

St. John the Evangelist,

Walton



# Open Door

Bringing people to Jesus



St. John's, Walton

**December 2025 & January 2026**



*Details of information in this magazine and more can be found at*  
[www.stjohnschurchwalton.org.uk](http://www.stjohnschurchwalton.org.uk)  
and  
[www.facebook.com/stjohnswalton/](https://www.facebook.com/stjohnswalton/)

## Sunday and Regular Services

**Sunday Morning Service 9.30 am**

**Please note new time**

Morning Worship — 1st and 3rd Sundays

Holy Communion — 2nd and 4th Sundays

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**5th Sunday Holy Communion Service 9.30am**

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**These services will be live streamed through  
our website:**

<https://stjohnschurchwalton.org.uk/>

**Holy Communion  
Sunday Service  
8.30 am**

**1st & 3rd  
Sundays only**

**Wednesday  
Celtic Service  
10.00 am**

## Special Services

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### Christmas Services

See card accompanying  
this issue of Open door

**All are welcome**



## Contact Details

Vicar: Rev. Jo Mackriell  
Telephone: 01925 968729  
Mobile: 07359 546362  
Email: [rev4jo@gmail.com](mailto:rev4jo@gmail.com)

*Lay Reader*  
Mr. I. Jerrard-Dinn — 01925 265 557

*Lay Reader*  
Mr. K. Fletcher — 07359 445564

*Pastoral Worker + Safeguarding Officer*  
Mrs. G. Povey-Robins — 07970 983 308

*Church Warden*  
Mr. T. Robins — 01925 261 922

*Church Warden*  
Mr. C. Lloyd — 01925 212 644

*Treasurer*  
Mr. M. Weeks — 07972 845174

*P.C.C. Secretary*  
Mrs. N. Chadwick — 01925 263 449

If you would like to give to the work and ministry of St. John's you can use the QR code, click on this link [bit.ly/give-st-johns](https://bit.ly/give-st-johns), or type it into your browser, to take you to our online giving website.

With many thanks.



***From Rev. Jo***

Dear Friends,

The Old and the New.

In the Church we begin the new year on Advent Sunday, which this year is 30<sup>th</sup> November. In the last few years the trend for something more than a chocolate Advent calendar for the children has developed into expensive 'treats', everything from whisky miniatures to luxury beauty products on offer. Whilst most of us enjoy the occasional treat, perhaps Advent is not the right time for this. Traditionally, Advent like Lent, is a time of fasting and prayer. A time when we can look back to what has been and prepare for what is to come.

In Advent we are, of course, preparing for the birth of a special baby — Jesus born in a stable, poor and with nothing, to earthly parents who would need to seek asylum. There are many in our world who can identify with this aspect of the Son of God's earthly beginnings. As we look back over the past year what can we do to change, in a small way, the lives of those around us and further afield? It isn't always about financial gifting, but a simple smile or 'Good morning' to a neighbour who is lonely, helping a stranger who is in need, caring for those around us, without counting the cost.

Janet Lees wrote this poem based on Isaiah 40:

There's a voice crying in the wilderness,  
up and down the high street,  
through the railway arches.  
The voice says 'Get ready for God!'  
'Make the path straight,  
repair the potholes and pavement cracks,  
fill in the ditches,  
cultivate the waste land.  
The mountains and the hills,  
empty office blocks  
and power tower will be laid low.  
Those bent over and weighed down  
will rise up and everyone will recognise  
God's handiwork."  
Praise God!

I pray that you will see God's handiwork this advent and Christmas and will seek to play your part to make our community an even better place in 2026.

Love from

Rev. Jo



## A Chance Encounter with Dr the Honourable Gilbert Greenall CBE

It was a Tuesday lunchtime a couple of weeks ago; I'd just completed a small task at the church hall, and I was on my way to my car. A rather well-dressed gentleman stopped me on the roadside and asked me for directions to the vicarage. He said he wanted to show his wife the inside of St John's because it had meant a lot to him and his family. I introduced myself and said that I was a church warden and that I had the keys. The gentleman introduced himself, and announced that he was Gilbert Greenall, younger brother of Lord Peter Daresbury our church Patron. As you can imagine, I was somewhat taken aback.



We then spent a delightful half hour or so wandering through St John's while Gilbert directed his wife Melisa to the several artifacts and stained-glass windows depicting memories of his family. Finally, we arrived at the inner vestry the walls of which are decorated with his families photographs and portraits. Gilbert's description of each was certainly an education for me but I doubt I'd be able to recall everything he told me; it was all too much for such an impromptu encounter.

An extract from Gilbert's very kind email to me (us) says:-

*" My older brother Peter Daresbury inherited so I was free to find somewhere else to live and very happily so. We live on the Herefordshire, Gloucestershire, Worcestershire border and I am currently the Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Worcestershire. Like my grandfather and great uncle I also served in the Household Cavalry. By chance one of the previous owners of my house was a parliamentary colleague of my great-great grandfather Gilbert Greenall. I was always under the impression that it was my great grandfather who built the church but this cannot be true – his father is buried in the church yard!*

*I have been a lay reader for some years now at St Mary's Bromesberrow in Gloucester diocese as we have had no incumbent for the nine parish benefice for a long time. My great great uncle was rector of Grappenhall and Arch Deacon of Chester.*

*Please pass on my thanks to all at St. John's."*

Perhaps one day Gilbert and Melisa will return and we might be treated to a talk at one of our services.

Tony Robins

### Have you heard?

*... just some things to ponder*



"Some people use religion like a bus – they ride on it only while it is going their way."

Anon

"Making the most of today is the best way to be ready for tomorrow."

Anon

"To perceive Christmas through its wrapping becomes more difficult each year."

E B White

# Dates for your diary

## Prayer Groups

2nd Tuesday **Lady Chapel 6.30pm**

4th Wednesday **Lady Chapel 11.00am**

### December

Tuesday 9th

### January

Tuesday 13th

Wednesday 28th



*If you would like to join us it would be great to see you*

## Knit and Natter

1.30pm—3.30pm

Church Community Hall



### December

Tuesday 2nd

### January

Tuesday 20th

ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST WALTON

ST. JOHN'S ENSEMBLE

CHRISTMAS CONCERT



**SATURDAY 06 DECEMBER 2025**

**7:30pm**

**£6.00 entry, includes Refreshments**

## Tuesday Group

7.15 – 9.00 pm

Church Community Hall



### December

9th

### January

Winter  
break



*A blessed, happy  
and peaceful  
Christmas and  
New year to all*

## St John's Church

invites all to:

## Messy Church

For crafts, food and fun

On Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> January  
at 2.00pm







# Prayer pages



Lord, we thank You for all Your blessings in December.

As this year comes to an end, help us to reflect on Your goodness with a grateful heart. Remove every spirit of complaining and fill us with joy for what You have done. May our lives overflow with thanksgiving and praise. Thank You for Your mercy that endures forever. In Jesus' name.

**Amen.**

Source: Owen Brownson

Give grace to us, our families and friends and to all our neighbours, that we may serve Christ in one another and to love as he loves us. Help us to make our homes patterns of your love, places of mutual trust and forgiveness, places of true sharing and caring, places of deep joy and peace, and unite us all, one to another in the circle of your love.

In this season of Advent, we celebrate the first coming of your Son to us in Bethlehem. May we joyfully anticipate the day when Christ will come again. May our Advent season be a preparation for the day when we are taken into the joy of heaven, where waiting will be no more, and all our hopes will be fulfilled.

Amen



## Psalm 34:18

**'The Lord is close to the broken hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.'**

Dear Lord, in this season of togetherness, we lift those who feel alone. Wrap them in Your comforting embrace, easing their solitude. Help them find solace in Your presence, knowing they are deeply loved. Amen

## A bedtime prayer for children on Christmas Eve by Robert Louis Stevenson



Loving Father,

Help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world.

Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting.

Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children, and Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

## As we enter 2026

Heavenly Father, as we stand on the threshold of a new year, we want to express our deepest gratitude for the past year's blessings. Thank you for your faithfulness, your love, and your constant presence in our lives. We acknowledge your sovereignty over the days gone by and the days yet to come. Amen

*Lord, as we embark on this new year, we lift up to you, our loved ones, our communities, and the world. May your peace reign in our hearts and in the hearts of all people. Bring healing where there is brokenness and reconciliation where there is division. Amen*



*Both these prayers sourced from Christianity .com*

O God we long to know you and to love you, but the busyness of life often gets in the way.

As we start another new year, help us to recognise the ordinary daily ways that our family can learn about you and grow close to you.

We know that you are with us, leading us and guiding us on our way.

Amen

*Source: Loyola Press*

**Lord, we ask that you bless our coming year. Give us the strength and desire to show kindness and love to others, to grow in forgiveness and generosity. May the Gospel message shine brightly as we share our faith and mission throughout 2026.**

**Amen**

### *Mission and Service*

#### *Outreaching Lord*

Through your amazing outreaching, outstretching love in the person of Your only Son Jesus, you taught us how to learn to know you and serve you. Through Him you commissioned us to share that with others as we care for your world and its people. Bless all those who work in the field of Mission, both at home and abroad. We especially ask your blessing on the Salvation Army in Warrington, Warrington Foodbank, Broomfields Youth Project, and Serving in Mission in Malawi where Stephanie Darling serves with such love. Help us, too, to remember that we as individuals can play our part where we live and work. Amen

### **St. John's Prayer Chain**

As part of our Pastoral Ministry at St. John's some church members make up our Prayer Chain. They pray daily for those in need, with requests normally being included for two weeks.

If you would like prayers to be offered on behalf of yourself or someone for whom you have a particular concern at this time, then we would be pleased to do so.

To make a request please contact any of the following:

Rev. Jo Mackriell

on 01925 968729 or 07359 546362

Ian Jerrard-Dinn (Lay Reader)

on 01925 265 557

Gill Povey-Robins (Pastoral Worker)

on 07970 983 308



## *St John's Ensemble Concert*

### *Saturday 27th September 2025*



*The theme for St. John's Ensemble's latest performance on 27th September was Nature and Creation.*

*Whilst this was a new and different theme, I'm glad and not surprised to confirm that it was also performed to the usual high standard.*

*The night was a fabulous mix of traditional and familiar choral music along with some less familiar content - including an operatic piece. Once again superbly led by Alan Thornecroft and beautifully performed by all.*

*A full house was thoroughly entertained by both the individual and joint talents of the Ensemble. Solo performances and duets were expertly delivered and were a testament to all the hard work and dedication put in by all.*

*The vocal talent of each individual was matched by the versatility of many of the participants in sharing musical accompaniment and conducting the performance.*

*Their performance was once again stunning and their obvious enthusiasm and enjoyment was infectious.*

*All in all a fabulous evening of entertainment was enjoyed by everyone.*

*Carol Lloyd*

### **Some anniversaries from December and January**

**250 years ago**, on 16<sup>th</sup> December 1775, Jane Austen, novelist was born.

**80 years ago**, on 27<sup>th</sup> December 1945, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development were founded. They'd been created at the Bretton Woods Conference in July 1944.

**200 years ago**, on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1826, Menai Straits Suspension Bridge was opened.

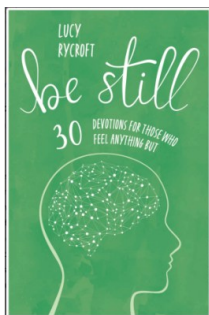
**100 years ago**, on 13<sup>th</sup> January 1926, Michael Bond, children's writer and creator of Paddington Bear, was born.



*We consider two more books in our occasional series of reviews:*

**Be Still: 30 devotions for those who feel anything but**

**By Lucy Rycroft,  
BRF, £8.99**



Stillness is an alien concept in today's busy world.

Communication, entertainment, work and relationships seem accessible to us 24–7, and it can feel impossible to change the pace.

So this book is a series of reflections on the concept of being still. Made up of 30 Bible moments, it ranges from Moses leading the Israelites through the Red Sea, to the raw emotions of the Psalms, to Jesus calming the storm.

The book's aim is to help Christians living in the crazed busyness of the 21st century to discover what 'being still' looks like for us today.

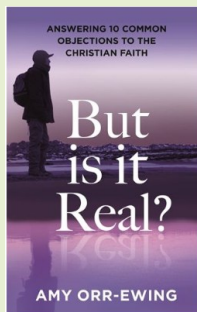
**But Is It Real? -**

**Answering 10 Common Objections To The Christian Faith**

**By Amy Orr-Ewing, IVP, £9.99**

Amy Orr-Ewing gives thoughtful and credible answers to common objections to the Christian faith.

Objections such as: Is God real? Is it possible to know anything, let alone know Him? Why do bad things happen to people who worship this God? What about the spiritual experiences of other faiths?



Amy Orr-Ewing writes, "I hope that the thoughts offered here will help you see what the Christian faith has to say amid all the pain, confusion and complexity of life."



**Warrington Open  
Door At Christmas**

Run entirely by volunteers and started in 1991 to help the homeless of Warrington, WODAC has now widened its scope to include those who are lonely and isolated over Christmas.

They offer food, toiletries, warm clothing, friendship and social activities to their guests.

If you would like to donate such items or just want to find out more about the organisation why not check out their website at **[www.wodac.org.uk](http://www.wodac.org.uk)** or find them on Facebook.

## Who was he?

*On the 25th January Saint Paul is remembered by the Christian church. But who was he? The following article sheds some light.*

January is a month of the beginning of great things! As well as the naming of the Son of God, we celebrate the conversion of the greatest ever apostle of the Christian faith. Many books have been written on Paul, and here is the briefest of introductions.

He was a Jew, born as 'Saul' at Tarsus, and brought up by the rabbi Gamaliel as a Pharisee. A devout, fanatical Jew, Saul persecuted the Christians, and watched with satisfaction the first Christian martyrdom, the stoning of Stephen. Then, on his way to Damascus, Saul had a vision of Christ that stopped him in his tracks. He realised that this Jesus whom he was persecuting was in fact the Messiah for whom he had longed.

Saul changed overnight. He was given a new name, Paul, and became an evangelist for the cause of Christ. He became a leader in the early Church, and his special calling was as an apostle to the Gentiles. He wrote epistles (*letters*) to the young churches that he founded - and thus, inadvertently, wrote a great part of the New Testament.

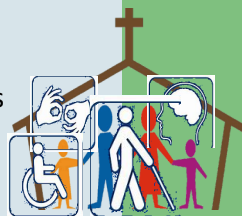
Life as the greatest apostle was hardly full of perks: Paul was stoned, beaten, mobbed, homeless, hated, imprisoned, and finally martyred. Tradition has it that he was beheaded in Rome during the persecution of Nero in 64AD, and buried where the basilica of St Paul 'outside the walls' now stands. His mighty faith in Christ has kindled similar belief in many hundreds of millions of people down the centuries.

### **Elderly and depressed this winter?**

#### **Go to church.**

Older people with depression can see a bigger improvement in their mental health if they start going to church than if they engage in charity work or sport.

Research from the London School of Economics found that joining a religious organisation is the best way of combatting depression. It may be both that having a faith gives benefit, and also because meeting up with other people of faith gives a sense of belonging. The LSE also found evidence that membership of some political and community organisations may have a poor impact on an older person's mental health.



## Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 18th January — 25th January 2026

### Theme: One Body, One Spirit

*"There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling" (Ephesians 4:4)*

The materials for this year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity have been prepared by the faithful of the Armenian Apostolic Church, along with their brothers and sisters of the Armenian Catholic and Evangelical Churches.

*"These resources draw upon centuries-old traditions of prayer and petitions used by the Armenian people, along with hymns that originated in the ancient monasteries and churches of Armenia, some of which date as far back as the fourth century."*

*We are invited to "draw upon this shared Christian heritage and to delve more deeply into our fellowship in Christ, which unites Christians worldwide."*

If you would like to learn more about the Week of Prayer, its history, links with Christian Aid, or how you can become involved, please visit:

<https://ctbi.org.uk/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2026/>

All information in this article has been sourced from this website.



### Funerals

Audrey Hoare

Beverley Batey

### Weddings

Angela Barker and Colin Hesketh

## Remembering your loved ones at St John's

Have you thought about celebrating or remembering a special event or person by sponsoring the flowers at St. John's?

We would love to hear from you.

Please contact Christine Hughes on 01925 210 792 to discuss a donation.



# For the children

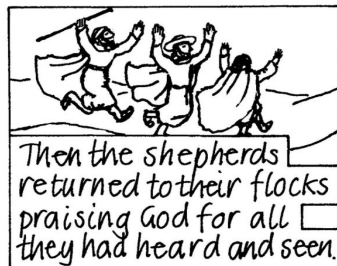
(and young at heart!)

## Bible Bite

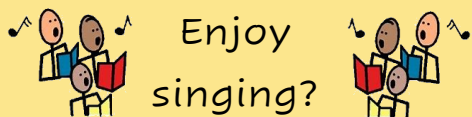
A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in  
Luke chapter 2 verses 8 to 20

Shepherds were paid to look after the flocks out on the hillside. Uneducated and rough, they were usually avoided, or overlooked.



## Social goings on



### Enjoy singing?

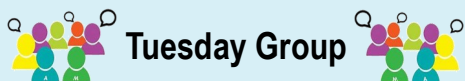
## St. John's Ensemble

meets In **Church**  
on

**Thursday from 7.30 pm**

Why not come along and  
join us?

Ability to read music a  
help but not essential.



## Tuesday Group

Want to learn more about God and the Christian faith outside the formal setting of Church?

Friendly, ordinary folk getting to grips with what living in the 21st Century means for their personal faith.

If you're interested, please speak to Noelle or contact her at [noelle\\_briggs@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:noelle_briggs@hotmail.co.uk)



Feeling lonely?

Fancy a cuppa?



Why not come along to

## St. John's Knit and Natter

(You don't **have** to do any knitting)

**1st and 3rd Tuesday** of the month

**Church Community Hall**

1.30pm — 3.30pm

**Guaranteed a warm welcome**

For more details please contact

Mrs. G. Hatch on 01925 262315

OR

Mrs. G. Bruce on 07876 058934

## Did you know?

**St John's Church Community Hall is available for hire**

Situated in the heart of Walton village

Suitable for

*parties* *societies and clubs* *fitness classes* *a rehearsal*  
*local community meetings*

- ◆ Grade 2 listed building
- ◆ 2 rooms available for hire:  
The Walton Room (capacity 49) and the Daresbury Room (capacity 27)
- ◆ Kitchen
- ◆ Disabled toilet and baby change facilities

Bookings are available for local groups or private hire.

Please contact Nina Chadwick on 07840119659 or





Raise a smile;



### Well known pilot

At Sunday school, the younger children were drawing pictures to illustrate a biblical story. The teacher was startled to see one little boy was drawing an airplane. "This is the Flight into Egypt," the little boy explained. "See, here is Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus. And this," he said, pointing to the figure in the front of the plane, "is Pontius. He's the Pilot."



### Footballer's carol

A football supporter's favourite Christmas song?

'Yule never walk alone'.



### Note from the editor

Every effort is made to produce a magazine which looks inviting and contains correct information, spelling, and grammar. However, no-one and nothing is perfect (especially myself), hence errors can get missed, both in production and proof-reading (done by someone else). As you peruse 'Open Door' award yourself 5 points when you find any mistakes which have escaped correction. Have fun! Hopefully you won't find too many! No need to report back.

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The Annex, Walton Lodge, Hillcliffe Road  
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Printed by [www.ecobourneprint.co.uk](http://www.ecobourneprint.co.uk)

## Acknowledgements

[www.parishpump.co.uk](http://www.parishpump.co.uk) — for some of the articles and graphics included



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*Showers/Baths resealed*

*Joinery work*

*Patio/drives jet washed*

*Garden gates supplied and fitted*

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**07808 044 383 or 01925 820 481**



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### Magazine issues

December/January

February/March

April/May

June/July

August/September

October/November

Open Door Editorial Team

by Tony Horsfall, a Bible teacher and conference speaker.

### **And there were shepherds...**

In his gospel, Luke tells how the shepherds in the fields were keeping watch over their flocks when they were terrified by the sudden arrival of heavenly angels, surrounded by the glory of the Lord. And the message of the angel that night has rung down the centuries:

*"I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." (Luke 2:10,11)*

And so, the first people to greet the Saviour were not rich VIPs, but humble shepherds. And in turn, it was the shepherds who became the first evangelists: for they would have gone home to their families and neighbours that night with the amazing news of what they had seen.

Meanwhile, for Mary there followed a time of reflection. She gathered up in her mind all her impressions, and all that the shepherds had shared about the angelic visit. She knew it was treasure, and not to be squandered. Then she quietly pondered in her heart the meaning and significance of all that had happened, so that she would never forget.

Exuberant witness and quiet contemplation are not opposites. They are, in fact, good companions in the spiritual life!

So, this Christmas, let's be filled with the joy that the Saviour has also been born 'to us'. May our lives reflect the glory of His coming, even in a small way. May our interactions with friends, colleagues and families during this Advent season reflect the great joy that the angels brought that night, so long ago.

1st January - Have you ever wondered where the name 'Jesus' comes from?

The name Jesus is a transliteration of a name that occurs in several languages. It is of Hebrew origin, 'Yehosua', or Joshua. There is also the Hebrew-Aramaic form, 'Yesua'. In Greek, it became 'Ἰησοῦς' (Iēsoûs), and in Latin it became 'Iesus'.

The meaning of the name is 'Yahweh delivers' or 'Yahweh rescues', or 'Yahweh is salvation'. No wonder the angel Gabriel in Luke (1:26-33) told Mary to name her baby Jesus: "because He will save His people from their sins."

Some words spoken about Jesus:

*"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel."*

*Isaiah Chapter 7 verse 14*