

St Thomas Parish Church

Newsletter Spring 2025



Note from the editor: Janet's letter was written before the newsletter was ready to publish, so my apologies, as there are some references to services and events that have already taken place.

Janet Writes

Spring is in the air. You only have to look at the churchyard to see the lovely snowdrops and a few brave little crocus heads peeping out of the ground. Hopefully that means warmer weather is around the corner. Honestly, I know I'm not the only one who finds the cold weather a bit of a trial, but I am longing for a little warmth in my bones! Winter may not be finished with us yet. Still, as February gives way to March we can see the signs of hope.

On March 16th we are hosting the Mission Community confirmation service at 6.30pm with Bishop Mark. We have a couple of candidates from St Thomas' this year so please do come and support them if you can. There may be cake!

We have Ash Wednesday between now and then, though. It falls on the 5th of March this year and we will be holding our Ash Wednesday service at 6pm. If you'd prefer a daytime service, there is one at St James at 10am. Some people find it helpful to follow a book for Lent, often with a reading and a reflection for each day. If you would like to do this, I have some I can share (please do bring them back after Easter so others can use them in the future).

Please take care on the road up to church, it has been damaged by the weather and some of the potholes are quite big. If anyone has any good ideas how we can get it fixed, please let us know. It is not our sole responsibility but it would be good to have it safe again.

On the subject of repairs, those of you who come to church will know that the heating is not working properly. We now know what the problem is but it is not a cheap repair, running

into thousands of pounds. Rest assured your PCC is trying hard to find a way to get it sorted but if anyone has won the lottery recently, please do remember us (I know, that was cheeky, but we live in hope!).

Finally from me... Thank You, to everyone who reads, prays, brews up, cleans, arranges flowers, sits on PCC, collects, counts and records money, to those who sit in pews and worship, to all of you. St Thomas cannot continue without your contributions, so Thank You.

God bless, Janet

Cheese and Wine Evening – Friday 14th March, 7pm

This is your chance to leave the kids or the TV for a couple of hours and enjoy some great food wine with friends.



These social events help bring us together as a community and strengthen our friendships. If you haven't been before, give it a try.

Tickets cost £10 on the door.

For catering it would be great to know numbers, so please text Gillian in advance if you can
T: 07507 544944.

The car park will be open but do bring a torch!!

Confirmation Service, Sunday 16th March, 6,30pm

Candidates from across Newhey, Milnrow and Littleborough and their families and friends will be visiting us this Sunday evening for a special service of commitment and confirmation. The

Confirmation service will be led by Bishop Mark, as the Confirmation candidates make their vows and promises to continue their journey of faith as a follower of Jesus Christ.

It would be really special if we as a church community could show up to support the candidates from St Thomas. Please join us on Sunday evening at 6.30pm for an inspiring service (again torches would be useful).

****DONATIONS OF CAKE AND HELP TO SERVE REFRESHMENTS ON THE NIGHT WOULD BE MUCH APPRECIATED****

Hard Truths

It's a fact that we continually struggle to meet the needs of our congregation, community, church building and grounds, as well as balance our finances and fulfil our legal obligations to the Diocese and National Church to be properly represented.

We desperately need more people to come forward to offer some time to help around church with the various admin, management, and maintenance tasks.

Whilst appreciating we all come to church for different reasons and we should be able to attend, feel refreshed and sustained spiritually and also leave – it's a fact that this church WILL NOT survive, without additional regular financial contributions and new volunteers.

Considering how successful and vibrant our Sunday School is (what a testament that is to our wonderful teachers and helpers), we should really be able to prosper and succeed. However, the burden of so many tasks continues to land on just a few people and it's becoming unsustainable!

Please consider joining the PCC, taking on a church officer role or helping with some of the admin or maintenance tasks.

Job carving and sharing is also possible, so none of the duties are overwhelming – consider coming forward now to take on or shadow and support anyone of the following roles:

- **Treasurer** – accounts admin experience helpful
- **Secretary** – minute taking, correspondence management
- **Warden / Deputy Warden** – do you have any knowledge of building maintenance or management?
- **PCC member** – being involved in decision making regarding the churches future
- **Safeguarding Officer** – protect and promote a safer environment and culture and respond promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation

Help is also required with the following:

- **Verger support** to help Janet with Weddings and Funerals – help to set up, welcome and tidy after
- **Church cleaning** – we desperately need new teams for the cleaning rota! At 59 I think I am the youngest member so it's time to give some of our ladies a break! And in this day and age, who says it should only be a role for the ladies – come on gentlemen!! Can you and a few friends or family members give an hour or so once every 5 or 6 weeks? Bring the children to help – the more the merrier!
- **Gardening Gang** – we only have 4 regular members and only 2 attend church! Come and help keep your churchyard tidy – bring the kids to help too!
- **Newsletter** – collating and writing the articles
- **Rota admin** – update and issue anyone of the following rotas; cleaning, refreshments, lay assistant/reader/intercessor

Finance

Rather than contributing just when you are physically in church, would you consider setting up a Standing Order to make a regular weekly or monthly contribution?

For those already making regular contributions, are you able to increase your giving?

If we could all increase our giving by a few pounds and ensure that giving was regular,

these changes could make a massive difference to our income and ability to budget for large expenses and also plan and sustain outreach projects.

Contact Judith if you would like more information on setting up a Standing Order – see contact details below.

For those who already make a regular Standing Order contribution, from Mothering Sunday, we will have re-usable tokens should you wish to place something in the collection bag/plate during service.

Gardening Gang is Back!!

Saturday 29th March, 10am -12pm

If you can spare any time, please bring your gloves and any gardening equipment you have (although we usually have plenty to spare).

Tasks: litter picking, weeding, cutting back shrubs, strimming grass



Mothering Sunday – Sunday 30th Mar

This will be a family service (no Sunday school) – could we politely ask that children sit with their families during family services to enjoy the service together and not congregate in the café area.

The usual gifts will be available to share with all those who take on a mothering role.

APCM – Sunday 6th April (after service)

It is that time of year again when we bring the previous financial year to a close and present reports.

All members of the church’s membership (electoral roll) are welcome and encouraged to attend to hear the review of 2024, understand the church’s financial situation and elect a new PCC and Warden(s).

Easter 2025 at St Thomas / St James

Service / Event	Date	Location
Maundy Thursday	Thurs, 17 April - 10am	St Thomas
Maundy Thursday	Thurs, 17 April – 7pm	St James
Good Friday	Fri, 18 April - 12 noon	St James
Easter Saturday Vigil	Sat, 19 April - 7.30pm	St Thomas
Easter Day Dawn Eucharist	Sun, 20 April - 6am	Ogden reservoir
Easter Day pre service breakfast	Sun, 20 April -10am	St Thomas
Easter Day Eucharist (family service)	Sun, 20 April -11am	St Thomas
Easter Day – Easter Egg Hunt (for adults and children)	Sun, 20 April - after service	St Thomas

Chocolate Egg & Gift Donations Needed

Could you buy an extra easter egg or two – nothing too eggstravagant! We’d love to make the hunt an eggciting event for everyone, both young and old!

Do you have any unwanted gifts you would be willing to donate to our hamper collection?

Baskets for donations are available at the back of church.

Social Events – 2025 Plans

Event	Date
Cheese & Wine Evening	Friday 14 th March, 7pm TONIGHT
Easter Day – pre-service Breakfast	Sunday 20 th April, 10am
Easter Day – post service Easter Egg Hunts	Sunday 20 th April, 12pm

Family Games Night	Thursday 24 th April, 6pm
Afternoon Tea	Saturday 17 th May, 2pm
Sponsored walk & BBQ (route tbc)	Saturday 12 th July, 10am
Milnrow Band Concert	September, date & time tbc
Christmas Quiz and supper	November, date & time tbc
Wreath Making Workshop	December, date & time tbc
Milnrow Band Christmas Concert	December, date & time tbc
Christmas Fair / Christmas Tree Festival	December, date & time tbc

Fund Raising

Our social events are an important way for us to connect and build friendships, but they are also vital to the survival of our church!

It might surprise you to know that we don't receive funding from the national church or the Government - the only way our doors stay open on Sundays and for each wedding, baptism or funeral is with income from YOU in form of regular weekly collections, gift aid claims and from fund raising events.

- If you haven't attended one of our events yet, please buy your ticket and join us for some fun.
- Use our #easyfundraising link to make a gift to Church at no extra cost when you shop from your favourite online brands (over 7500 available).

It's an easy way to support us by doing what you do anyway and it doesn't cost you a penny extra.

So far we only received £10 from Easy Fund Raising this year – can you help us improve this income stream NOW.

Please support us by clicking here

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stthomaschurch/>

Take a look as it's really easy to use and you can make a BIG difference as we get a % contribution based on your total spend.

Nominate St Thomas for a chance to receive £1,000

The **Movement for Good Awards** programme gives churches the opportunity to obtain grants of £1,000 or more.

You can nominate St Thomas and your other favourite charities (one nomination per charity per person). The Movement for Good Awards has gifted over £5.75 million to more than 2,500 charities since the initiative started in 2019.

In 2023, £11,000 was gifted to 10 church-related charities through the £1,000 Movement for Good Awards. Kilkenny Christian Centre actually won twice, so get nominating, next time it could be us!!

To nominate, click on the link below:

<https://movementforgood.com/ecclesiastical>

Scroll down the page and click on this box ...

Nominate a charity for £1,000

In the search box, type or copy & paste 624345 St Thomas church, Newhey

Search for an organisation, group, charity name or charity number

Click 'Search' and tick the 'Registration exempt' box and select charity type 'church'. Complete your details and submit – it's that easy! If every adult receiving this newsletter completed a nomination, we might be in with a chance to receive a bonus gift of £1000!

Once you've submitted your nomination, share it, and get your friends and family to support us too.

Volunteering Opportunities

- **Gardening Gang**

Meets once a month to help keep our Churchyard tidy.

We are desperate for help from those with a bit more youth, fitness and strength on their side so we can tackle some of the larger jobs!

Please consider if you (or anyone you know) would like to join the Gardening Gang and volunteer just 2 hours a month.

- **Cleaning Rota**

New teams required - could you / friends / family give an hour or so every 6 weeks to help give the church a clean and vacuum? All equipment and training provided!!

- **Lay Assistant / Service reader**

Have you ever thought about joining the service team to support the Sunday readings or potentially serve as Lay Assistant?

For more information about what's involved for any of the above opportunities, please speak to Janet, Neil or Judith

A Church Near You

All services and activities are listed on our page on AChurchNearYou website. Click the link below and search for St Thomas, Newhey <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/>



Votive Candles

We provide votive candles for anyone who wants to light one in prayer for themselves or others. We have placed the candles in sand for safety reasons as we leave them lit for the duration of the natural burn time after service.

Please take a candle to light and pray for any loved ones, however please limit to one candle to respect the needs of others.

Children are not permitted to light candles unaccompanied – parents and guardians, please help ensure the safety of our young visitors.

Regular St Thomas Service Timings

Sunday	Holy Communion	11.00am
Thursday	Holy Communion	10.00am

Contact Us

If you would like to add anyone to our collective prayers, or if you would like to talk to Janet about anything:

Priest in Charge - Reverend Janet Pitman

Email: hildaofwhitby67@gmail.com

Vicarage: 01706 594284

Mobile: 07401 344526

Curate - Neil McClure

Email: neil.mcclure@hotmail.co.uk

Mobile: 07799 417341

Warden - Judith Jones

Email: stthomaschurchnewhey@outlook.com

Mobile: 07795 818047

Please note, Friday is Janet's usual day off, so there will be a delay in any response.

Events & News from the Rochdale Deanery and Manchester Diocese

----- EVENTS -----

Living Hope – Lent 2025

Living Hope is our theme for Lent 2025. 

In Lent we journey with Jesus on the road to the cross on Good Friday – and beyond, to the transformation of Easter Day.



Living Hope offers us the opportunity deepen our hope in God and think about how our churches can be part of what God is doing to bring hope in the world.

Discover more at cofe.io/LivingHope
Facebook - [#LivingHope](https://www.facebook.com/LivingHope)

Nelson Street Church – Spirit Cafe

Last Saturday each month



Thought for the Day

<https://www.manchester.anglican.org/news/thought-for-the-day/>

Welcome to our "Thought for the Day" page, where we host reflections and insights to inspire and uplift your spirit. The reflections and thoughts are often shared by members of our Diocese, including our Bishops and our Archdeacons during their contributions to national and local radio stations, including BBC Radio 4 and BBC Radio Manchester. Within these reflections, you'll find a blend of timeless truths and contemporary insights, addressing the joys and challenges of daily life through the lens of Christian faith. We invite you to explore these daily offerings as a source of inspiration, guidance, and spiritual nourishment.

Livestream services from Manchester Cathedral



[Click here for the Cathedral Facebook page](#)

Events at the Cathedral

Manchester Cathedral is a thriving, diverse and welcoming church in the heart of the city, Daily worship lies at the heart of cathedral life and offered throughout the day and on most days it includes at least one service sung by the Cathedral Choir.

[What's On - click here for more info](#)

-----NEWS-----

Transforming Prayer Community

Lord, teach us to pray

The Diocese of Manchester invites you to join its Transforming Prayer Community.

A community that will help each of us to grow closer to God through prayer, and find support and fellowship with others.

All that's asked is you set aside a little time each day to pray The Lord's Prayer, Our Diocesan Prayer of Thanksgiving and Hope and the Prayer for our Local area, You may choose to say these prayers at home, in church, on your commute or at work, wherever suits you best!

<http://tinyurl.com/3rxcbrnn>

It would also be great to know who is joining the prayer community, so please sign up online using the QR code below or the link above.



A supportive Facebook group is also available, just search **'Transforming Prayer Community in the Diocese of Manchester'**.

Additionally, Bishop Matthew Porter will be leading a short time of focussed prayer for various situations of conflict each Wednesday at 12 noon for twenty-five minutes on Facebook Live [via his page](#).

All are invited to join him to pray for peace.

Sign up for our daily election reflections via email using the form below [Church House Publishing](#).

Curious? [Get a sneak peek](#) of the content to come over the coming weeks.

Stories of faith

<https://www.manchester.anglican.org/news/storiesoffaith/>