**August 2025**

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| ***Letter from the Rector*** | | | | | |
| *The Rector writes.*  Some words seem to be going out of fashion. In the past there were several holy days of obligation, such as the Ascension, as well as Epiphany and Christmas, where there was an “obligation” to attend church. For some churches the word obligation was also applied to ordinary Sundays!  The core meaning of obligation, “must,” is also going out of fashion.  There are two main uses of “must” in English. One is a logical necessity: “This must be the entrance, as I cannot see another way in.” The other is an obligation such as, “Seat belts must be worn.” It is this latter use of the word which has fallen by around 55% according to linguistic experts. In contrast, the use of “have to” has increased by over 30% over the same time frame.  Here are a pair of sentences that illustrate the difference:  *You really must do it* – is authoritative with the sense of being told  *You really have to do it* – comes across as more invitational  Why the change? According to the linguistic expert, Prof. David Crystal, writing in “The Tablet,” it seems to be a part of a social trend in which equality and mutual respect are playing an increasingly important role. “It’s not up to me to tell you what to do.” So, if “obligation” is out, what could be its replacement? Perhaps the word “opportunity,” which seems to be gaining traction. This word has been in use in English since the Middle Ages and is common in Bible translations, such as Mathew 26: 16 where Judas looks for an *opportunity* to betray Jesus. Opportunity has a wide range of more positive connections, such as “once in a lifetime”, “marvellous” or “unique”. There is also the counter sense of missing out, or a wasted opportunity.  A holy day of obligation is an exciting and marvellous opportunity to encounter Christ. So maybe we need to reframe holy days, including Sundays, as *days of opportunity*: offering the opportunity to encounter something inspirational and transformative, if we come with open hearts and minds. How about taking up the golden opportunity to share in a church service this summer? Every blessing, Susan    &  **Every Tuesday 10am to 11.30am, St Cuthbert’s Church, choir vestry**  Come and chat, learn how to knit or crochet or bring your own craft. Meet old friends and make some new ones; take the opportunity to have a moment in church. Entrance by the back door of the church.    **Every Wednesday 12.30 – 2.30pm (approximately), St Thomas’ warm welcome in Lydiate Guide Centre**  A simple lunch followed by time to chat or simply be. See Glen Gardner for more details.    **Bank Holiday Monday, 25th August 2-5pm.**  Duck Race at the Saracens Head, Halsall. £2 a duck. Fun for all the family.  Raising money for St Cuthbert’s disabled access project.  &  **Prayer meeting for the United Benefice and Christian Chatter Restart in September**  Tuesday 9th September for Prayer and Tuesday 23rd September for Christian Chatter    **St Thomas’ Parent and Toddler, restarts Tuesday 9th September10.30am -12 midday.** | | | | | |
| **August 2025** | | | | | |
| *Date* | *Time* | *Place* | | *Service* | |
| **Sunday 3rd August Seventh Sunday after Trinity** | 8.00am | St Thomas’ Lydiate | | Said BCP Holy Communion | |
| 9.30am | St Cuthbert’s Halsall | | BCP Holy Communion (No Church without walls) | |
| 11.00am | St Thomas’ Lydiate | | Common Worship Holy Communion | |
| Wednesday 6th August | 11.00am | St Thomas’ Lydiate | | Said CW Holy Communion | |
| Thursday 7th August | 9.15 am  1.30pm | St Cuthbert’s Halsall  St Cuthbert’s Halsall | | Morning Prayer  Said Holy Communion with prayers for healing | |
| **Sunday 10th August**  **Eighth Sunday after Trinity** | 8.00am | St Thomas’ Lydiate | | Said BCP Holy Communion | |
| 9.30am | St Cuthbert’s Halsall | | CW Holy Communion | |
| 11.00am | St Thomas’ Lydiate | | CW Holy Communion (No Church Parade) | |
| Weds 13th August | 11.00am | St Thomas’ Lydiate | | Said CW Holy Communion | |
| Thurs 14th August | 9.15am  1.30pm | St Cuthbert’s Halsall  St Cuthbert’s Halsall | | Morning Prayer  Said Holy Communion with prayers for healing | |
| **Sunday 17th**  **80th Anniversary of Victory in Japan day** | 8.00am | St Thomas Lydiate | | Said BCP Holy Communion | |
| 9.30am | St Cuthbert’s Halsall | | BCP Holy Communion (No Messy Church) | |
| 11.00am | St Thomas Lydiate | | Common Worship Holy Communion | |
| Weds 20th August | 11.00am | St Thomas’ Lydiate | | Said CW Holy Communion | |
| Thursday 21st August | 9.15am  1.30pm | St Cuthbert’s Halsall  St Cuthbert’s Halsall | | Morning Prayer  Said Holy Communion with prayers for healing | |
| **Sunday 24th August**  **Tenth Sunday after Trinity** | 8.00am | St Thomas’ Lydiate | | Said BCP Holy Communion | |
| 9.30am | St Cuthbert’s Halsall | | Common Worship Holy Communion | |
| 11.00am | St Thomas’ Lydiate | | All age Eucharist | |
| Wednesday 27th August | 11.00am | St Thomas’ Lydiate | | Said CW Holy Communion | |
| Thursday 28th August | 9.15am  1.30pm | St Cuthbert’s Halsall  St Cuthbert’s Halsall | | Morning Prayer  Said Holy Communion with prayers for healing | |
| **Sunday 31st August**  **Eleventh Sunday after Trinity** | 8.00am | | St Thomas’ Lydiate | | Said BCP Holy Communion |
| **10.30am** | | **St Cuthbert’s Halsall** | | **Joint BCP Holy Communion for the united benefice – come and learn about the history and theology of this ancient service.** |
| **Thank you**    To all who helped to organise the Farm Service on 20th July,  especially the Webster family who made us so welcome.  To all sponsored Rev Susan for her abseil from Liverpool Cathedral – she lived to tell the tale and raised around £1000 for the disabled project at St Cuthbert’s. More donations always welcome as we try to get to £40k target.  ***Looking Further ahead***  **Friday 5th September Bingo Night**  St Cuthbert’s Halsall – details to be confirmed  **Friday 19th September at 6.45pm**  Butterflies and Bees Brigade  An evening on the wild side –in the memorial Hall  Home made curry (bring your own drinks), speakers and family fun - Tickets £7.50    *Some thoughts to ponder*  Why not have one day a week on which you buy nothing?  Before you buy a gadget you won’t use every day you could ask a friend or neighbour if you can borrow theirs, and commit to lend them something you have in return.  Why not make use of our jigsaw and book swap library, at the back of St Cuthbert’s church? | | | | | |
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