

# The Church of Saint Paul Burton upon Trent



December 2025 Newsletter

## CLERGY DETAILS

<b>Rev Simon Archer</b>	revsimonarcher@gmail.com	Tel: 01283 902157
<b>Hon. Clergy</b> Rev Preb Phillip Jefferies	pjjefferies@talktalk.net	Tel: 07964 892230

## OFFICERS

Churchwardens	Colin Dawson	Tel: 01283 516714
	John Woolley	Tel: 01283 532748
PCC Secretary	Maureen Woolley	Tel: 01284 532748
Treasurer	Mike Mear	Tel: 01283 544652
Electoral Roll Officer	Rose Jefferies	
Safeguarding Officer	Sue Ganley	Tel: 07852 473250
Hall Booking enquiries	John Woolley	Tel: 01283 532748
	Colin Dawson	Tel: 01283 516714

## SERVICES

<b><u>St Paul's</u></b>	Sundays	10.45am	Sung Mass
	Thursdays	12 noon	Holy Communion
<b><u>St John</u></b>	Sundays	9.15am	Sung Mass
<b><u>the Divine</u></b>	Wednesdays	9.30am	Holy Communion

**ST PAUL'S CHURCH IS OPEN 10.30am – 4.00pm MOST DAYS**

**For Baptisms and Weddings please contact the clergy**

**Fr Simon's day off is Friday**

**<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4195/>**

**Donations for St Paul's Church will be gratefully accepted**

Lloyds Bank

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## CHRISTMAS SERVICES



**Carols by Candlelight**  
with the Tutbury Band  
Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30pm

**Christmas Eve**  
The First Mass of Christmas and  
blessing of the crib  
8.00pm

**Christmas Day**  
Sung Mass at 10.45am



**December 2025  
for St Paul's Newsletter**

**Eternal God,  
as Mary waited for the birth of your Son,  
so we wait for his coming in glory;  
bring us through the birth pangs of this present age  
to see, with her, our great salvation  
in Jesus Christ our Lord.**

The prayer above is one of the Additional Collect prayers for the Church of England, suggested for the Fourth Sunday of Advent but also put forward to be used on any day in Advent.

Might we make it a prayer that we turn to repeatedly during this season, to fend off the distractions of the secondary 'stuff' of Christmas (budgeting, buying, bustling) and the racket of our noisy, violent world, and keep us focused on what truly matters. To keep us steady in hope and expectation.

A couple of years ago in Advent, I found it really helpful in having a go-to prayer or comment stored in the back of my mind, to be brought forward whenever required to help me refocus amidst the clamour and busyness. In that case, it was a quote from the then Bishop of Crediton, Sarah Mullally, now the elected Archbishop of Canterbury. In a book called *A Good Year*, edited by Mark Oakley and with chapters from different Anglican figures, on the various seasons of the Church's year, I was struck by – and duly highlighted in fluorescent yellow – words from Bishop Sarah.

They were: 'We seem as adults to lose our sense of anticipation and wonder.'

All through that Advent, whenever the bustle and unceasing demands of preparing for Christmas weighed on me and threatened to dim my sense of wonder, Bishop Sarah's words helped me pause and brought me 'back to my senses', back to recognising the wonder of God becoming human for our salvation.

This Advent I'll be keeping this Collect is whatever's left of my mind to once more teach me what is true and real, and a reason for hope.

That the God of love and mercy is eternal – not diminished or dimmed by the folly of our human failings.

That the Blessed Virgin Mary, through the example of her life, constantly points us to her Son, Jesus. She teaches us to wait: as she waited to give birth to the Lord, and as we wait for his return in glory. His return to set things right, to fulfil the Kingdom of love and mercy, despite the best efforts of the arrogant, the self-important, the divisive, the racist, the war-mongering, the genocidal, the exploitative, the abusive, the rich (the list goes on) to starve us of hope and deflect us from the truth.

That the trials and turbulence of how things appear now are not how they will always be. They are ‘birth pangs’ of an age that will pass, to give way to the joy of the new heaven and new earth.

That, in the words of the prophet Isaiah, ‘sorrow and sighing shall flee away’ to make way for joy and gladness.

Watching, waiting and working as best we can for the Kingdom, we will – with Mary – see the salvation found in Jesus Christ.

Might we each hold on to this Collect this Advent? And bring it to mind often in the coming weeks – especially when the way of the world makes us groan – and let it refocus our minds and hearts on what is true and eternal.

Its language and images are somewhat dated now, but I’ve always had a soft spot for John Betjeman’s poem *Christmas*. At this time of year, I always seem to come back to its repeated refrain: ‘*And is it true? And is it true?*’, followed by the lines: ‘*The most tremendous tale of all... The Maker of the stars and sea / Become a Child on earth for me?*’

Yes, even with my sometimes world-weary and scarred heart, I do believe it’s true. And that it is the hope we can cling to with confidence.

Wishing you a blessed, hope-filled Advent and that you will know a sense of true Christmas joy.

Fr Simon

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**Fr Simon would like to thank everyone who donated to his Sober October effort, which raised £359 for Macmillan Cancer Support.**

# Parish Notes

<p>PCC meeting on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> December at 12.45pm.</p>	<p>There will be a Christmas card exchange table in the baptistery.</p>
<p>A reminder that we have been invited to the Oak and Ivy to sing carols on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> December at 7.00pm. Please come and support this</p>	<p>Pat Dawson unfortunately is not well at the moment and is in Derby hospital. We wish her a speedy recovery.</p>
<p>The painting of the ceiling tiles in the hall is nearly complete. The painting of walls etc is next on the list. Grateful thanks to those involved in the work.</p>	<p>Thanks to Sue G for decorating the church for Advent.</p>
<p>We are once again delighted to have the Tutbury Band play at our Carols by Candlelight on 18<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30pm.</p>	<p>If you would like to contribute towards the flowers for Christmas please see Sue Ganley. Thanks!</p>
<p>PLEASE, PLEASE BE CAREFUL walking into the entrances of the church. This time of year there are lots of leaves on the paths and if it rains it is slippery.</p>	<p>We held a Service of Thanksgiving in memory of Michael Johnson on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> November followed by the interment of ashes.</p>



### **ALL SOULS DAY**

113 names were remembered at the service on 2<sup>nd</sup> November.

The congregation were invited to light candles in memory of their departed loved ones



### **REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY**

The congregation gathered at the east end of the church. Colin Dawson placed a poppy wreath before the 2-minute silence at the Calvary War Memorial



### **The YMCA SLEEPOUT**

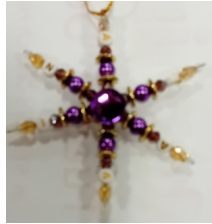
Isaac Pickering [along with Fr Simon] braved the elements on 7<sup>th</sup> November to take part in the YMCA Sleepout. Proceeds towards YMCA. Well done Isaac.



**COFFEE MORNING** – thanks to everyone who supported this event. Our next Coffee Morning is on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> December at 10.00am. Lots of jigsaws and books on sale.

We have had a note from Macmillan thanking us for our donation of £250 which was raised at our coffee morning in September.

### **CRAFTS, KNIT & NATTER**



At the November Crafts, Knit & Natter the topic of the day was these lovely Christmas tree decorations – thanks to Gill Bingham who supplied the jewels. We were treated by Davina to cake to celebrate her birthday.

The group celebrated the second anniversary in October. We have a good number of ladies in the group who come and enjoy the nattering, knitting, crafts and coffee. All are welcome to join us.

Our next meeting is on 2<sup>nd</sup> December at 10.00am.

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### **Teams4U 2025 Christmas Shoebox Appeal:**

Well done St Paul's members and their friends!

On behalf of Clive Lawton, area co-ordinator for the Teams 4U charity and his support team, I would like to say a very big 'thank you' to all who so kindly supported our 2025 Christmas Shoebox Appeal.

The response this year has been outstanding with a total of 72 boxes of very welcome items having been donated and they are now being processed for delivery to Bosnia and Ukraine, where they will be distributed to desperately



poor children and families as they face up to the harsh reality of an Eastern European winter; there will also be some local distribution so that deserving children in our own area do not miss out, with many families still facing a cost of living crisis. It is exceedingly encouraging to know that members of St Paul's as well as their friends, neighbours, colleagues etc are keen to support this annual appeal in the knowledge that the donated items will make such a difference in the lives of people far less fortunate than ourselves. Such actions embody the spirit of Christmas and as we reflect during the Advent season and prepare to gather in celebration of the Nativity of our Lord and Saviour, who entered this world in extreme poverty; let us be thankful that we have been able to share that festive spirit with those who will no doubt be very grateful for those basic things which we can often take for granted.

May God bless you and all those you love this Christmas and throughout 2026.  
Tom Foster

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**Tutbury Rural Deanery Synod, Thursday 13th November 2025  
at St Paul's Church Hall, Burton upon Trent**

The Lay Co-chair, Dr Doug Brown warmly welcomed synod members to this, the last convening of the year, hosted by ourselves in St Paul's Church Hall.

Doug reflected on the observation of Remembrance Sunday in the current, rather contentious social climate with its' emphasis on national identity and subsequent disrespect for our national flags and their significance in the last two world wars along with armed conflicts involving our armed forces personnel since.

The minutes of the September meeting at Rolleston were read and accepted; the guest speaker from St Mary's House in Lichfield, Rev Prebendary Dr Jeanette Hartwell, was highly commended for her very positive and enlightening address.

Matters arising: We have a new Deanery Synod treasurer in Phil Coleman, deanery Standing Committee member who takes up the vacant post after being

proposed by the rural dean, Rev Dr Robin Trotter and seconded by Rev Dave Collier; we wish him well as he seeks to keep our finances in order.

Main item: Discussion on finance.

Having been newly appointed, Phil Coleman opened the synod up to a number interesting and important elements of church finances which the synod was encouraged to explore:-

- PCC 's; directly and collectively responsible for all income and expenditure.
- The setting of budgets and fund-raising.
- The Common Fund.
- Diocesan tasks: What are parishes doing to engage with the community, 'on-line' returns, prompt payment of fee returns.
- St Mary's House: any assistance afforded: provision of more support for parochial church councils., 'Go Fund Me' account system, independent account checking.

Other important issues: contactless giving, Gift Aid take-up, hire of church halls.

Synod members discussed with Phil as to how best to give these matters the attention they deserve and at the close of his address he offered his services in an advisory capacity to any parish regarding their accounts.

Brief reports given on the following:-

Treasurer's: awaiting report from Phil Coleman in Feb, 26.

Deanery Standing Committee: 2026 Synod meeting dates agreed. 2 x venues to be arranged.

Diocesan Synod: awaiting.

General Synod: will give fuller report next Feb, 26.

### **Pastoral Matters**

Rev Tony Williams had a new post. Tutbury Deanery has at present, four parishes in interregnum; a, situation carefully noted by Rev Philip Jefferies who

offered some perspectives in the light of fewer people coming forward for ordination to the priesthood.

The state of affairs at St Chad's was touched upon by the rural dean Rev Dr Robin Trotter; challenging both financially and pastorally to all concerned.

### **The Common Fund**

The Lay Co-chair Dr Doug Brown was pleased that the deanery had attained a 97 per cent collection rate, asking synod members to convey sincere thanks to all PCC members and the congregations they serve. He emphasised the need to avoid leaving paying into the Common Fund until the end of the year as this affects the ability of the diocese to pay clergy etc. 2026 will see the Common Fund requests rising by 3.3%.

### **Seeking the Kingdom**

The Diocese of Lichfield is due to receive £3 million c/o a designated investment fund, fed in over 5 years, from the Church Commissioners which will specifically target urban parishes in particularly challenging situations. This follows on from the 'Seeking the Kingdom' initiative with a view to assisting 'front-line' churches with specific demographic issues and where congregations reflect the communities they serve.

The synod concluded with prayers and the grace (2 Corinthians 13, vs 14)

Next meeting: Monday 23rd February 2026 at St Modwen's

### **Deanery Synod dates 2026**

Mon 23rd Feb: St Modwen's, Tues 16th June: St Mary's Dunstall, Wed 16th Sept (venue TBA), Thurs 12th Nov (venue TBA).

### **PRAYER DIARY DECEMBER 2025**

1	Charles de Faucauld Hermit 1916	Our Advent Course
2	Francis Xavier missionary 1552	our Crafts, Knit & Natter group

3	St. Birinus	people of Ukraine and Middle East
4	John of Damascus monk and teacher c749 Nicholas Farrar deacon 1637	Our PCC
5	St Bassus	People living in war torn areas
6	Nicholas, Bishop of Myra c326	Our churchwardens
7	<b>ADVENT 2</b> St. Ambrose bishop 397	The terminally ill
8	The Conception of the blessed Virgin Mary St Macharius	thanksgiving for Our Lady Our Advent Course
9	St Lesmo	Our Christmas Coffee Morning
10	St Deiniol	
11	St Barsabas	Residents and staff at Amber House
12	St Finnian	Grange & Shobnall Schools – teachers and pupils
13	St Lucy martyr 304	for the blind and partially sighted
14	<b>ADVENT 3</b> St John of the Cross 1591	The homeless
15	St Valerian	Patients awaiting surgery
16	St Bean	the housebound
17	St William	Work of Reconnect
18	St Flannan	our Carols by Candlelight
19	St Samthana	Work of the Children's Society
20	St Philogonius	Retired priests especially Fr Phillip
21	<b>ADVENT 4</b> St Thomas	Our outreach to the parish
22	St Ernan	The children in Ukraine & Bosnia
23	St Victoria	those separated from their families at Christmas time
24	<b>CHRISTMAS EVE</b> St Gregory	those who are lonely
25	<b>CHRISTMAS DAY</b>	thanksgiving for the birth of Jesus Christ
26	St Stephen deacon and martyr	the armed forces

27	St John evangelist	carers
28	<b>CHRISTMAS 1</b> The Holy Innocents St Antony	Those struggling with the cost of living
29	St Thomas Becket archbishop and martyr 1170	entertainers
30	St Anydiius	Charlotte James Nursing Home
31	John Wycliff St Warembert	victims of terrorism
<b>Jan</b>		new beginnings
1	<b>NEW YEAR'S DAY</b>	
2	St Basil and St Gregory 379 and 389	travellers
3		the Franciscans
4	<b>[EPIPHANY]</b>	For wisdom
5		Staff at the Queens Hospital
6		School teachers
7		The new school term
8		Publicans

<p><b>From the anniversary of death book we remember in December</b></p> <p>Stanley Jackson, Betty Poynton, James Riley, Laurie Phillips, Win Edwards, Audrey Smith, Mell Woolley, Pauline Spalding, Florrie Coxon, Anna Catherine Fitzgerald, Alfred Smith</p>	<p><i>We pray for all who have once been part of this church and community, for the saints and all who have enriched our world. May they, with our dear ones departed, rejoice in doing your will in your kingdom.</i></p>
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# ADVENT

*Lord Jesus,  
Master of both the light and the darkness,  
send your Holy Spirit upon  
our preparations for Christmas.  
We who have so much to do  
seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day.  
We who are anxious over many things  
look forward to your coming among us.  
We who are blessed in so many ways  
long for the complete joy of your kingdom.  
We whose hearts are heavy seek  
the joy of your presence.  
We are your people,  
walking in the darkness, yet seeking the light.  
To you we say, "Come, Lord Jesus!" Amen*



Henri Nouwen

## BORN IN THE NIGHT, MARY'S CHILD

**Born in the night, Mary's child,  
a long way from your home:  
coming in need, Mary's child,  
in a borrowed room.**

**Clear shining light, Mary's child,  
your face lights up our way:  
light of the world, Mary's child,  
dawn on our darkened day.**

**Truth of our life, Mary's child,  
you tell us God is good:  
prove it is true, Mary's child.  
Go to your cross of wood.**



**Hope of the world, Mary's child,  
you're coming soon to reign:  
king of the earth, Mary's child,  
walk in our streets again**

## LOVE CAME DOWN AT CHRISTMAS

1 Love came down at Christmas,  
Love all lovely, Love divine;  
Love was born at Christmas;  
star and angels gave the sign.

2 Worship we the Godhead,  
Love incarnate, Love divine;  
worship we our Jesus,  
but wherewith for sacred sign?

3 Love shall be our token;  
love be yours and love be mine;  
love to God and others,  
love for plea and gift and sign.

Christina Rossetti

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Heavenly Father,  
as we celebrate the birth of your Son,  
fill our hearts with the joy  
that comes from knowing Him.  
May the joy of Christmas  
be a constant presence in our lives,  
reminding us of the true source of happiness  
found in Jesus Christ.  
Let us share this joy with others  
and be a reflection of your love in the world. Amen.

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## Forthcoming Events

<b>Advent Study Group</b> Mondays 1 <sup>st</sup> , 8 <sup>th</sup> , 15 <sup>th</sup> & 22 <sup>nd</sup> December at 7.00pm Topic: The Lord's Prayer at St Paul's	<b>Christmas Coffee Morning</b> Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> December at 10.00am
<b>Crafts, Knit &amp; Natter</b> Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> December at 10.00am	<b>Carols at the Shobnall Community Centre</b> Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> December [check time with Tom Foster]
<b>Christmas Crafting</b> Red Lion House Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> December 10.00am - 12 noon price: £5 to include materials	
<b>Carols by Candlelight</b> with the Tutbury Band Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup> December 7.30pm	<b>Carol Singing</b> in the Oak & Ivy Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> December 7.00pm

**Thanks to all who have contributed to the  
newsletter**

**Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year**



# Puzzle time

## Answers to “FOR ALL THE SAINTS” Crossword

Across:	3. FORTRESS	4. DIVINE	6. GLORIOUS	9. FAITH
10. PRAISE	11. LORD	12. TRIUMPHANT	14. LIGHT	15. FOREVER
16. FARTHEST				
Down:	1. HEARTS	2. KING	4. DISTANT	5. WARFARE
7. LABOURS	8. STRUGGLE	10. PEARL	13. THEE	

## Answers to the Quiz about abbeys and monasteries:

1. St Augustine’s Abbey
2. Cistercian monks
3. Northanger Abbey by Jane Austen
4. AD 657
5. The shelling of Whitby by the German High Seas Fleet
6. St Aelred – the third Abbot
7. Lindisfarne Priory
8. The High Altar
9. Much Wenlock
10. Castle Acre Priory
11. It had a relic consisting of what was believed to be a portion of the blood shed by Christ on the Cross.
12. It was transformed into what’s called a collegiate foundation where a community of priests would sing masses for the souls of benefactors
13. Byland Abbey in North Yorkshire
14. Henry III
15. Waverley Abbey

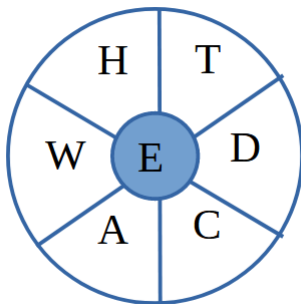
## Can you name the Advent hymn?

Below are the SECOND lines of Advent hymns, can you name the hymn?

(Answers will be given next month)

1. Born to set thy people free
2. Thy people's everlasting light
3. 'Christ is nigh', it seems to say
4. The Saviour promised long
5. River and mountain-spring
6. Once for favoured sinners slain
7. And ransom captive Israel
8. Announces that the Lord is night
9. Our prayers must now employ
10. His footsteps cannot err
11. A glorious light have seen
12. Each in his office wait

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How many four or more letter words can you make from this wordwheel using the letter in the centre?

**CAROL WORDSEARCH ...** when you have filled in the wordsearch the blank squares will spell out a carol.

W	I	S	E	C	I	H	R	W	O	N	S	D
X	O	N	K	M	A	I	D	E	N	T	L	R
H	G	R	I	O	A	M	E	G	I	V	E	E
B	A	S	S	T	L	N	E	L	C	G	G	H
E	T	B	S	H	M	A	G	L	H	Y	N	P
L	H	M	E	E	I	C	O	E	E	E	A	E
B	E	A	A	R	G	P	D	K	R	M	I	H
A	R	L	D	T	H	G	I	N	A	F	W	S
T	E	N	I	A	T	S	U	S	B	I	U	N
S	D	T	E	R	Y	C	H	R	I	S	T	L
L	U	F	T	S	A	E	R	B	M	I	L	K

ALMIGHTY	CHERUBIM	HEART	MOTHER	SNOW
ANGELS	CHRIST	HIM	MILK	STABLE
ASS	GATHERED	KISS	NIGHT	SUSTAIN
BREASTFUL	GIVE	LAMB	OX	WISE
CAMEL	GOD	MAIDEN	REIGN	WORSHIP
CAN	HAY	MANGERFUL	SHEPHERD	

## READERS ETC FOR DECEMBER 2025

<u>Date</u>	<u>Readings</u>	<u>Reader</u>	<u>Prayers</u>	<u>Offertory</u>
<b>7<sup>th</sup> Dec Advent 2</b>	Isaiah 11.1-10 Psalm 72.1-7,18,19 Romans 15.4-13 Matthew 3.1-12	Mike Mear	John Woolley	Olwen & Alan Sharpe
<b>14<sup>th</sup> Dec Advent 3</b>	Isaiah 35.1-10 Psalm 146.4-10 James 5.7-10 Matthew 11.2-11	Valerie Cammack	Maureen Woolley	Lilian Keen
<b>21<sup>st</sup> Dec Advent 4</b>	Isaiah 7.10-16 Psalm 80.1-8,18-20 Romans 1.1-7 Matthew 1.18-25	Sue Ganley	Mike Mear	Alfredo
<b>24<sup>th</sup> Dec Christmas Eve 8.00pm</b>	2 Samuel 7.1-5,8-11,16 Psalm 89.2,19-27 Acts 13.16-26 Luke 1.67-79	Tom Foster	Clergy	Rose Jefferies
<b>25<sup>th</sup> Dec Christmas Day</b>	Isaiah 9.2-7 Psalm 96 Titus 2.11-14 Luke 2.1-14[15-20]	Alison Woolley	Clergy	Sue & Valerie
<b>28<sup>th</sup> Dec The First Sunday of Christmas</b>	Isaiah 63.7-9 Psalm 148 Hebrews 2.10-18 Matthew 2.13-23	Margaret Merry	Colin Dawson	Svetlana
<b>4<sup>th</sup> January The Second Sunday of Christmas or Epiphany</b>	Jeremiah 31.7-14 Psalm 147.13-21 Ephesians 1.3-14 John 1.[1-9]10-18 Isaiah 60.1-6 Psalm 72.[1-9]10-15 Ephesians 3.1-12 Matthew 2.1-12	John Woolley	Margaret Merry	Olwen & Alan Sharpe