 Share our countries
 Instead let us
 Build a wall to keep them out
 It is not okay to say
 These are people just like us
 A place should only belong to those who are born there
 Do not be so stupid to think that
 The world can be looked at another way

Now, read the poem again. line by line, from the bottom back to the beginning.

Welcome to our guests! - over the next few months our church will be playing host to a couple of visiting groups. As Padgate Community Centre has been closed for repairs and Padgate Library is reducing its available capacity, new venues are needed for some of our community groups. So we are really pleased to welcome the Padgate & Fearnhead Heritage Group and the Ladies' Friendship Group who will both be using our school

room and other facilities on a regular basis.

And that serves as a reminder that if you know of any other local groups, organisations or activity classes that are in need of a venue or a new home, please tell them about our church—we would be very happy to hire out the building to responsible users.

All contribution and donations of articles for the Newsletter are very gratefully received

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Next Newsletter:

There is no fixed date for the next issue currently but the broad target at this point is to publish sometime during late summer or autumn.